

**Open Space and Habitat Commission Minutes  
Monday, May 6, 2024**

**Community Chambers Conference Room, 23 Russell Boulevard, 6:30 p.m.**

Commissioners Present:	Ramiro Cabanillas-Ledesma, Lindsay Correa, Sara Geonczy, Patrick Huber (Chair), Marc Vayssieres (Vice Chair)
Vacant Positions:	One Regular Member, One Alternate Member
Commissioners Absent:	Emma Torbert
Assigned Staff:	Tracie Reynolds, Manager, Open Space Program
Council Liaison:	Josh Chapman (Regular), Bapu Vaitla (Alternate)

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**1. Call to Order & Roll Call**

Commissioner Huber opened the meeting after a quorum was achieved. Commissioner Vayssieres arrived during Regular Items.

**2. Approval of Agenda**

Commissioner Cabanillas-Ledesma made a motion to approve the agenda. It was seconded by Commissioner Correa. The Commission voted 4-0-2-0 to approve the motion (Ayes – Cabanillas-Ledesma, Correa, Huber, Geonczy; Noes – None; Absent – Torbert, Vayssieres; Abstentions – None).

**3. Brief Announcements from Staff, Commissioners, and Council Liaisons**

Tracie Reynolds, staff liaison to the Commission, said that Commissioner Torbert had informed her that she would be leaving the Commission in June. That means the Commission will have three vacancies beginning in July, she said. She said staff was bringing a recommendation to fill two of the three vacant positions to the City Council on May 21, so the Commission should be fully staffed, except for the alternate position, when the Commission meets in September after the summer recess.

She also said that the purchase of a 120-acre agricultural conservation easement on property owned by the Gill family closed on March 15. And, she said, the City and UC Davis hosted the second community meeting to gather public input on draft designs for a wetland habitat restoration project on April 11 at the UC Davis landscape architecture department. She said the meeting was very well attended and the City and UC Davis received valuable input. The City's design consultant, ICF, will summarize all the public input received to date and meet with UC Davis's science advisory panel, in an effort to settle on a final design concept for the new wetlands habitat area.

**4. Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

**5. Consent Calendar**

Approval of the March 2024 meeting minutes was on the consent calendar. Commissioner Correa made a motion to approve the minutes. It was seconded by Commissioner Cabanillas-Ledesma. The Commission voted 4-0-2-0 to approve the motion (Ayes – Cabanillas-Ledesma, Correa, Huber, Geonczy; Noes – None; Absent – Torbert, Vayssieres; Abstentions – None).

**6. Regular Items**

## **Discussion Item – Consider Council Subcommittee Proposed Scope of the Open Space and Habitat Commission**

Zoe Mirabile, the City's City Clerk, said that the City Council's Subcommittee on Commissions ("Subcommittee") has been reviewing the structure, roles and responsibilities of all City advisory commissions over the past year. The goal of this effort, she said, was to structure commissions to align with the needs of the City Council and to ensure that commissions provide added value to the local decision-making process. She said the Subcommittee has spent time to review and recommend simplified functions for each commission and is now seeking feedback from commissions on the proposed revised scopes. The Subcommittee will consider the Commission's feedback, she said, and include a summary of it when staff return to the City Council on May 21 with recommendations. The intent is for every commission to have 3-4 primary functions, she said. Additional tasks may be requested by the City Council at any time, she said. Mayor Josh Chapman said the Commission restructuring was done with the General Plan update in mind. He said the Subcommittee's goal was to restructure the commissions to better reflect the different elements in the General Plan.

Commissioner Huber then asked if Commissioners had any clarifying questions. Commissioners asked for clarification on (1) how public outreach and commission collaboration would be captured in commission scopes, (2) how this discussion fit in with the bigger discussion about the General Plan, (3) how these scopes would and should be able to remain relevant over time, (4) whether adding the work required of commissions for the General Plan update was going to be manageable, and (5) what the thinking was behind the draft revised scope for the Commission.

Commissioner Huber then took public comment. One member of the public, who declined to identify himself, asked why the draft revised scope did not include environmental education and whether there was any scope overlap with the commission on environmental justice. Commissioner Huber then closed public comment and the Commission discussed this item. The Commission informally recommended that (1) the year "2030" was removed as an adjective describing the Strategic Plan for the City's Open Space Program and replaced with the word "current," (2) explicit language was added allowing the Commission to review the open space and habitat elements of development projects, and (3) the six subject areas of the Strategic Plan for the City's Open Space Program were added to the scope, especially public engagement. No action was taken.

## **7. Subcommittee and Liaison Assignment Updates**

### **A. Liaison Assignments**

- (1) *Lower Putah Creek Coordinating Committee ("LPCCC")*. Commissioner Huber briefed the Commission on proposed short- and long-term fixes for the Los Rios Check Dam which historically has been an impediment to fish passage on Putah Creek.
- (2) *Yolo Habitat Conservancy ("YHC")*. Commissioner Huber said there was nothing to report about the YHC's implementation committee.

## **8. Long Range Calendar: Upcoming Meeting Dates and/or Potential Agenda Items**

The next regularly scheduled meeting is Monday, June 3, 2024. Possible agenda items discussed included an appreciation of Commissioner Torbert's service to the Commission. Commissioner Huber said he would discuss with staff whether a meeting in June was necessary.

## **9. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:02 p.m.