



THE TOWN OF

LOS ALTOS HILLS

California

ENVIRONMENTAL INITIATIVES COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes (Approved at the October 1, 2020 EIC Meeting)

Date: September 3, 2020 at 6:30pm

Location: TELECONFERENCE SPECIAL NOTICE

Pursuant to Executive Order N-29-20:

1. Call to Order (roll call)

Attended: Srinu Srinivasan, Peter Evans, Steve Schmidt, Aileen Lee, April Anair, Vrinda Bhandarkar

Council Observer: George Tyson

Resident: Anand R, Les Earnest

2. Approval of Minutes

- a. Committee voted unanimously to approve Minutes of August Meeting of EIC

3. Topic: EIC agenda for 2021:

- Three topics: (1) Undergrounding; (2) GHG inventory; (3) Seminar format for relevant topics
- Steve: Time to update our Climate Action Plan? (Last done in 2015)
- Peter's ideas: (1) Resilience microgrid? (2) We are surrounded by mid-pen open space... should we engage on forestry maintenance practices?
 - i. Fire district has money (everyone's trying to take it); maybe it could be used for this? (Note Alan Epstein's op ed!)
- Action: Follow-up with Peter on Alan Epstein's op-ed

4. Topic: Air Quality (Anand)

- Air has been bad. Broke record for 17 consecutive days with Spare the Air alerts. This could be the new normal.
- Places where people could go (with air purifiers)? Supplies of masks?
- At AirNow, the closest government monitor is in Redwood City. Also have PurpleAir, crowd-sourced.
- Discussed PurpleAir.com and IQair.com maps of local air quality
- Srinu encouraged Anand to join committee
- ACTION: EIC to put up helpful information about AQI tracking links on EIC Website

5. Topic: Undergrounding

- Les Earnest: Consider DC network! Proposed 50 volt system. Would be innovative! AC is old.
 - i. Steve: Lots of issues with DC safety & cost, but supports fiber optic.

- ii. Vrinda: DC works for buildings, but not for distribution over long distances.
- iii. George: Interested in DC distribution... looks like China is making great progress in this area. But his Undergrounding effort is already on shaky ground so not excited about adding risk.
- iv. Les: He's running on DC at his home: Solar PV + batteries. His basic system is DC.
- v. Peter: Network will be operated by PG&E. Maybe a pilot project to add DC to the joint trench...?
- vi. April: Key issue is support by PG&E... they would not support a small DC network.
- vii. Peter: Include Les' message in the meeting minutes.
- George: Two projects -- two responses to ice breaker project RFP! We have funding to do initial design of town-wide project. PG&E may redesign the funding of undergrounding (matching up to \$2M per year!).
- ACTION: Srini to include Les's brief in the minutes

6. Topic: What's happening with PSPS notifications? Why did we have outages?

- George: Several explanations of the recent outages -- people pick the one that matches their world view.
- Srini: How do we educate LAH residents?
- Steve: Correct falsehoods on NextDoor.
- Srini: Will ask Jolie to include SVCE on a public education seminar.
- George & Aileen: "Tone" of Nextdoor gets really nasty... maybe there's no way to win on that system?
- Peter: Don't comment on Nextdoor by saying "I'm a member of the EIC and...". The council expects us to be advocates to them.
- Srini: We are only advisors to the council "at their pleasure". We have no power. What is our liability...?
- ACTION: Srini to follow-up with Jolie on status of EIC Seminar

7. Topic: GHG Inventory update

- City staff is looking for contractor.
- Steve: Not a big job.... 40 hours per year... need to find someone to do it long term.
- Srini: How do we make sure this gets done?
- ACTION: Srini will request copy of RFP

8. Topic: Utility Users Tax

- Vrinda: Against a general tax -- needs to be for a specific purpose
- George: Higher % vote required for specific purpose taxes
- Peter: Also against general fund, should be for a specific purpose and should sunset.
- Anand: His big takeaway from Bruce Karney's presentation was that an increased tax on natural gas wouldn't have much impact on gas use.
- Steve: But natural gas is our biggest issue for GHGs. What other options do we have? We need to take the "all of the above" approach.
- ACTION: Srini to drive discussion to resolution

6. **Topics of Interest / Open Discussion**
7. **Next EIC meeting:** October 1, 2020
8. **Adjournment**