



CITY OF BEVERLY HILLS

Room 280A
455 North Rexford Drive
Beverly Hills, CA 90210

In-Person / Telephonic / Video Conference Meeting

PUBLIC WORKS COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING

MINUTES

June 8, 2023
8:00 AM

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

Date/Time: June 8, 2023 / 8:00 AM

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present: Commissioners Nehoray, Millan, Greer, Vice Chair Alpert, Chair Nystrom

Commissioners Absent: None

Staff Present: Vince Damasse, Josette Descalzo, Samer Elayyan, Shana Epstein, Michael Hensley, Ilene Knebel, Tristan Malabanan, Robert Welch

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE AUDIENCE

Members of the public may address the Commission regarding any items on the Agenda that are within the subject matter jurisdiction of the Commission. By State law, the Commission may not discuss or vote on items not on the agenda.

Public Speaker: None.

Public Comment: None.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion: MOVED by Chair Nystrom, SECONDED by Commissioner Millan to amend the Agenda by moving TAB 4 earlier in the meeting (4/1).

AYES: Commissioners Millan, Greer, Vice Chair Alpert, Chair Nystrom
NOES: Commissioner Nehoray

CARRIED

CONSENT CALENDAR

1. Consideration of Minutes

Consideration of Minutes of the Public Works Commission regular meeting of May 11, 2023.

Motion: MOVED by Commissioner Greer, SECONDED by Commissioner Millan to approve the Minutes as presented (5/0).

AYES: Commissioners Nehoray, Millan, Greer, Vice Chair Alpert, Chair Nystrom

NOES: None.

CARRIED

REPORTS FROM PRIORITY AGENCIES

Operations Reports from City Departments, Consultants and Outside Agencies

Metropolitan Water District Director Dr. Barry Pressman provided an update on the current water supply and demand and storage conditions as of May 18, 2023. He reported that the California Department of Water Resources increased the State Water Project Table A (basic amount of water that the multiple contractors on the state water project are entitled to) allocation to 100%. This has not been done in many years and provides availability of over 2.5-million-acre feet of water. The Colorado River has just under 1-million-acre feet of water available. Supply will be exceeding demand by nearly 2 million-acre-feet of water. Reservoirs are being filled and water is being delivered to member agencies who previously deferred delivery. Surplus will be maintained at Oroville Lake, San Luis Reservoir and Lake Mead. He also discussed the hydrological conditions, including snowpack and runoff, and the anticipated 5.2-million-acre feet of water in storage by the end of the water year.

The Commission asked about the long-term forecast regarding water and agriculture, and the safety and supply of our water. The Commission also asked about how other cities are saving water and the current water situation in Phoenix, Arizona.

CONTINUED BUSINESS

2. Proposed Ordinance Amending the Beverly Hills Municipal Code to Regulate Polystyrene Food ware and Plastic Waste

Environmental Compliance and Sustainability Programs Manager Josette Descalzo presented an update and clarified the specifics of single use beverage containers in the ordinance. He reviewed other cities with plastic beverage regulations. He also relayed that there is clarification needed in the wording of section 5-12-4a, information about single use plastic items.

Public Speakers: Public comment was heard from Todd Johnson, Shawn Saeedian, Jr Dzubka, and Morris Poulder

The Commission noted they do not support a single-use bottle ban. It was suggested to amend language and/or exempt the proposed ordinance to allow pre-packed items to be sold in the city. They also conveyed it is important to support recycling, but it cannot be an unfunded mandate. Changes should be implemented in phases this item should be re-agendized after

two years for review. It was also suggested to create an Ad Hoc including local small business leader to participate.

The commission took a break at 9:45 AM

The commission returned from break at 9:52 AM

3. Proposed Agenda Items for July through December 2023 Meetings

Deputy Director of Public Works/Operations Michel Hensley presented the proposed Commission Calendar for agenda items from July through December 2023.

