

City of Capitola

Commission on the Environment Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, September 20, 2023– 6:00 PM



Capitola City Hall, Community Room
420 Capitola Avenue, Capitola, CA 95010

Chair: Michelle Beritzhoff-Law
Vice Chair: Jason Shepardson
Council Member: Mayor Margaux Keiser
Commissioners: Anthony Lacenere, Peter Wilk

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Commissioners Present: Michelle Beritzhoff-Law, Jason Shepardson, Peter Wilk
Mayor Keiser and Anthony Lacenere were absent from the meeting.
City Staff Present: Erika Senyk, Jessica Kahn

Chair Beritzhoff-Law called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

2. Additions and Deletions to the Agenda

No additions or deletions to the agenda.

3. Oral and Written Communications

- Goran Klepic, Santa Cruz County resident, spoke about the transient population at Jade Street Park being a potential sanitation issue.
- Commissioner Wilk received communications from Vice Mayor Brown and Council Member Brooks that 100 trees were distributed to residents during the 2017 Arbor Day Tree Giveaway event, however, the first day of the event would have benefited from improved coordination.

4. Consider the minutes from the August 16, 2023, Commission on the Environment Meeting

Motion to approve the minutes: Vice Chair Shepardson
Seconded: Commissioner Wilk
Motion passed 3-0-2 (Mayor Keiser and Commissioner Lacenere Absent)

5. General Business

A. Green Business Network Presentation

Recommended Action: Receive a 15-minute presentation from Green Business Network representatives regarding the City's current and potential future involvement in the program.

Green Business Network (GBN) representatives, Claudia Villalta-Mejia and Jakki Castorena-Davila, gave a presentation regarding the City's current involvement in the GBN program and additional collaboration opportunities, including business recruitment, partner connection, regional meeting attendance, City Council recognition, and other partnership opportunities.

The Commission discussed the benefits of the Green Business Network and options for continuing the City's program involvement.

Motion that the Commission sees value in the Green Business Network (GBN) for the resources and rebates the program provides, the data metrics that the program collects, and how the GBN can support the City's Climate Action Plan goals. The Commission recommends that the City promotes the GBN on social media channels and the City's website to increase awareness of the program to Capitola businesses.

Motion: Chair Beritzhoff-Law

Seconded: Vice Chair Shepardson

Motion passed 3-0-2 (Mayor Keiser and Commissioner Lacenere Absent)

B. Climate Action Plan goals for Residential and Non-Residential Energy

Recommended Action: Discuss potential actions and develop recommendations that support Climate Action Plan goals for the Residential and Non-Residential Energy sector and associated measures.

Environmental Projects Manager, Erika Senyk, presented the staff report.

The Commission discussed each measure of the Residential and Non-Residential Energy sector:

ENRG – 1 Solar Energy: Commission recommends prioritizing assessing solar energy as a way to power EV infrastructure within the City, given the limitations of Pacific Gas and Electric infrastructure for residential and non-residential areas in Capitola. Commission also recommends prioritizing identifying locations for solar farms within the City, which can help to inform permitting and municipal planning processes.

ENRG – 2 Energy Upgrade California and Residential Energy Efficiency: Commission recommends additionally prioritizing researching energy saving materials and avenues through which the City can provide those materials to residents (e.g., energy-efficient light bulb giveaway event). The Commission agreed to discuss at a later meeting future energy needs related to climate planning and how the City will respond to natural disasters (e.g., energy efficient backup generators).

ENRG – 3 Residential Weatherization: The Commission did not have comments on this measure at this time.

ENRG – 4 Renewable Energy Sources and Community Choice Aggregation: The Commission did not have comments on this measure at this time.

ENRG – 5 Non-Residential Energy Efficiency: The Commission did not have comments on this measure at this time.

ENRG – 6 Right Lights Energy Efficiency Program: The Commission recommends that the City research whether the Right Lights Energy Efficiency Program is still current and that the new Climate Action Plan include an updated scope of relevant programs.

ENRG – 7 Green Business Certification Program: The Commission agreed to move a discussion of the idea of promoting an individual environmental certification as part of the new Climate Action Plan to the November Commission on the Environment regular meeting.

ENRG – 8: Municipal Energy Use: The Commission did not have comments on this measure at this time.

The Commission plans to bring additional comments regarding the Residential and Non-Residential Energy sector to the November 15th, 2023 regular COE meeting.

C. Commission on the Environment Youth Member Application

Recommended Action: Review the application and recommend that the City Council appoint a youth member to the Commission on the Environment.

The Commission reviewed and discussed the application for the Commission on the Environment youth member.

Motion to recommend that City Council appoint Tucker Graessle as the youth member for the Commission on the Environment.

Motion: Chair Beritzhoff-Law

Seconded: Vice Chair Shepardson

Motion passed 3-0-2 (Mayor Keiser and Commissioner Lacenere Absent)

6. Items for Future Agenda

The Commission requested that the following items be agendaized for a future meeting:

- **October 18, 2023 Regular Meeting:** Discuss potential projects that support Climate Action Plan goals for the Water and Wastewater, Solid Waste, Parks, Open Space, and Agriculture, and Action and Implementation sectors and the associated measures.
- **November 15, 2023 Regular Meeting:** Review Climate Action Plan potential projects and recommendations to bring to City Council. Discuss promoting an individual environmental certification (e.g., Green Business Network) as part of the new Climate Action Plan.
- **December 20, 2023 Regular Meeting:** Approve projects and recommendations to bring to City Council at the Mid-Year Budget Report meeting in January 2024.
- **Green Building Funds:** Discuss Green Building funds and potential recommended uses of the funds in support of the City's Climate Action Plan goals.

7. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:05 pm to the next Regular Meeting of the Commission on the Environment on October 18, 2023.