



## SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE

RECORD OF ACTION FOR  
March 20, 2023

Supervisor John Gioia, Chair  
Supervisor Federal D. Glover, Vice Chair

Present: John Gioia, Chair  
Federal D. Glover, Vice Chair

Staff Present: John Kopchik, Director, Dept. of Conservation and Development; Demian Hardman-Saldana, Senior Planner, Dept. of Conservation and Development; Jody London, Sustainability Coordinator, Dept. of Conservation and Development; Jennifer Quallick, Deputy Chief of Staff, Supervisor Andersen; Elissa Robinson, District Representative, Supervisor Burgis; Lia Bristol, Deputy Chief of Staff, Supervisor Carlson; Michael Kent, Hazardous Materials Ombudsman, Contra Costa County Health Services; Dan Peddycord, Chief Climate & Health Policy Officer, Contra Costa County Health Services; Adam Scarbrough, Planner, Dept. of Conservation and Development; Brendan Havenar-Daughton, Energy Manager, Dept. of Public Works

Attendees: Sebastian Conn, Brandon Matson, Denice Dennis, Shoshana Wechsler, Jan Warren, Mike Moore, Carol Weed, Call-in User 1, Luz Gomez

### 1. Introductions

*The Committee stated that this meeting is being held as a hybrid meeting from two locations: Committee Chair John Gioia's office in Richmond and Vice Chair Glover's office in Pittsburg*

### 2. Public comment on any item under the jurisdiction of the Committee and not on this agenda (speakers may be limited to three minutes).

*Representing 350 Contra Costa, Denice Dennis requested that the County move forward with the public workshop mentioned during the February 17<sup>th</sup> Sustainability Committee meeting to allow for the opportunity to provide detailed input on the interim climate action plan*

### 3. APPROVE Record of Action from February 17, 2023, Meeting of the Sustainability Committee (Jody London, Department of Conservation and Development).

*The Record of Action from February 17 was inadvertently not attached to the agenda. This item will come back at the next meeting.*

*County Sustainability Coordinator, Jody London, spoke to 350 Contra Costa's mention of a workshop highlighting that this workshop was to address the Climate Action Plan (CAP) and General Plan concurrently. The Committee agreed and clarified that the interim CAP update should be included in this workshop. London indicated that this workshop could potentially occur in July or*

*as a special meeting.*

#### 4. RECEIVE UPDATE from MCE

*Committee Chair Gioia provided an introduction for Sebastian Conn of MCE, indicating that MCE is a public agency and community choice aggregator (CCA) which serves cities within Marin, Contra Costa, Napa, and Solano Counties. The MCE Board consists of one representative from each participating jurisdiction; in the case of Contra Costa County, Committee Chair Gioia serves as the Board member.*

*Senior Community Development Manager of MCE, Sebastian Conn provided an update for the Committee on MCE operations in the County. Conn described MCE as a non-profit public agency that enables cities and counties (37 currently) to have more control over their community's renewable energy supply. MCE's mission is to confront the climate crisis by eliminating fossil fuels, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, producing renewable energy, and creating equitable community benefits in an effort to lead California to an equitable, clean, affordable, and reliable energy economy. MCE/Contra Costa County highlights include:*

- Over 331,000 customers in the County (over 6,000 of these accounts are subscribed to the deep green option which provides 100% renewable energy).*
- Over 307,000 Metric Tons of CO2 have been reduced to date.*
- ~387 Electric Vehicle (EV) charging ports.*
- Battery Storage for 10 Pittsburg Unified School District campuses. \$715,000 in funds from MCE and \$2.8 million in energy savings.*
- Saving energy from 4-9pm through PeakFlex program started in 2022.*

*Conn expressed the importance of partnership and coordination with other jurisdictions and programs with similar goals, including the BayREN program which shares a customer base.*

*MCE has started to work to increase community energy resilience by requiring battery storage on all new solar projects, having secured contracts for more than 325 MW so far. MCE is also exploring the concept of Virtual Power Plants (VPP) which provides electricity to the grid through a network of digitally connected technologies such as rooftop solar, energy storage, and space/water heating. MCE also offers customer programs geared toward saving money on utility bills while also addressing climate change. The programs offered include rebates for energy efficiency retrofits, EVs and EV charging, electrification, energy resilience (through distributed energy resources (DER), virtual power plants, and battery storage).*

*Conn shared a slide from the California Energy Commission (CEC) which highlighted the frequency of available charging ports (public and private) in the Counties served by MCE and Contra Costa has the most with 1,238 level 2 chargers and 255 DC fast chargers. MCE offers rebates on EV charging ports which include \$3,000 per charging port (2-20 ports) and an additional \$500 for ports that have opted up to MCE'S Deep Green energy tier. Contra Costa County has partnered with MCE to install more than 370 stations.*

*Conn ended the presentation by highlighting MCE's efforts around greening the workforce. MCE offers programs for contractors that provide rebates on Heat Pump Water Heaters (HPWH). MCE also offers workforce development assistance by matching contractors with pre-qualified job seekers for 160 hours of no-cost project assistance and labor.*

*Committee Chair Gioia highlighted that he sits on the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (Air District) Board and that the Air District has updated its rules around water heaters in homes to require water heaters that emit NOx gasses to be phased out upon replacement. The committee tasked MCE with compiling a comprehensive list of the rebates, tax credits, and other assistance*

programs for the public to reference. Conn believes that MCE's Customer Programs Team is already looking into this and will keep the Committee updated as they make progress on this goal. London added that the County is looking at doing something similar on its website and Gioia followed, highlighting that the community-based organization, 350 Contra Costa will be doing a public event in May on the available incentives and is looking for sponsorship. Conn confirmed they have, in fact, committed to sponsoring this event.

