

Agenda 5.2.23 Item 6.2 Climate Advisory Commission Public Comment

Ruth Merino <[REDACTED]>

Mon 5/1/2023 3:43 PM

To: District3 <district3@sanjoseca.gov>; District8 <district8@sanjoseca.gov>; District5 <District5@sanjoseca.gov>; District2 <District2@sanjoseca.gov>; District1 <district1@sanjoseca.gov>; The Office of Mayor Matt Mahan <mayor@sanjoseca.gov>; District4 <District4@sanjoseca.gov>; District 6 <district6@sanjoseca.gov>; District7 <District7@sanjoseca.gov>; District9 <district9@sanjoseca.gov>; District 10 <District10@sanjoseca.gov>; Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>; City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>

Cc: Webmaster Manager <webmaster.manager@sanjoseca.gov>; Romanow, Kerrie <Kerrie.Romanow@sanjoseca.gov>; Mitchell, Lori <Lori.Mitchell@sanjoseca.gov>; Benabente, Julie <Julie.Benabente@sanjoseca.gov>; Struyk, Zachary <Zachary.Struyk@sanjoseca.gov>; Linda Hutchins-Knowles <[REDACTED]>

 1 attachments (154 KB)

Climate Commission Item 6.2 5.1.23.pdf;

[External Email]

Attached is a public comment letter regarding tomorrow's City Council meeting agenda item 3.4 regarding the Climate Advisory Commission. Please let us know if you have any questions.
Thank you,

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Ruth Merino, Chair
San Jose Community Energy Advocates
[REDACTED]

Linda Hutchins-Knowles, Team Coordinator
Mothers Out Front Silicon Valley: Mobilizing for a Livable Climate

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May 1, 2023

To: Honorable Mayor and City Council

Re: 5.2.23 Agenda Item 6.2: Establish a Climate Advisory Commission: Maintain a separate CECAC

Dear Mayor Mahan, Vice Mayor Kamei, and Councilmembers Jimenez, Torres, Cohen, Ortiz, Davis, Doan, Candelas, Foley and Batra,

We appreciate the City Council establishing a Climate Advisory Commission. As the then Vice Mayor Chappie Jones and current Councilmembers David Cohen and Pam Foley stated in their memo dated June 14, 2022, which was approved by the City Council, “Climate change is the defining crisis of our time, and we stand today at a critical moment in that crisis. Generations to come will either reap the benefits of what we do in this moment, or they will endure the consequences of our inaction.” They also asked for the new Climate Advisory Commission to be merged with the existing Clean Energy Community Advisory Commission (CECAC), which helps to guide San Jose Clean Energy (SJCE).

Although the proposed Climate Advisory Commission (CAC) and the CECAC are related, as described in the April 10, 2023 memo to the City Council, we have serious reservations regarding the merging of the two commissions. The operations of San Jose Clean Energy are extremely complex and we believe that it would be extremely important to retain the CECAC and its functions that require specialized analysis and commissioner knowledge while allowing the CAC to focus on the myriad of other climate issues that our community must confront. For example, CECAC provides input on SJCE’s Integrated Resource Plan (IRP). The IRP is the long-term utility planning document that SJCE submits every two years to the California Public Utilities Commission. IRPs outline how to meet State emission targets; State Renewable Portfolio Standards; and system reliability; as well as to guide statewide procurement decisions, policy making, and transmission planning. They forecast load and energy needs, and detail how to achieve state and local climate goals by using renewable energy integration models.

Most community choice energy programs have a board of directors that meets monthly for their municipal authority, which is not the case for San Jose because it is a single city community choice energy program. Instead, the City of San Jose uses interdepartmental executive staff to review SJCE finances, policies and programs, which are approved by the City Council. **Therefore, we recommend that the CECAC be maintained in its current form and that a new Climate Advisory Commission (CAC) be established to complement, rather than replace, the CECAC.**

However, if the City Council moves forward with a merged commission, we make the following two recommendations regarding the commission’s composition.

1. **Please give a more specific description of the community representative or indicate that these are seats for community members.** Other San Jose commissions describe a community representative for their type of commission. In the introduction to the composition of the commission category chart on pages 3 and 4, the memo states that there would be seats available for community members and the chart indicates there would be 5 in this category. If this is the requirement, then **it would be good to clarify the ordinance to read “Whenever possible, at least five (5) members shall be community members who must be from different Council Districts”.** By making this clarification, the definition of a community representative is not up for interpretation by the nominating Council Appointment Advisory Commission.
2. Our understanding is that a climate advocate or other expert in the Special Eligibility category of commissioner applicants, can also be selected for one of the community representative/member seats. However, that is not clear in the ordinance. **Please clarify so that it is not up to interpretation by the nominating Council Appointment Advisory Commission. For example, please add a sentence to the ordinance Section 2.08.2120 Special Eligibility Requirements stating something to the effect of “This does not preclude commission applicants from categories C, D and E, from filling a community member seat.”**

We would also like to highlight that the memo states that the meetings of the CAC should be held at least quarterly, depending on the approved work plan. We note that the CECAC commission meetings have been held bi-monthly, and because the CAC covers additional topics, the meetings will most likely need to be held bi-monthly, which the ordinance allows. Furthermore, in addition to the work plan topics listed in the memo, the CAC will also need to schedule time to adopt the commission's annual work plan of objectives for the next fiscal year, and to prepare the annual report of Commission actions on objectives for the current fiscal year.

