

## **ITEM 7A**

# Coachella Valley Conservation Commission Meeting Minutes September 14, 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. in the CVAG Conference Room, Suite 104, in Palm Desert.
- 2. ROLL CALL** – Roll call was taken and it was determined that a quorum was present.

### **Members Present**

Councilmember Ernesto Gutierrez  
Mayor Steven Hernandez, Vice Chair  
Board Member Anthony Bianco  
Mayor Pro Tem Gary Gardner  
Director Alex Cardenas  
Mayor Donna Griffith  
Councilmember Elaine Holmes  
Mayor Linda Evans, Chair  
Director Russ Martin  
Councilmember Evan Trubee  
Councilmember Ron deHarte  
Mayor Pro Tem Steve Downs  
Councilmember Glenn Miller  
Councilmember Kathleen Fitzpatrick  
Councilmember Jan Harnik

### **Agency**

City of Cathedral City  
City of Coachella  
Coachella Valley Water District  
City of Desert Hot Springs  
Imperial Irrigation District  
City of Indian Wells  
City of Indio  
City of La Quinta  
Mission Springs Water District  
City of Palm Desert  
City of Palm Springs  
City of Rancho Mirage  
Riverside County – District 1  
Riverside County – District 2  
Riverside County – District 3

### **Members Not Present**

Supervisor V. Manuel Perez  
Supervisor Yxstian Gutierrez

Riverside County – District 4  
Riverside County – District 5

### **3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

CVWD Board Member Anthony Bianco led the commission in the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **4. AGENDA MODIFICATIONS (IF ANY)**

None

### **5. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA AND NON-AGENDA ITEMS**

Management Analyst Elysia Regalado read an emailed public comment from Joan Taylor, member of the Sierra Club, regarding the club's support of Agenda Item 8B.

### **6. COMMISSION CHAIR / DIRECTOR COMMENTS**

Executive Director Tom Kirk gave a brief update of damages caused by Tropical Storm Hilary, with some before and after pictures of areas of the Coachella Valley impacted by the storm.

## **7. CONSENT CALENDAR**

- A. Approve June 8,2023 CVCC Meeting Minutes**
- B. Authorize the Executive Director to execute a letter of engagement with Best, Best & Krieger to provide legal services related to the implementation of the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan on a time and materials basis not to exceed the allocated Fiscal Year 2023/24 budget for legal services**
- C. Authorize the updating of the signature cards and signatories for CVCC investments and banking**
- D. Authorize the Executive Director to execute a cultural monitoring agreement with the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians Historic Preservation Office for a not-to-exceed amount of \$28,500 to provide monitoring of sensitive cultural sites for up to one year during the construction of the Peninsular bighorn sheep fence in La Quinta**

**IT WAS MOVED BY MAYOR KELLY AND SECONDED BY MAYOR HERNANDEZ TO APPROVE THE CONSENT CALENDAR ITEMS.**

**THE MOTION CARRIED WITH 15 AYES, AND 2 MEMBERS ABSENT.**

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

## **8. DISCUSSION / ACTION**

- A. Acquisition of three parcels in the Upper Mission Creek/Big Morongo Canyon Conservation Area**

CVMC Executive Director Jim Karpiak presented the staff report on Upper Mission Creek/Big Morongo parcel acquisitions.

**IT WAS MOVED BY DIRECTOR CARDENAS AND SECONDED BY MAYOR PRO TEM GARDNER TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 2023-04 FOR ACQUISITION OF THREE PARCELS CONSISTING OF APPROXIMATELY 24.12+/- ACRES IN THE UPPER MISSION CREEK/BIG MORONGO CANYON CONSERVATION AREA AT A COST NOT TO EXCEED \$5,550; AND AUTHORIZE THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO EXECUTE ALL NECESSARY CONTRACTS AND TAKE SUCH OTHER ACTIONS AS NECESSARY FOR THE ACQUISITION**

**THE MOTION CARRIED WITH 15 AYES, AND 2 MEMBERS ABSENT.**

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

**B. Amendment to American Fence Contract and Update on Installation of the Peninsular Bighorn Sheep Fence in La Quinta**

Conservation Director Kathleen Brundige presented the staff report along with a history of the fence project.

Member discussion ensued with Ms. Brundige answering Commission members' on the additional funding as well as monitoring and maintaining the fence.

