

ITEM 6A

Coachella Valley Conservation Commission Meeting Minutes February 9, 2023



The audio file for this committee can be found at: <http://www.cvag.org/audio.htm>

- 1. CALL TO ORDER** – The meeting was called to order by Chair Linda Evans, City of La Quinta, at 10:30 a.m. via Zoom, pursuant to AB 361 and the guidelines for governing how public meetings are held virtually.
- 2. ROLL CALL** – Roll call was taken and it was determined that a quorum was present.

Members Present

Councilmember Ernesto Gutierrez
Board Member Anthony Bianco
Mayor Pro Tem Gary Gardner
Director Alex Cardenas
Mayor Donna Griffith
Councilmember Elaine Holmes
Mayor Linda Evans, Chair
Councilmember Evan Trubee
Councilmember Ron deHarte
Director Russ Martin
Mayor Richard Kite
Councilmember Glenn Miller
Councilmember Kathleen Fitzpatrick
Councilmember Jan Harnik
Supervisor V. Manuel Perez
Supervisor Yxstian Gutierrez

Agency

City of Cathedral City
Coachella Valley Water District
City of Desert Hot Springs
Imperial Irrigation District
City of Indian Wells
City of Indio
City of La Quinta
City of Palm Desert
City of Palm Springs
Mission Springs Water District
City of Rancho Mirage
Riverside County – District 1
Riverside County – District 2
Riverside County – District 3
Riverside County – District 4 *(arrived at Item 3)*
Riverside County – District 5

Members Not Present

Mayor Steven Hernandez, Vice Chair City of Coachella

Chair Evans welcomed the CVCC's new member, Palm Springs Councilmember Ron deHarte, to the Commission.

3. AGENDA MODIFICATIONS (IF ANY)

Executive Director Tom Kirk announced that the Protect California Deserts Coalition had requested Item 7D be continued to the next meeting. Mr. Kirk noted that any written comments would be included with that staff report. The Commissioners concurred.

4. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA AND NON-AGENDA ITEMS

None

5. COMMISSION CHAIR / DIRECTOR COMMENTS

Mr. Kirk provided a recap of the CVCC's January tour of properties and thanked staff for coordinating the event.

6. CONSENT CALENDAR

- A. Approve January 12, 2023 CVCC Meeting Minutes**
- B. Reaffirm that findings still exist, pursuant to Assembly Bill 361, and authorize continuation of remote teleconference/virtual meetings of the Coachella Valley Conservation Commission and its committees**
- C. Approve CVCC's existing Investment Policy as CVCC Policy 23-01**
- D. Receive and file the Local Development Mitigation Fee Annual and Five-Year Report for Fiscal year 2021/2022 in fulfillment of the reporting requirements of the Mitigation Fee Act**
- E. Authorize the Executive Director to execute Amendment Number One to the services agreement with Pacific Policy Group, providing for two additional years at a not-to-exceed cost of \$60,000 annually for professional lobbying services at the state level to advocate for funding opportunities and policy priorities as identified in the CVCC's legislative platform**

IT WAS MOVED BY COUNCILMEMBER HARNIK AND SECONDED BY COUNCILMEMBER HOLMES TO APPROVE THE CONSENT CALENDAR ITEMS. THE MOTION CARRIED WITH 16 AYES, AND 1 MEMBER ABSENT.

Councilmember Ernesto Gutierrez	Aye
Mayor Steven Hernandez	Absent
Board Member Anthony Bianco	Aye
Mayor Pro Tem Gary Gardner	Aye
Director Alex Cardenas	Aye
Mayor Donna Griffith	Aye
Councilmember Elaine Holmes	Aye
Mayor Linda Evans	Aye
Director Russ Martin	Aye
Councilmember Evan Trubee	Aye
Councilmember Ron deHarte	Aye
Mayor Richard Kite	Aye
Councilmember Glenn Miller	Aye
Councilmember Kathleen Fitzpatrick	Aye
Councilmember Jan Harnik	Aye
Supervisor V. Manuel Perez	Aye
Supervisor Yxstian Gutierrez	Aye

7. DISCUSSION / ACTION

- A. CVCC's Audit for Fiscal Year 2021/22 and Related Reports – Claude Kilgore**

Director of Finance/ CVCC Auditor Claude Kilgore introduced the audit and Shannon Ayala from Davis Farr, who presented the audit and the unmodified opinion. Chair Evans noted that the audit was reviewed by the CVCC Finance Committee.

IT WAS MOVED BY SUPERVISOR PEREZ AND SECONDED BY MAYOR KITE TO RECEIVE AND FILE THE AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2022, REPORT ON INTERNAL CONTROLS OVER FINANCIAL REPORTING, AND THE AUDITOR’S COMMUNICATION WITH THOSE CHARGED WITH GOVERNANCE

THE MOTION CARRIED WITH 16 AYES AND 1 MEMBER ABSENT.