Please note also that although the undersigned Ruth Merino is a member of the San Jose Clean Energy Community Advisory Commission, she does not represent them in this letter.

Again, we appreciate the establishment of the Climate Advisory Commission.

Sincerely,

Ruth Merino, Chair

San Jose Community Energy Advocates, a volunteer community group

[REDACTED]

Linda Hutchins-Knowles, Team Coordinator

Mothers Out Front Silicon Valley: Mobilizing for a Livable Climate

cc Jennifer Maguire

Kerri Romanow

Lori Mitchell

Agenda 5.2.23 Item 6.2 Climate Advisory Commission: Support and Amend

Ruth Merino [REDACTED]

Tue 5/2/2023 10:45 AM

To: District3 <district3@sanjoseca.gov>; District8 <district8@sanjoseca.gov>; District5 <District5@sanjoseca.gov>; District2 <District2@sanjoseca.gov>; District1 <district1@sanjoseca.gov>; The Office of Mayor Matt Mahan <mayor@sanjoseca.gov>; District4 <District4@sanjoseca.gov>; District 6 <district6@sanjoseca.gov>; District7 <District7@sanjoseca.gov>; District9 <district9@sanjoseca.gov>; District 10 <District10@sanjoseca.gov>; Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>; City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>; Cohen, David <David.Cohen@sanjoseca.gov>
Cc: Webmaster Manager <webmaster.manager@sanjoseca.gov>; Romanow, Kerrie <Kerrie.Romanow@sanjoseca.gov>; Mitchell, Lori <Lori.Mitchell@sanjoseca.gov>; Struyk, Zachary <Zachary.Struyk@sanjoseca.gov>; Benabente, Julie <Julie.Benabente@sanjoseca.gov>; Linda Hutchins-Knowles [REDACTED] >

 1 attachments (170 KB)

5.2.23 Agenda Item 6.2 Update.pdf;

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Attached is an updated letter regarding today City Council meeting agenda item 6.2 regarding our support for the Climate Advisory Commission. Please let us know if you have any questions.

Thank you,

Ruth Merino

San Jose Community Energy Advocates
[REDACTED]

Linda Hutchins-Knowles, Team Coordinator

Mothers Out Front Silicon Valley: Mobilizing for a Livable Climate

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May 2, 2023

To: Honorable Mayor and City Council

Re: Agenda Item 6.2: Establish a Climate Advisory Commission: Support and Amend

Dear Mayor Mahan, Vice Mayor Kamei, and Councilmembers Jimenez, Torres, Cohen, Ortiz, Davis, Doan, Candelas, Foley and Batra,

In light of Councilmember David Cohen's helpful Memo of May 2, 2023, we are sending this update of our support and recommendations for the new Climate Advisory Commission. We do see the value of expanding the current Clean Energy Community Advisory Commission (CECAC) into a new Climate Advisory Commission (CAC) with a broader scope. Our concerns about combining both together center around ensuring that the members have both sufficient technical knowledge to provide input on San Jose Clean Energy's complex energy operations as well as enough time to also advise on implementing the ambitious Climate Smart plan.

We would feel reassured about a combined Commission if Council requested that **the new CAC meet at least bimonthly** so that the Commissioners have enough time to discuss the many issues in their purview.

We also request that Council specify that, at or before the first meeting of the CAC, **staff shall provide a detailed in-person orientation and training for all of the Commissioners** that includes a basic overview of SJCE policy focus, Transportation operations, and the many aspects of the Climate Smart San José plan. This would ensure that the new commissioners have the necessary background information to prepare them for the regular meetings. Although SJCE staff currently sends new energy advisory commissioners a new-commissioner packet by email, the operations training portion of the packet are simply links to the SJCE website and SJCE documents. In our opinion, a staff-led training would be much more effective in preparing new commissioners, and can demonstrate the website links, not only for the technical SJCE topics, but for understanding the Climate Smart plan as well.

As stated in our letter from yesterday, we reiterate the following additional recommendations:

1. **Please give a more specific description of the community representative or indicate that these are seats for community members.** Other San Jose commissions describe a community representative for their type of commission. In the introduction to the composition of the commission category chart on pages 3 and 4, the memo states that there would be seats available for community members and the chart indicates there would be 5 in this category. If this is the requirement, then **it would be good to clarify the ordinance to read "Whenever possible, at least five (5) members shall be community members who must be from different Council**

Districts”. By making this clarification, the definition of a community representative is not up for interpretation by the nominating Council Appointment Advisory Commission.

2. Our understanding is that a climate advocate or other expert in the Special Eligibility category of commissioner applicants, can also be selected for one of the community representative/member seats. However, that is not clear in the ordinance. **Please clarify so that it is not up to interpretation by the nominating Council Appointment Advisory Commission. For example, please add a sentence to the ordinance Section 2.08.2120 Special Eligibility Requirements stating something to the effect of “This does not preclude commission applicants from categories C, D and E, from filling a community member seat.”**

Thank you for your commitment to robust and informed community participation in SJCE and the Climate Smart plan.

Sincerely,

Ruth Merino, Chair
San Jose Community Energy Advocates, a volunteer community group

[REDACTED]

Linda Hutchins-Knowles, Team Coordinator
Mothers Out Front Silicon Valley: Mobilizing for a Livable Climate

cc Jennifer Maguire
Kerri Romanow
Lori Mitchell