

ITEM 6A

Energy & Sustainability Committee Meeting Minutes September 11, 2025



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 12:01 p.m. at the Coachella Valley Water District Steve Robbins Administration Building Training Room, 75515 East Hovely Lane, 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 Nancy Ross
Councilmember Stephanie Virgen*
Councilmember Dirk Voss
Director JB Hamby
Mayor Pro Tem Dana Reed
Councilmember Oscar Ortiz, *Chair*
Mayor Linda Evans, *Vice Chair*
Director Amber Duff
Councilmember Gina Nestande
Mayor Ron deHarte
Mayor Pro Tem Lynn Mallotto
Supervisor V. Manuel Perez**
Tribal Chair Joseph Mirelez

Agency

City of Blythe (*via Zoom*)
City of Cathedral City
City of Coachella
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
City of Palm Springs
City of Rancho Mirage
Riverside County – District 4
Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians

Members/ Ex-Officios Not Present

Director Anthony Bianco
Supervisor Yxstian Gutierrez

Coachella Valley Water District
Riverside County – District 5

* *Arrived at 5A*

** *Arrived at 7A*

*** *Left after 7B*

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Ortiz requested a moment of silence to honor those who lost their lives in the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks. Following the moment of silence, Mayor Pro Tem Dana Reed lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS

None

5. COMMITTEE MEMBER / DIRECTOR COMMENTS

Program Manager Jacob Alvarez provided an overview of the meeting room logistics and expressed appreciation to Coachella Valley Water District for their hospitality and for accommodating CVAG with a meeting space.

A. Update on regional efforts to address air quality

Assistant Director of Energy & External Affairs Emmanuel Martinez provided an update on ongoing efforts to improve air quality and coordinate with South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD). It was announced that the Coachella Valley dust summit is scheduled for Thursday, November 6, with additional details to follow at a later date. Brief member discussion ensued.

6. CONSENT CALENDAR

A. Approve the minutes from the May 8, 2025, meeting

B. Authorize the Executive Director to take the necessary to accept \$40,000 from the Colmac Air Quality Enhancement Fund Grant Program for the region's Landscape Certification Program, including executing the required agreement with the County of Riverside

IT WAS MOVED BY MAYOR EVANS AND SECONDED BY TRIBAL CHAIR MIRELEZ TO APPROVE THE CONSENT CALENDAR.

THE MOTION CARRIED WITH 13 AYES AND 2 MEMBERS ABSENT FOR THE VOTE.

Mayor DeConinck	Aye
Mayor Ross	Aye
Councilmember Virgen	Aye
Director Bianco	Absent
Councilmember Voss	Aye
Director Hamby	Aye
Mayor Pro Tem Reed	Aye
Councilmember Ortiz	Aye
Mayor Evans	Aye
Director Duff	Aye
Councilmember Nestande	Aye
Mayor deHarte	Aye
Mayor Pro Tem Mallotto	Aye
Supervisor Perez	Absent
Tribal Chairman Mirelez	Aye

6.1 ITEMS HELD OVER FROM THE CONSENT CALENDAR

None

7. DISCUSSION / ACTION

A. Presentation: First Public Hydrogen Authority Municipal Hydrogen Utility

Alexus Merino, Managing Director of the First Public Hydrogen Authority, joined the committee meeting via Zoom and provided a PowerPoint presentation regarding the program.

Member discussion ensued with Ms. Merino responding to questions regarding hydrogen pricing, market trends, delivery logistics, and supply considerations.

No action was taken as this was presented for informational purposes only.

B. Rollout of the Shade Trees for Southern California Deserts Program

Kelli Legakes, tree planting program consultant, delivered a presentation on the shade tree grant awarded to the region, highlighting the goal of planting 6,000 trees across Imperial County and Eastern Riverside Counties by 2028.

Member discussion ensued with Ms. Legakes answering questions regarding the grant details and criteria for tree species selection. Staff indicated they would follow up on additional guidance for trees planting.

No action was taken as this was presented for informational purposes only.

C. Election of Energy & Sustainability Committee Officers

Deputy Executive Director Erica Felci opened the floor for nominations for Chair.

Supervisor Perez nominated Chair Ortiz and Vice Chair Evans to remain in their respective positions.

No other nominations were received.

IT WAS MOVED BY SUPERVISOR PEREZ AND SECONDED BY TRIBAL CHAIR MIRELEZ TO ELECT COUNCILMEMBER ORTIZ AS CHAIR AND MAYOR EVANS AS VICE CHAIR OF THE ENERGY AND SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025-26.

THE MOTION CARRIED WITH 13 AYES AND 2 MEMBERS ABSENT FOR THE VOTE.

Mayor DeConinck	Absent
Mayor Ross	Aye
Councilmember Virgen	Aye
Director Bianco	Absent
Councilmember Voss	Aye
Director Hamby	Aye
Mayor Pro Tem Reed	Aye
Councilmember Ortiz	Aye
Mayor Evans	Aye
Director Duff	Aye
Councilmember Nestande	Aye
Mayor deHarte	Aye
Mayor Pro Tem Mallotto	Aye

**Supervisor Perez
Tribal Chairman Mirelez**

**Aye
Aye**

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

A. Attendance Record

B. New location of CVAG's public meetings

C. Coachella Valley Power Agency Update

D. Used Oil Recycling Annual Report

E. Inland Regional Energy Network's Business Plan and Executive Committee Update

9. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

None

10. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Supervisor Perez reminded members that the Coachella Valley dust summit will be held on Thursday, November 6, at the UCR Palm Desert Campus Auditorium. The event time is to be determined, with additional details to be provided at a later date.

The next meeting of the **Energy & Sustainability Committee** will be held on Thursday, November 13, 2025, at noon at the Coachella Valley Water District, Steve Robbins Administration Building Training Room, 75515 Hovley Lane East, Palm Desert, 92260.

The next meeting of the **Executive Committee** will be held on Monday, September 29, 2025, at 4:30 p.m. at the Coachella Valley Water District, Steve Robbins Administration Building Training Room, 75515 Hovley Lane East, Palm Desert, 92260.

11. ADJOURN – Chair Ortiz adjourned the meeting at 12:57 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Elysia Regalado, Deputy Clerk