Councilmember Ernesto Gutierrez	Aye
Mayor Steven Hernandez	Absent
Board Member Anthony Bianco	Aye
Mayor Pro Tem Gary Gardner	Aye
Director Alex Cardenas	Aye
Mayor Donna Griffith	Aye
Councilmember Elaine Holmes	Aye
Mayor Linda Evans	Aye
Director Russ Martin	Aye
Councilmember Evan Trubee	Aye
Councilmember Ron deHarte	Aye
Mayor Richard Kite	Aye
Councilmember Glenn Miller	Aye
Councilmember Kathleen Fitzpatrick	Aye
Councilmember Jan Harnik	Aye
Supervisor V. Manuel Perez	Aye
Supervisor Yxstian Gutierrez	Aye

B. Acquisition of nine parcels in the Thousand Palms Conservation Area – Jim Karpiak

Jim Karpiak of the Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy presented the staff report and provided an overview of the property. Member discussion ensued with staff providing background on conservation areas. Mr. Kirk noted that staff would follow up at the next meeting with specifics on how much property had been acquired by CVCC.

IT WAS MOVED BY COUNCILMEMBER HARNIK AND SECONDED BY COUNCILMEMBER FITZPATRICK TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 2023-01 FOR ACQUISITION OF NINE PARCELS CONSISTING OF APPROXIMATELY 885+/- ACRES IN THE THOUSAND PALMS CONSERVATION AREA AT A COST NOT TO EXCEED \$1,300,000, PLUS CLOSING AND TRANSACTION RELATED COSTS NOT TO EXCEED \$10,000; AND AUTHORIZE THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO EXECUTE ALL NECESSARY CONTRACTS AND TAKE SUCH OTHER ACTIONS AS NECESSARY FOR THE ACQUISITION

THE MOTION CARRIED WITH 16 AYES AND 1 MEMBER ABSENT.

Councilmember Ernesto Gutierrez	Aye
Mayor Steven Hernandez	Absent
Board Member Anthony Bianco	Aye
Mayor Pro Tem Gary Gardner	Aye
Director Alex Cardenas	Aye
Mayor Donna Griffith	Aye
Councilmember Elaine Holmes	Aye
Mayor Linda Evans	Aye
Director Russ Martin	Aye
Councilmember Evan Trubee	Aye
Councilmember Ron deHarte	Aye
Mayor Richard Kite	Aye
Councilmember Glenn Miller	Aye
Councilmember Kathleen Fitzpatrick	Aye
Councilmember Jan Harnik	Aye
Supervisor V. Manuel Perez	Aye
Supervisor Yxstian Gutierrez	Aye

C. Memorandum of Understanding with The Living Desert – Kathleen Brundige

Director of Conservation Kathleen Brundige presented the staff report, discussed the opportunities for partnerships and next steps to developing the MOU. Member discussion ensued, including discussion of educational outreach.

IT WAS MOVED BY SUPERVISOR PEREZ AND SECONDED BY SUPERVISOR GUTIERREZ TO AUTHORIZE THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO DEVELOP AND NEGOTIATE A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH THE LIVING DESERT TO PROVIDE SUPPORT FOR COOPERATIVE SURVEYING, OUTREACH, AND BEHAVIORAL CHANGE EFFORTS ON CONSERVATION LANDS AND RETURN THE AGREEMENT TO THE COMMISSION FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION

THE MOTION CARRIED WITH 16 AYES AND 1 MEMBER ABSENT.

Councilmember Ernesto Gutierrez	Aye
Mayor Steven Hernandez	Absent
Board Member Anthony Bianco	Aye
Mayor Pro Tem Gary Gardner	Aye
Director Alex Cardenas	Aye
Mayor Donna Griffith	Aye
Councilmember Elaine Holmes	Aye
Mayor Linda Evans	Aye
Director Russ Martin	Aye
Councilmember Evan Trubee	Aye
Councilmember Ron deHarte	Aye
Mayor Richard Kite	Aye
Councilmember Glenn Miller	Aye
Councilmember Kathleen Fitzpatrick	Aye
Councilmember Jan Harnik	Aye
Supervisor V. Manuel Perez	Aye
Supervisor Yxstian Gutierrez	Aye

D. Update on Proposed Chuckwalla National Monument Designation – Kathleen Brundige

This item was continued to the next meeting.

8. INFORMATION

A. Attendance Record

B. CVCC's Unaudited Investment Report through December 31, 2022

C. CVCC's Unaudited Financial Reports through December 31, 2022

D. Contracts under \$25,000

These items were placed in the agenda for members' information.

9. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

None

10. ANNOUNCEMENTS

The next meeting of the Coachella Valley Conservation Commission will be held on Thursday, April 13, 2023, at 10:30 a.m. with additional meeting logistics to be announced.

Supervisor Perez announced the upcoming fishing derby for veterans and their families, which Riverside County is hosting at Lake Cahuilla.

11. ADJOURN

Chair Evans extended appreciation to staff for last month's tour and adjourned the meeting at 11:12 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Erica Felci, Assistant Executive Director