

**ECONOMY AND EFFICIENCY COMMISSION
MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
July 2, 2020**

ROOM 525, KENNETH HAHN HALL OF ADMINISTRATION
500 West Temple St., Los Angeles, CA 90012

Editorial Note: Agenda sections may be taken out of order at the discretion of the chair. Any reordering of sections is reflected in the presentation of these minutes.

I. CALL TO ORDER

With the presence of a quorum, Chair Munoz called the Commission meeting to order at 10:30 a.m. via Zoom.

II. APPROVAL OF COMMISSIONER'S ABSENCES

The following was the attendance for the meeting:

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT

Nancy Coleman
Becca Doten
Benjamin Everard
Jacob Haik
Michael Hastings
Larry Kaplan
Ed Munoz
Robert Philibosian
Wilma Pinder
Yolanda Rodriguez-Pena
Joanne Saliba
John Anthony Schmitz
Velveth Schmitz
Connie Sullivan
Steven Ward
Cesar Zaldivar-Motts

COMMISSIONERS REQUESTING TO BE EXCUSED

Robert Cole
Ronald K. Ikejiri
T. Warren Jackson
Jeffrey Monical
Natalie Samarjian

III. APPROVAL OF JUNE 4, 2020 MINUTES

Chair Munoz asked if there were any objections or changes to the minutes of the June 4, 2020 Commission meeting. Hearing no changes, the motion was then Moved, Seconded, and Adopted. The minutes of the June 4, 2020 Commission meeting were approved.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

V. REPORTS

A. Economic Recovery Group 1: Contracts

Executive Director Eng reported that a total of 14 ideas were submitted to the Quality and Productivity Commission, the Project Manager for the Board's motion. He stated that there had been no further meetings scheduled.

B. Economic Recovery Group 2: Website

Commissioner Schmitz reported that the Prosper LA website went live on June 30, 2020. She stated that a lot of work has been accomplished by the Executive Office's IT team in such a short amount of time. Commissioner Schmitz also reported that Commissioner Hastings and herself had made quite a few suggestions with respect to the next phase. She said the idea is to have different sector groups go onto the website and make suggestions on ways that the economy could be bolstered and programs that the County can help business owners incentivize their customers.

Commissioner Hastings reported that the task force submitted 19 ideas/recommendations to the Quality and Productivity Commission, the Project Manager for this motion, but he is not sure if the group acted on any of the recommendations. He reported that the task force was in heavy discussion about who was going to utilize the website. He reported that it would be great for the E&E Commissioners to look at the site and give feedback on what they think about the site. <https://prosperla.lacounty.gov/>.

Chair- Munoz stated that he would like the Commissioners to look at the website within the next couple of days and send any feedback to Executive Director Eng.

C. Video Arraignment Pilot

Commissioner Saliba reported that Video Arraignment Pilot Program was accelerated and went live due to Covid-19.

http://eec.lacounty.gov/Portals/EEC/Reports/202_0619VideoArraignmentReport.pdf

D. Transit Stops (Bus Benches) Design Pilot Presentation

Executive Director Eng reported that 1st District had asked the E&E Commission to look at ways to improve transit bus stops in underserved communities. He reported that Deputy Martin Reyes, 1st District Deputy, expressed to Chair Munoz and him that the current transit stop designs are inadequate in protecting riders from pollutants and sunrays, and consequently, penalizes disadvantaged communities where a majority of its residents rely on public transit as their primary form of transportation.

Executive Director Eng reported that after many emails and meetings he found that the 1st District was more interested in improving the social welfare of riders than an engineering redesign of benches. He reported that the priority became to focus on the health and safety of the riders in terms of the prolonged exposure to air quality in the hot sun as opposed to the look and feel of the benches.

Executive Director Eng reported that his research led him to a company called Green City Solutions City Bench. He stated that the company has a product called the Vertical Garden Benches which was launched in Europe and since has become very popular. He reported that the moss on the benches serves as a bio-purifier that provides shade, a cooling affect and is self-maintained. He reported that each bench cost about \$27,000 each, and after presenting this to the 1st District they were excited and hopeful about moving forward with a pilot program in either East LA or La Puente.

Executive Director Eng reported that the next step is to do more research and reach out to the Public Health Department to get more data on pollutant related illness or respiratory sickness related to the environment. He also reported that a future task force needs to check with the Public Works Department to see if this is a turnkey project or if it something the County can buy and then modify in-house.

Executive Director Eng reported that moving forward the 1st District would like the E&E Commission to be a project manager to facilitate the development, installation, and implementation of the program. He reported that due to Covid-19 and the protests in the last couple of months, the project had been placed on hold, but it is time to move forward and should resume working on this mid-July.

