



*Visalia Environmental Committee informs and advises the Visalia City Council and Citizens  
on preserving and improving environmental quality for the benefit of the community.*

## **MEETING MINUTES**

**February 12, 2020**

### **1. Welcome & Introduction**

The Visalia Environmental Committee (V.E.C.) meeting was called to order at 5:46 p.m. by Chair Melkonian.

**Members Present:** Maile Melkonian, Melisa Prins, Renee Burton, Mark Wall, and Kathy Falconer

**Members Not Present:** Steve Sanders, Melisa Prins, and David Shelburne

**Members of the Public:** O'Neill Louchard, Arthur Ogawa, Theresa Zelazny, Amy Figueroa, Jonathan Smith, Bud Darwin, Harold Wood, Julie Martinez, Leticia Garcia, John Garcia, Daniel Garcia, Sergio Sanchez, Lisa Wilbur, Tutuy Montes, Destiny Montes, Perlita Renteria, and Carole Milles

**City Staff:** Nathan Garza

### **2. Public Comment**

Mrs. Garcia stated that she as well as others in attendance were attending tonight's meeting to learn more about Bio-Char which her son Daniel Garcia will be presenting to the Environmental Committee. Mr. Smith also stated that he hopes that the Bio-Char presentation will be well received and that he looks forward to collaborating with Earth Day 2020.

### **3. Approval of January 8, 2020 Meeting Minutes**

Member Wall made a recommendation to accept and approve the meeting minutes for the January 8th, 2020 meeting. Member Falconer seconded. The motion carried 4-0

### **4. Earth Day 2020 Sub-Committee Update**

Member Falconer reminded all Members that earth Day is scheduled for April 18, 2020, and reviewed the planned speaker events schedule as part of 2020 pre Earth Day events. Member Falconer also asked that all V.E.C. Members reach out through their contacts for potential sponsors and/or exhibitors.

### **5. Bio-Char Presentation**

Mr. Daniel Garcia provided a power point presentation on "Bio-Char", which outlines a new approach to conservation Ag burning. Mr. Garcia also handed out a flyer (see attached) which further discusses the benefits of using the Bio-Char method versus regular Ag burning methods. He also discussed the possibility of developing a local mobile "Bio-Char" unit that could provide these services to local farmers. Chair Melkonian asked if there have been any other locations to use a mobile "Bio-Char" unit. Member Wall asked if this information had made available during the recent "World Ag Show", to which Mr. Garcia stated that it was not included however the discussion on Bio-Char will likely be included in an upcoming Ag related symposium scheduled at the AG-TAC facility in Tulare California.

### **6. Low Water Use Landscape Awards Application Review**

1. Downtown Visalians Property Owners Association – Chair Melkonian asked that this item be tabled for the March meeting to allow for more discussion with all members present.
2. DeNevi Property – 1910 S. Hillcrest Dr. – Member Falconer made a motion to award the DeNevi property as the second recipient of the 2020 Low Water Use Landscape Award. Member Burton seconded and the motion carries 4-0.
3. 2020 Application Review – Members reviewed the application changes provided by Member Wall and Member Prins (see attached application), to the 2020 Low Water Use Landscape application.

Mr. Bud Darwin mentioned that he and Lisa Cuellar are developing classes on drought tolerant gardens. Members present asked to be kept in the loop so that these classes can be made public.

### **7. VEC Battery Program Update**

This item was also tabled to allow for more Members to be present to participate in the discussion.

**8. Member Requests & Announcements**

Member Falconer mentioned that the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District has announced their Healthy Air Living Kids' Calendar Contest.

Chair Melkonian announced a community discussion on E. Main St. development being held at Café 210 on January 13, 2020 at 6:30pm. She also announced two upcoming candidate forums. The first is scheduled for January 14, 2020 at Café 210, and the second event is scheduled for January 30, 2020 at College of the Sequoias Ponderosa Room.

**9. Adjourn**

Chair Melkonian adjourned the meeting at 7:41pm.