Demian Hardman-Saldana commented that the County is currently working on an Existing Building All-Electric Roadmap which he hopes to have completed by the next Sustainability Committee meeting in May. Gioia indicated that the roadmap should not try to do anything different from what the Air District has done.

#### *Public Comment:*

A community member inquired as to whether there are any new projects in the pipeline for new electricity generation. Conn responded that the load serving entity, MCE, along with all utility providers, is required to submit its procurement practices to the CEC and the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) on a regular basis. MCE posts publicly its Operational Integrated Resource Plan which indicates where MCE procures its energy currently as well as where it plans to in the future. Currently MCE is approximately 95% GHG free and aiming to be 85% renewable by 2030. MCE is also exploring DER and investing in battery storage.

The person also expressed concerns about switching to MCE over PG&E. Committee Chair Gioia provided an introduction for Sebastian Conn of MCE, indicating that MCE is a public agency and community choice aggregator (CCA) which serves cities within Marin, Contra Costa, Napa, and Solano Counties. The MCE Board consists of one representative from each participating jurisdiction; in the case of Contra Costa County, Committee Chair Gioia serves as the Board member.

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5. RECEIVE UPDATE from Health Services Department on Sustainability Initiatives
6. RECEIVE REPORT from Sustainability Commission Chair, or Designee (Luz Gomez, Sustainability Commission Chair)

*The Committee heard a report from the newly appointed Sustainability Commission Chair, Luz Gomez, on the February 27 Sustainability Commission meeting.*

*The Commission heard a report on the updates to the Brown Act which have resulted in a return to in-person meetings starting March 1, 2023. One question the Commission is looking into is whether Alternates will be required to attend in person. The Commission also heard recommendations from the Single-Use Plastics Working Group, headed by Commissioner Farnsworth. The recommendations include potentially aligning an ordinance with those in the nearby cities of Richmond, Berkeley, or El*

*Cerrito. Aligning with the City of Richmond's ordinance is promising because Richmond and Contra Costa County use the same waste hauler, Republic Services. The Commission was supportive of potentially adopting a County ordinance and recommended that a proposal go to the Board of Supervisors for consideration. The Commission reviewed and adopted the 2022 CAP progress report and expressed support for the potential of the California Air Resources Board (CARB) to conduct GHG emission inventories for local governments.*

*The Committee requested clarification around what the Commission has discussed regarding the Brown Act to ensure that the rules are properly understood.*

*Public Comment:*

*A member of the public indicated that for them, the driving times are relatively similar, so they are not concerned about the meeting venue. Another member of the public expressed concern over the hybrid meeting format.*

**7. RECEIVE REPORT from Sustainability Coordinator.**

*Sustainability Coordinator Jody London covered what has been accomplished since the last Sustainability Committee meeting. The team hosted the quarterly Sustainability Exchange for local government staff collaboration. London discussed SB 511 which would require the California Air Resources Board to develop GHG emissions inventories for local governments in California and requested that Committee Chair Gioia and Vice Chair Glover engage the regional entities whose boards they sit on, specifically the Contra Costa Transportation Authority and the Bay Area Air Quality Management District to register support for this bill. The first hearing for SB 511 will be on April 19 in front of the Senate Environmental Quality Committee and London will be testifying with her experience on behalf of the Contra Costa County.*

*The Healthy Lands, Healthy People study is going to be delayed for a few months due to some assumptions that need to be updated in light of discrepancies in data. Staff hope to have this report completed and brought to the Committee in July. Staff are preparing to receive the Community Project Funding Grant for Just Transition from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and at tomorrow's Board of Supervisors meeting, staff will be presenting the semi-annual report from the Interdepartmental Climate Action Taskforce. The Public Works department continues to seek funding for its Vision Zero initiative and the Active Transportation Plan. Public Works has already received funding through a few grants which are covered in the main report.*

*The Committee inquired as to whether the support letters for SB 511 and other bills have been drafted yet as well as if the agencies mentioned have been contacted about this. London indicated that the County support letter is in and that the County has reached out to the Air District.*

*Public Comment:*

*A member of the public believes the number of staff should be reduced*

**8. The next meeting is currently scheduled for May 15, 2023.**

*Supervisors Gioia and Glover will continue with this meeting format, and they welcome public participation at every meeting.*

**9. Adjourn**

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For Additional Information Contact:

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