**IT WAS MOVED BY COUNCILMEMBER HARNIK AND SECONDED BY BOARD MEMBER BIANCO TO AUTHORIZE THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO EXECUTE AMENDMENT NO.1 TO THE SERVICES CONTRACT WITH AMERICAN FENCE COMPANY, INC FOR THE LA QUINTA PENINSULAR BIG HORN SHEEP FENCE PROJECT FOR AN ADDITIONAL \$751,732 RELATED TO FENCING MATERIAL AND LABOR COSTS**

**THE MOTION CARRIED WITH 15 AYES, AND 2 MEMBERS ABSENT.**

<b>Councilmember Ernesto Gutierrez</b>	<b>Aye</b>
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Mayor Steven Hernandez	Aye
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 Pro Tem Steve Downs	Aye
Councilmember Glenn Miller	Aye
Councilmember Kathleen Fitzpatrick	Aye
Councilmember Jan Harnik	Aye
Supervisor V. Manuel Perez	Absent
Supervisor Yxstian Gutierrez	Absent

### C. Senate Bill 583 and the Proposed Salton Sea Conservancy

Program Manager Emmanuel Martinez presented the staff report and noted that Senate Bill 583 of the proposed Salton Sea Conservancy has been placed in the inactive file in the Senate.

Pat Cooper, Deputy Chief of Staff for Supervisor Perez's office, addressed the committee on behalf of Supervisor Perez noting that he is respectfully asking that the commission holds the oppose until amended stance until the Salton Sea Authority board meets next week and considers their position.

A brief member discussion ensued. Commissioners agreed to maintain the current position of 'oppose until amended,' and no vote was taken.

### D. Election of CVCC Officers

Mr. Kirk opened the floor for nominations for Chair. Councilmember Fitzpatrick nominated Mayor Pro Tem Gary Gardner for Chair. No other nominations were received.

**IT WAS MOVED BY COUNCILMEMBER FITZPATRICK AND SECONDED BY COUNCILMEMBER HARNIK TO ELECT MAYOR PRO TEM GARY GARDNER AS CHAIR OF THE COACHELLA VALLEY CONSERVATION COMMISSION.**

**THE MOTION CARRIED WITH 15 AYES, AND 2 MEMBERS ABSENT.**

Councilmember Ernesto Gutierrez	Aye
Mayor Steven Hernandez	Aye
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 Pro Tem Steve Downs	Aye
Councilmember Glenn Miller	Aye
Councilmember Kathleen Fitzpatrick	Aye
Councilmember Jan Harnik	Aye
Supervisor V. Manuel Perez	Absent
Supervisor Yxstian Gutierrez	Absent

Mayor Pro Tem Gardner nominated Councilmember Holmes as Vice Chair. No other nominations were received.

**IT WAS MOVED BY MAYOR PRO TEM GARDNER AND SECONDED BY COUNCILMEMBER FITZPATRICK TO ELECT COUNCILMEMBER ELAINE HOLMES AS VICE CHAIR OF THE COACHELLA VALLEY CONSERVATION COMMITTEE**

**THE MOTION CARRIED WITH 15 AYES, AND 2 MEMBERS ABSENT.**

Councilmember Ernesto Gutierrez	Aye
Mayor Steven Hernandez	Aye
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 Pro Tem Steve Downs	Aye
Councilmember Glenn Miller	Aye
Councilmember Kathleen Fitzpatrick	Aye
Councilmember Jan Harnik	Aye
Supervisor V. Manuel Perez	Absent
Supervisor Yxstian Gutierrez	Absent

Newly-elected Chair Gardner led the remainder of the meeting.

**9. INFORMATION**

- A. Attendance Record**
- B. Contracts under \$25,000**
- C. Tipping fees to support the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan**
- D. CVCC's Unaudited Investment Report through June 30, 2023**

**E. CVCC's Unaudited Financial Reports through June 30, 2023**

**F. Letter from CVAG Chairman Scott Matas**

**10. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS**

Resident Jim Sullivan expressed concerns over the Local Development Mitigation Fee and provided them with a packet detailing his argument for a new nexus fee.

**11. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The next meeting of the **Coachella Valley Conservation Commission** will be held on Thursday, November 9, 2023, at 10:30 a.m. at the Coachella Valley Association of Governments' conference room, 73-710 Fred Waring Drive, Suite 104, Palm Desert, 92260.

**12. ADJOURN**

Chair Garner adjourned the meeting at 11:09 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Elysia Regalado*  
*Management Analyst*