

## **ITEM 7A**

### **Coachella Valley Conservation Commission Meeting Minutes April 10, 2025**



*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 Gary Gardner, City of Desert Hot Springs Mayor Pro Tem, at 11:00 a.m. in the CVAG Conference Room, Suite 104, in Palm Desert. Zoom videoconferencing was available from Riverside County Administrative Building in Riverside, CA.
- 2. ROLL CALL** – Roll call was taken and it was determined that a quorum was present.

#### **Members Present**

Councilmember Ernesto Gutierrez\*  
Mayor Steven Hernandez  
Mayor Pro Tem Gary Gardner, *Chair*  
Director Alex Cardenas\*  
Mayor Pro Tem Dana Reed  
Councilmember Oscar Ortiz  
Mayor Linda Evans  
Director Amber Duff  
Mayor Pro Tem Evan Trubee  
Mayor Ron deHarte  
Councilmember Michael O'Keefe  
Councilmember Stephanie Virgen\*  
Councilmember Kathleen Fitzpatrick  
Mayor Jan Harnik  
Supervisor V. Manuel Perez

#### **Agency**

City of Cathedral City  
City of Coachella  
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  
Riverside County – District 4

#### **Members Not Present**

Director Anthony Bianco  
Supervisor Yxstian Gutierrez

Coachella Valley Water District  
Riverside County – District 5

*\*arrived at Item 6*

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

Chair Gardner led the Commission in the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

None.

### **5. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS**

None.

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

Chair Gardner and Executive Director Tom Kirk announced that CVCC was awarded a CalRecycle grant in the amount of \$500,000 to focus on cleaning up and trash removal on conservation land.

Mr. Kirk announced that Proposition 4 was passed in November's ballot and includes wildfire prevention funding. CVAG will be advocating for funds from that proposition to backfill the funds that the Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy had previously been set to receive but then retracted due to State budget issue.

## **7. CONSENT CALENDAR**

- A. Approve the minutes of the February 13, 2025, meeting**
- B. Receive and file a 2.03 percent inflationary adjustment to the Local Development Mitigation Fee for Fiscal Year 2025-26, to take effect July 1, 2025**
- C. Receive and file the Local Development Mitigation Fee Annual and Five-Year Report for Fiscal Year 2023-24 in fulfillment of the reporting requirements of the Mitigation Fee Act**
- D. Appoint Doug Evans of Cathedral City and Ray Schneider of Highland to at-large positions on the Trails Management Subcommittee, and appoint Scott Collins of Palm Springs as an alternate member**

**IT WAS MOVED BY MAYOR EVANS AND SECONDED BY DIRECTOR DUFF 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>Absent</b>
<b>Mayor Pro Tem Gary Gardner</b>	<b>Aye</b>
<b>Director Alex Cardenas</b>	<b>Aye</b>
<b>Mayor Pro Tem Dana Reed</b>	<b>Aye</b>
<b>Councilmember Oscar Ortiz</b>	<b>Aye</b>
<b>Mayor Linda Evans</b>	<b>Aye</b>
<b>Director Amber Duff</b>	<b>Aye</b>
<b>Mayor Pro Tem Evan Trubee</b>	<b>Aye</b>
<b>Mayor Ron deHarte</b>	<b>Aye</b>
<b>Councilmember Michael O'Keefe</b>	<b>Aye</b>
<b>Councilmember Stephanie Virgen</b>	<b>Aye</b>
<b>Councilmember Kathleen Fitzpatrick</b>	<b>Aye</b>
<b>Mayor Jan Harnik</b>	<b>Aye</b>
<b>Supervisor V. Manuel Perez</b>	<b>Aye</b>
<b>Supervisor Yxstian Gutierrez</b>	<b>Absent</b>

## **7.1 ITEMS HELD OVER FROM CONSENT CALENDAR**

None

## **8. DISCUSSION / ACTION**

### **A. 2024 Annual Report**

Program Manager Peter Satin presented the staff report.