The Commissioners suggested the following topics:

- Hardening water distribution system in the event of a wildfire
- Disseminating information on irrigation
- Contingency plan for wildfires
- Water/Wastewater Rates
- Allow Fire Department to use water in pools (to fight fires)
- Ideas for more efficiency for trash collection in alleys
- Comprehensive plan of how City is going to conserve water

NEW BUSINESS

4. Monthly Educational Speaker Series – After the Fire USA (item was taken out of order – after REPORTS FROM PRIORITY AGENCIES)

Environmental Compliance and Sustainability Program Manager Josette introduced Jennifer Gray Thompson, Founder and CEO of After the Fire USA, who provided a detailed description of the organization and advocacy in relation to wild and mega fires. She also commented about a community-based approach to resiliency.

The Commission inquired about how to maintain awareness about fires and keep the community engaged and educated, how her group gets funding, insurance concerns and various early warning/notification systems.

PROJECT UPDATES & STATUS ITEMS

5. La Brea Subarea Update

Water Resources and Operations Manager Vince Damasse provided a brief update from a meeting with the Department of Drinking Water with regards to sampling, updating reports and their upcoming site visit.

The Commission asked about the location of well sites in the La Brea Sub Area and what area would be more favorable. There were also suggestions of looking into leasing property for a water well, as an alternative, and also presenting a schedule of when the sampling, site visit, and return of samples will take place.

6. Water Efficiency Update

The Commission asked about monitoring outdoor sprinkler use. Utilities General Manager Robert Welch relayed information about various ways the public can report this issue. If a “water waster” is observed, call Public Works Customer Service at 310.285.2467, report on our website or enter the concern at AskPW@beverlyhills.org. Our Environmental Inspectors will go to locations and enforce our regulations. The Commission also asked about smart sprinklers and outdoor car washing, and if we had any ordinances regarding them. It was

stressed education is the key to help curb these issues. There was a brief discussion about Smart Water Meters.

The Commission also inquired about the replacement of the former Water Conservation Administrator position.

7. Capital Projects Update

Engineering Services Manager Samer Elayyan presented updates on Capital Improvement Projects including the Coldwater Cañon Water Main Replacement Project and the Reservoir Management System Project. After inquiries from the Commission, information was conveyed that the Robertson Boulevard Sidewalk Project continues, and the Burton Way Median Planting and the Water Treatment Plant Upgrade Project are both nearing completion.

8. Specific Information and Department Updates

Public Works Director Shana Epstein responded to Commission questions and concerns regarding the Financial Report. The Commission also commented about continuing to educate the public about an upcoming increase in water rates.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE COMMISSION

9. Chair's Report

The Commission provided the details of the most recent Liaison Meeting and the discussion about water and wastewater rates. The goal is to present a cost that reflects the actual service provided especially with respect to multi-family versus single family residences.

Director of Public Works Shana Epstein reported on the City Council's comments after the Liaison Meeting. The City Council Liaison chose the CIP Proposal #1, which includes forebay at Cabrillo Reservoir and an enhanced pump station. The Commission also encouraged staff to continue to look for additional water storage solutions through groundwater. We may have an upcoming grant opportunity, so potable water rates may not increase until January 2025 beyond the water reliability charge.

The Commission commented about two-meter homes and their water usage, the justification of going from a flat rate to a dual rate based on environmental considerations and their disagreement with the City Council's choice of CIP Proposal #1.

The Commission bid farewell to Commissioner Joshua Greer, who completed his six years on the Public Works Commission. Commissioner Greer offered comments including encouraging residents to participate in Team Beverly Hills to learn and engage with the City of Beverly Hills.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM STAFF

10. Director's Report

Director of Public Works Shana Epstein also thanked Commissioner Greer for his service. The upcoming events were reviewed, and the Commission was informed about a meeting at the Chamber of Commerce today regarding the plastics ordinance.

ADJOURNMENT

Date/Time: June 8, 2023 / 10:58 AM

PASSED AND APPROVED THIS 13TH DAY of JULY, 2023



Wendy Nystrom, Chair

Link to June Public Works Commission Video:

https://beverlyhills.granicus.com/player/clip/9231?view_id=58&redirect=true&h=24cd745eae4ebc440296716a217c102d

Link to June Public Works Commission Meeting Transcript:

https://beverlyhills.granicus.com/TranscriptViewer.php?view_id=58&clip_id=9231