

ITEM 6A

Energy & Sustainability Committee Meeting Minutes September 12, 2024



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

1. **CALL TO ORDER** – The meeting was called to order by Chair Oscar Ortiz, City of Indio, at 12 p.m. at the CVAG Conference Room, 73-710 Fred Waring Drive, Suite 104, in the City of Palm Desert. Zoom videoconferencing was available from the City of Blythe and Imperial Irrigation District's office in El Centro.
2. **ROLL CALL** – Roll call was taken and it was determined that a quorum was present.

Members Present

Mayor Joseph DeConinck
Mayor Pro Tem Nancy Ross
Director Anthony Bianco*
Councilmember Russell Betts
Director JB Hamby
Councilmember Dana Reed (*alternate*)
Councilmember Oscar Ortiz, *Chair*
Mayor Linda Evans, *Vice Chair*
Director Amber Duff
Mayor Pro Tem Harnik (*alternate*)*
Mayor Pro Tem Ron deHarte
Mayor Pro Tem Ted Weill
Supervisor V Manuel Perez
Tribal Secretary Altrena Santillanes

Agency

City of Blythe (*via Zoom*)
City of Cathedral City
Coachella Valley Water District
City of Desert Hot Springs
Imperial Irrigation District (*via Zoom*)
City of Indian Wells
City of Indio
City of La Quinta
Mission Springs Water District
City of Palm Desert (*left at Item 7D*)
City of Palm Springs
City of Rancho Mirage
Riverside County – District 4
Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians

Members/ Ex-Officios Not Present

Vice Chair Candace Patencio Anderson
Mayor Pro Tem Stephanie Virgen
Supervisor Yxstian Gutierrez

Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians
City of Coachella
Riverside County – District 5

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Ortiz led the committee in the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS

Chuck Parker, resident of Palm Desert, commented on Item 7B. Mr. Parker highlighted an August vote by the Imperial Irrigation District's (IID) board that makes reductions in water deliveries from the Colorado River to the Salton Sea, and described it as a devastating effect on the Salton Sea and the already worsening air quality.

Donald Zeigler, resident of Palm Desert, addressed the Committee regarding Items 7C and 8C and the delivery of electricity to the Coachella Valley. Mr. Zeigler advocated for an administrative body that will be assigned to design an electricity infrastructure that maximizes local resources and uses microgrid technology.

Alejandro Espinoza, Chief of Community Engagement with the Desert Healthcare District and Foundation (DHCD), joined via Zoom to provide comment on Item 7C. Mr. Espinoza reports the DHCD held a meeting with key stakeholders in May 2024 to address possible ways of mitigating the health impacts and is launching a request for proposals. He also highlighted a summit on September 20-21 in Rancho Mirage focusing on the environment.

Kerry Berman, resident of Palm Desert, commented on Item 7B and how the Salton Sea dust, diesel trucks, and fires all contribute to the region's poor air quality conditions.

Fritz Barkley, resident of La Quinta, commented on Item 7B and expressed his concerns with PM10 levels.

5. COMMITTEE MEMBER / DIRECTOR COMMENTS

IID Director JB Hamby reports IID, in partnership with the State of California and the Bureau of Reclamation, were able to materialize \$250 million dollars to be able to fund the State of California's Species Conservation Habitat Project at the Salton Sea.

Desert Hot Springs Councilmember Russell Betts announced there will be a Salton Sea summit on October 18-19 at the UCR Palm Desert campus and encourages all to register and attend.

Chair Ortiz reports he recently met with SunLine to discuss their hydrogen demand needs as they are looking to expand their facilities. Chair Ortiz also said he met with Lancaster, who has some projects in the works for hydrogen, and asked staff to add a presentation to a future agenda.

Executive Director Tom Kirk reports CVAG has been unsuccessful in setting up a tour for lithium valley as the companies are not open to public facility tours.

Mr. Kirk announced a nearly \$500 million, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) grant that South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) has secured to address climate pollution reduction.

6. CONSENT CALENDAR

A. Approve the minutes from the June 13, 2024 meeting

IT WAS MOVED BY MAYOR EVANS AND SECONDED BY MAYOR PRO TEM WEILL TO APPROVE THE CONSENT CALENDAR.