Brief member discussion ensued throughout the presentation with Mr. Satin answering questions from the Commission as he presented the PowerPoint presentation.

**IT WAS MOVED BY MAYOR EVANS AND SECONDED BY COUNCILMEMBER FITZPATRICK TO REVIEW AND ACCEPT THE 2024 ANNUAL REPORT ON THE COACHELLA VALLEY MULTIPLE SPECIES HABITAT CONSERVATION PLAN  
THE MOTION CARRIED WITH 15 AYES AND 2 MEMBERS ABSENT.**

Councilmember Ernesto Gutierrez	Aye
Mayor Steven Hernandez	Aye
Board Member Anthony Bianco	Absent
Mayor Pro Tem Gary Gardner	Aye
Director Alex Cardenas	Aye
Mayor Pro Tem Dana Reed	Aye
Councilmember Oscar Ortiz	Aye
Mayor Linda Evans	Aye
Director Amber Duff	Aye
Mayor Pro Tem Evan Trubee	Aye
Mayor Ron deHarte	Aye
Councilmember Michael O'Keefe	Aye
Councilmember Stephanie Virgen	Aye
Councilmember Kathleen Fitzpatrick	Aye
Mayor Jan Harnik	Aye
Supervisor V. Manuel Perez	Aye
Supervisor Yxstian Gutierrez	Absent

### **B. Acquisition of two parcels in the Desert Tortoise and Linkage Conservation Area**

Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy Associate Director Diana Rosas presented the staff report.

**IT WAS MOVED BY MAYOR EVANS AND SECONDED BY COUNCILMEMBER ORTIZ TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 2025-03 FOR ACQUISITION OF TWO PARCELS CONSISTING OF APPROXIMATELY +/-60.0 ACRES IN THE DESERT TORTOISE AND LINKAGE CONSERVATION AREA AT A COST NOT TO EXCEED \$84,500, PLUS CLOSING AND TRANSACTION RELATED COSTS NOT TO EXCEED \$3,000; 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>Absent</b>
<b>Mayor Pro Tem Gary Gardner</b>	<b>Aye</b>
<b>Director Alex Cardenas</b>	<b>Aye</b>
<b>Mayor Pro Tem Dana Reed</b>	<b>Aye</b>
<b>Councilmember Oscar Ortiz</b>	<b>Aye</b>
<b>Mayor Linda Evans</b>	<b>Aye</b>
<b>Director Amber Duff</b>	<b>Aye</b>
<b>Mayor Pro Tem Evan Trubee</b>	<b>Aye</b>
<b>Mayor Ron deHarte</b>	<b>Aye</b>
<b>Councilmember Michael O'Keefe</b>	<b>Aye</b>
<b>Councilmember Stephanie Virgen</b>	<b>Aye</b>
<b>Councilmember Kathleen Fitzpatrick</b>	<b>Aye</b>
<b>Mayor Jan Harnik</b>	<b>Aye</b>
<b>Supervisor V. Manuel Perez</b>	<b>Aye</b>
<b>Supervisor Yxstian Gutierrez</b>	<b>Absent</b>

**C. Development of the CVCC's Conservation Ranger Program**

Conservation Ranger Coordinator Will Steichen presented the staff report and outlined the development of the ranger program.

Member discussion ensued with Commissioners asking questions regarding requirements for future rangers and other program details.

No action was taken as this was an information only item.

**9. INFORMATION**

- A. Attendance Record**
- B. Update on Reinstatement of Tipping Fees**
- C. CVCC's Unaudited Financial Reports through December 31, 2024**
- D. CVCC's Quarterly Investment Report through December 31, 2024**
- E. Conflict of Interest Guidance**

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

None

**11. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The next **Coachella Valley Conservation Commission** meeting will be held on Thursday, May 8, 2025, 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 Gardner adjourned the meeting at 11:58 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Elysia Regalado*  
*Management Analyst*