

MINUTES



SPECIAL MEETING OF THE POLICY AND PROGRAMS SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, September 28, 2010, 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 PM
El Cerrito City Hall – Hillside Conference Room (2nd Floor)
10890 San Pablo Avenue

Rome called the meeting to order at 7:10 PM.

Roll Call

Present: Rome, Miner, Corwin, Spitalnik, Goudy,

Also Present: Maria Sanders (Environmental Services Analyst and Staff Liaison), Melanie Mintz (Environmental Services Division Manager)

- 1. Comments from the public on non-Agenda Items** – Mike Vukolich expressed concern that the City was working on climate issues, saying that climate change is not happening and is a hoax. Sarah Stone and Ron Nyren introduced themselves and thanked the Committee for working on this issue.
- 2. Subcommittee chair and vice chair nominations and elections** – Interim Chair Rome accepted nominations for Chair and Vice-Chair of the Policy and Programs Subcommittee. Spitalnik moved to elect Rome as the Chair and Miner as the Vice-Chair. Motion passed unanimously.
- 3. El Cerrito's Carbon Footprint & the Climate Action Plan** – Sanders gave a presentation on the details of the 2005 Baseline Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory and its relationship to the State recommended reduction goal of 15% below 2005 emissions by 2020. A public member asked if the City was interested in adopting a more aggressive reduction goal and what types of policies were being considered. Sanders said that the State recommended goal was being used only for planning purposes and Council would be considering adopting an official El Cerrito Goal early next year. Sanders also responded that the City would be holding community workshops in October and November to discuss strategies to reduce emissions. These strategies would fall under the categories of transportation and land use, energy use, and waste reduction.
- 4. Take Out Containers and Plastic Bags** – Rome gave an update on the effort to pass a state-wide single-use plastic bag ban in order to reduce the type of litter that pollutes waterways and makes it to the ocean. The state-wide ban was not successful. Now, the effort to ban plastic bags has reverted back to the local level, with Californians Against Waste circulating a model local government ordinance. Mintz indicated that the EQC was a good forum to begin discussion on ways to deal with single use plastic bags and Styrofoam take-out containers, and that the EQC should take its time to consider the implications of doing this at the local level. She mentioned that California Green Communities developed a Master EIR for Plastic Bag Bans and found that the bans, if not implemented right, could have unintended environmental consequences (such as increased GHG emissions if people then switched to paper bags). Members and the public discussed various mechanisms to decrease the impact of single use plastic bags and take out containers – such as increased education, monetary incentives, and surcharges. Miner, Rome, and Corwin volunteered to form an ad hoc subcommittee to

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investigate how other cities have dealt with education and technical assistance components of these types of bans.

5. **Greening City Events and Event Spaces** – Members post-posed the discussion of this item due to time constraints.
6. **Staff and other updates; Suggestions for future agenda** items – No updates or announcements. Future agenda items:
 - Greening City Events and Event Spaces
7. **Adjournment** – Rome closed the meeting at 9:06 PM

Any writings or documents provided to a majority of the Environmental Quality Committee regarding any item on this agenda will be made available for public inspection at the El Cerrito Recycling Center Offices at 7501 Schmidt Ln., El Cerrito, Monday - Thursday from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. & 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.