Executive Director Eng made a PowerPoint presentation on the product.

Commissioner Everard asked if the \$27,000 cost relative to prior designs is high or low compared to other designs the County has looked at. Executive Director Eng responded that the cost of \$27,000 is a lot higher than what they have now. He reported that there is an existing contract to maintain close to 1,000 bus benches throughout LA County. He said that he drove around the County to observe the benches and some currently have sprinklers used as a cooling system, some have metal racks that sit overhead to keep the area shaded, but the majority of them are just benches with advertising. He reported that after looking at all the different bus benches he can see why the 1st District is interested in redesigning the benches to attract more bus riders and making it safer and healthier for them.

Chair-Emeritus Philibosian stated that he is glad that the Commission has been given this task, but it seems that Metro and with all of their research should be able to do this on their own. Executive Director Eng said that he went on NextGen Metro and they currently have three research papers on bus routes <https://www.metro.net/projects/nextgen/>.

Commissioner Sullivan stated that it's a pretty design and understands that it removes pollutants from the air, but she doesn't see how it provides shade or protection from rain. She stated that those are two important considerations when sitting on a bus bench. Executive Director Eng responded that if you look at all the bus stops in Los Angeles County, currently none of them provide shade or rain protection and that is why the task force will be meeting

with Public Works and Green City Solutions to do more research to see if that is something that can be added on to their design. He also reported that they are unsure if adding those items will compromise the warranty of the benches. He reported that this is a very initial exploratory phase.

Commissioner Sullivan asked if the expenses will be covered by advertisements. Executive Director Eng reported that he was unsure because he is not aware how much it costs to advertise on benches, or how much the advertisements generate, but that there is currently a maintenance contract under Public Works.

Commissioner Hastings said he liked the idea and the concept but is surprised that anyone would like it due to it not having a place for advertising. He stated that he likes the Chair Emeritus Philibosian's ideas of asking Metro and trying to understand why they don't have a brain trust to do what the task force is doing.

Commissioner Pena asked who will maintain and monitor the benches to make sure they are cleaned and undamaged. Executive Director Eng responded that the maintenance contract is under Public Works and he was made aware that Public Works awarded a contract to an outside company to maintain all the benches. He reported that moving forward the maintenance protocol will change dramatically because of the new technology.

Commissioner Haik reported that in the City of Los Angeles, there is an agreement with the contractor and the contractor takes care of all the maintenance. He stated that any advertising does not impact the City of Los Angeles' revenue since everything is all built into the agreement and works pretty seamless. Commissioner Haik stated that there have never been any issues with maintenance and there are different ways to get creative in making a solid maintenance agreement.

Chair Munoz reported that he would like to capture the important points that Chair-Emeritus Philibosian and Commissioner Hastings brought up about looking at why Metro cannot tackle this project on their own since they have the funding and staff for this type of program.

Commissioner Haik stated that in working with a lot of neighboring cities through the Council of Government, he thinks that we would be able to develop a great pilot program with the bus benches and then migrated it to the other Board Offices.

Executive Director Eng reported that currently this is strictly a 1st District project but if the pilot program goes well the 1st District will try to make it a Countywide project.

VI. NEW BUISNESS

Chair Munoz reported that one of the things that he and the Executive Director Eng are trying to do is to find out if there are projects that the Board of Supervisors would like the Commission to work on. He asked if any Commissioner has had the opportunity to check with their respective Districts on any potential new project ideas.

Executive Director Eng stated that he is trying to spread out new projects evenly throughout each Board District. He stated that when it comes to the 1st District the Commission is looking at Bus Bench Design Project and reviewing the East LA Entrepreneurial Center which held its grand opening two months ago.

Commissioner Saliba reported that since the 1st District asked the E&E Commission to work on the Bus Bench Pilot Program, she has not called the district for further project

Commissioner Pinder reported that she has not received any formal projects from the 2nd District.

Commissioner Doten reported that there is nothing to report at this time for 3rd District.

Commissioner Sullivan reported that she has not reached out to the 4th District recently, but she did reach out to the District in January. She reported that she suggested reviewing the County's long-term disability and restarting the early return to work programs for workers comp cases. She stated that the 4th District forwarded her suggestions to the Department of Human Resources and as well as to the CEO. She stated that she hasn't heard back from anyone since then.