THE MOTION CARRIED WITH 14 AYES AND 2 MEMBERS ABSENT FOR THE VOTE.

Vice Chair Patencio Anderson	Absent
Mayor DeConinck	Aye
Mayor Pro Tem Ross	Aye
Mayor Pro Tem Virgen	Absent
Director Bianco	Aye

Councilmember Betts	Aye
Director Hamby	Aye
Councilmember Reed	Aye
Councilmember Ortiz	Aye
Mayor Evans	Aye
Director Duff	Aye
Mayor Pro Tem Harnik	Aye
Mayor Pro Tem deHarte	Aye
Mayor Pro Tem Weill	Aye
Supervisor Perez	Aye
Tribal Secretary Santillanes	Aye

7. DISCUSSION / ACTION

A. Imperial Irrigation District’s Coachella Valley Resiliency Initiative

IID Deputy Energy Manager Paul Rodriguez provided a PowerPoint presentation showcasing the efforts to obtain funding for rural substations in the East Valley.

Brief member discussion ensued with Mr. Rodriguez answering questions from the committee.

No action was taken as this was an informational item.

B. Update from South Coast Air Quality Management District on continued concerns related to poor air quality

Riverside County Supervisor V. Manuel Perez, an SCAQMD Board member, provided an overview of the air quality concerns the valley has been facing before introducing SCAQMD Executive Officer Wayne Nastri. Mr. Nastri who introduced his staff present at the meeting, including Deputy Executive Officer for Rule Development and Implementation, Dr. Sarah Rees. Dr. Rees then provided a PowerPoint presentation to the committee regarding PM10 levels in the Coachella Valley.

Lengthy member discussion ensued with staff from both SCAQMD and CVAG addressing questions from members.

No action was taken as this was an informational item.

C. Update on Coachella Valley Energy Commission and Ongoing Analysis of Regional Alternative Governance

In the interest of time, it was requested that a written summary of the status be sent to the Committee and a report be presented to the Executive Committee at its next meeting.

D. Election of Energy & Sustainability Committee Officers

IT WAS MOVED BY COUNCILMEMBER REED AND SECONDED BY MAYOR PRO TEM DEHARTE TO RE-ELECT COUNCILMEBER ORTIZ AS CHAIR AND MAYOR

EVANS AS VICE CHAIR OF THE ENERGY & SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE FOR THE 2024/2025 FISCAL YEAR

THE MOTION CARRIED WITH 12 AYES AND 4 MEMBERS ABSENT FOR THE VOTE.

Vice Chair Patencio Anderson	Absent
Mayor DeConinck	Aye
Mayor Pro Tem Ross	Aye
Mayor Pro Tem Virgen	Absent
Director Bianco	Absent
Councilmember Betts	Aye
Director Hamby	Aye
Councilmember Reed	Aye
Councilmember Ortiz	Aye
Mayor Evans	Aye
Director Duff	Aye
Mayor Pro Tem Harnik	Absent
Mayor Pro Tem deHarte	Aye
Mayor Pro Tem Weill	Aye
Supervisor Perez	Aye
Tribal Secretary Santillanes	Aye

8. INFORMATION – The following items were provided in the agenda for information only:

- A. Attendance Record**
- B. Virtual participation in CVAG’s meetings**
- C. Update on the Climate Pollution Reduction Grant Application and the Region’s Comprehensive Climate Action Report**
- D. Used Oil Recycling Annual Report**
- E. Potential tour of Lithium Valley**

9. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

None

10. ANNOUNCEMENTS

The next meeting of the **Energy & Sustainability Committee** will be held on Thursday, November 14, 2024, at noon at the CVAG conference room, 73-710 Fred Waring Drive, Suite 104, Palm Desert, 92260.

The next meeting of the **Executive Committee** will be held on Monday, September 30, 2024, at 4:30 p.m. at the CVAG conference room, 73-710 Fred Waring Drive, Suite 104, Palm Desert, 92260.

11. ADJOURN – Chair Ortiz adjourned the meeting at 1:36 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Elysia Regalado, Management Analyst