Commissioner Ward reported the 5th District said that they would get back to him and as of this meeting, he is still waiting for a response. Chair-Emeritus Philibosian stated that the Commission may want to look at Foster Youth Program that was suggested by Supervisor Barger in her last visit to the Commission. He stated that the E&E Commission should look at how the County is managing foster youth into adulthood. He reported that although right now may not be a good time to work on this this should be added to the list of projects. Commissioner Ward stated that when he hears back from the 5th District, he will mention this project to the Chief Deputy and report back.

Chair-Emeritus Philibosian reported that the E&E Commission did a study on Foster Youth Emancipation several years ago and it would be worthwhile for the Commissioners to look at the report. (Please see links below Report and Commission Meeting Presentation)

http://eec.lacounty.gov/Portals/EEC/Reports/178_0202EmancipationServices.pdf

<http://eec.lacounty.gov/Portals/EEC/Presentations/2002/5-02-02%20Presentation.pdf>

Commissioner Hastings asked if there is a way to look at building a large facility in the Lancaster/Palmdale area or any vacant area with tents to house the homeless from under the freeways immediately. Commissioner Ward stated that the Palmdale/Lancaster area is already filled with homeless people and he isn't sure if that is the solution.

Commissioner Coleman reported that she is concerned with targeting and moving large numbers of people to the high desert when in fact there is a lack of services. She reported that it is not appropriate when there are no services to accommodate the people that are being moved. She reported that Commissioner Ward has already stated that there are many facilities in place that the homeless don't utilize.

Chair Munoz asked the Executive Director if he could develop a scope for this project. Executive Director Eng responded that the biggest hurdle is there is already so much research out there and you can spend a lot of time going through reports and data. He stated that doing so will require a lot of time. Executive Director Eng stated that if the Commission would like to move forward and take this project on, he will do his best to accommodate and read what is currently being done but this will take time.

Commissioner Haik stated that dealing with the homeless population for the last 6 years, he feels that it is a very complicated issue. He reported that homelessness will not be solved until all 88 cities in the County speak with one voice with solutions. He reported that this is

not an easy conversation, but the Commission should start with what is already happening with the Federal Judge. He stated that he would be happy to forward some of the emails and information he has to Executive Director Eng and Admin Assistant Pittmon. He reported that there are a lot of law suits ongoing it would also be good to look at some of those to get a better understanding of the current federal negotiations that would give the Commission a better picture if we are trying to help propose new guidelines.

Chair Munoz stated that this could be a huge project and issue for the Commission. He stated that he does not want to duplicate a project or take on a project that is too big to tackle.

Commissioner Coleman stated that every year the Civil Grand Jury (CGJ) attempts to look at homelessness. She reported that given that even for a group who has the ability to hire outside consulting firms who can do it, the task is monumental given all the other agencies that exists.

Chair Munoz encouraged liaisons from each district to continue reaching out to their appointing Supervisors to check and see if there are any new projects that they would like the E&E Commission to tackle in '20-'21.

VII. PRESENTATION

There was no presentation at the July Zoom Meeting.

VIII. COMMISSIONERS' ANNOUNCEMENTS

Commissioner Pinder stated that she would like Chair Munoz to send a letter to the Chair of the Board of Supervisors praising her leadership in dealing with all Covid-19 matters. She stated that the letter should be written by the Chair of the E&E Commission on behalf of all the Commissioners. Executive Director Eng stated that there would need to be a motion to move forward with such a resolution.

Commissioner Pinder Moved with the motion, and it was Seconded, and Adopted by the Commission.

IX. STAFF ANNOUNCEMENTS

Administrative Assistant Pittmon reported that the County is moving forward with using only WebEx for future meetings instead of Zoom. She reported that another recommendation was to try and utilize Microsoft Teams as well.

Executive Director Eng reported that many departments have already began using WebEx. He stated that some departments have set up various trainings for Commissioners to learn how to use it. He also reported that within the next couple of months Admin Assistant will send out an email with instructions on how to setup the WebEx account and the Executive Office technology staff will also be available to assist anyone who is having a difficult time setting it up. He reported that the E&E Commission will transition into using WebEx because it is supported by the County for liability reasons.

Administrative Assistant Pittmon reported that once WebEx is setup it will be hosted by the Executive Office IT Division. She reported that the meeting invites will come from them directly to the Commissioners' emails.

Commissioner Kaplan asked will the Commission be meeting in person in the near future. Executive Director Eng responded that HOA is currently closed to the public.

Chair Munoz stated that until everyone on the E&E Commission is comfortable with in-person meetings, the Commission will continue to have virtual meetings.

X. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned by Chair Munoz at 12:33 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Edward Eng", written in a cursive style.

Executive Director, Edward Eng