



City of Sunnyvale

Agenda Item

19-0386

Agenda Date: 4/9/2019

REPORT TO COUNCIL

SUBJECT

Approve the 2019 Sustainability Speaker Series

BACKGROUND

In June 2016, City Council approved Budget Supplement No. 7 (Attachment 1), which provided \$25,000 annually for five years for a total amount of \$130,600 (budget is adjusted for inflation each year after the first), to create and conduct a Sustainability Speaker Series (Speaker Series). The Speaker Series is led by the Sustainability Commission, whose specific duties include advising Council on ways to drive community awareness, education and participating in best practices related to making Sunnyvale a more sustainable city. The approved budget supports two to four events each year. Staff provides logistical support for the events, such as coordinating speakers, identifying venues, and publicity and outreach for events. As specified in the Budget Supplement, City Council approves the series topics.

In March 2017, the Sustainability Commission formed an Ad Hoc Committee (hereafter referred to as the Subcommittee), comprised of Commissioners Kristel Wickham and Steven Zornetzer, to identify topics and plan the Speaker Series. In 2018, Commissioner Doug Kunz joined the Subcommittee.

The 2018 Sustainability Speaker Series (2018 Series) was approved by the City Council in October 2017 (RTC No. 17-0951) and included four events on the theme of "Climate Action," consistent with the Council Priority adopted in 2017. The 2018 Series events covered the following topics:

1. Drawdown (Chad Frischmann, Project Drawdown)
2. Hidden in Plain Bite (Katie Cantrell, Factory Farming Awareness Coalition)
3. The Power of Stuff (Annie Leonard, Greenpeace USA)
4. Home Energy-Taking Charge! (panel featuring Marianna Grossman, Minerva Ventures; Doug Kunz, Sunnyvale resident; Steve Schmidt, Home Energy Analytics; Tom Kabat, SunWork; Dave Edwards, Earth Bound Homes)

Events were held on weekday evenings between January and November 2018. All events were held in the City Council Chambers, except for The Power of Stuff with Annie Leonard, which was held at the Sunnyvale Theater. Staff also worked with non-profits (e.g., Acterra, Factory Farming Awareness Coalition) and businesses (e.g., Rheem, ELV Motors for Electric Bikes) to create educational opportunities for attendees to learn about sustainable behaviors, upcoming sustainability events or programs they could participate in. Some examples of these include: a volunteer-run electric vehicle (EV) display in the City Hall parking lot at which attendees could sit inside EVs and ask EV owners questions about them; one-on-one support for registering for the Home Intel free energy efficiency program (formerly Green@Home program); and a heat pump water heater exhibit hosted by a manufacturer who could speak to its advantages.

Each Speaker Series event was broadcasted live on K-SUN TV and available for live streaming through the City's website, with the exception of Annie Leonard's talk due to restrictions stipulated in her agreement. Video recordings are available through the City's website.

Each of the events drew approximately 65-100 participants. The feedback provided by attendees, staff, Councilmembers in attendance and Sustainability Commissioners was overwhelmingly positive.

EXISTING POLICY

The Speaker Series is aligned with the City's Climate Action Plan (CAP 1.0), which contains a key goal area for increasing and retaining awareness of sustainability issues.

This Series is also aligned with the Sustainability Commission's duties, which include advising the Council on ways to drive community awareness, education and participation in best practices.

In addition, continued implementation of the Series is also proposed as a "next move" (action scheduled for implementation in the next three years) in the City's Draft Climate Action Playbook, released for public review in March 2019.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The action being considered does not constitute a "project" within the meaning of the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15378(a) as it has no potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment.

DISCUSSION

After research and coordination with Environmental Services Department staff, the Subcommittee presented a proposal for the 2019 Sustainability Speaker Series (2019 Series) at the October 24, 2018 Sustainability Commission meeting. The proposal contemplates six options to pick from to create up to four events, assuming sufficient availability of staff resources, proposed speaker availability and available budget. At this meeting, the Commission prioritized the following six topics included in the Proposal (Attachment 2):

- Electric Vehicles - Is an Electric Vehicle Right for You?
- Youth focused - Carbon Footprint
- Water - Water Wise
- Parking - Traffic, Parking and Climate
- Recycling - Beyond the Triangle
- CAP 2.0 - Meet the CAP 2.0

The Commission voted unanimously to forward the 2019 Sustainability Speaker Series Proposal with the Commission's ranking to Council for review and approval (Attachment 3). Pending Council approval of the topics, the Commission plans to schedule the first speaker event in late spring 2019.

FISCAL IMPACT

Funding for the 2019 Series is included in the FY 2018/19 Adopted Budget, Project No. 832360.

For the 2018 Series (calendar year 2018), \$35,386 was spent split across FY 2017/18 (\$13,063) and the current FY 2018/19 (\$22,323). This covered expenses for staff time, speaker payments,

advertising, audio/visual recording support, refreshments, graphic design services, and other miscellaneous event expenses. A significant portion of the cost in the current fiscal year is attributed to a single speaker (Annie Leonard), whose fees totaled \$15,000.

A total of \$30,220 would be available for the 2019 Series, which includes the remaining budget of \$3,690 for FY 2018/19 and the allocated funds of \$26,530 for FY 2019/20.

Staff anticipates that the primary costs for these events will be:

- Staff time to plan and implement logistics and publicity for the events;
- Speaker fees (ranging from \$0 to \$20,000);
- Publicity, graphic design, advertising, and recording services costs; and
- Refreshments (if donations are not secured).

Staff will continue to monitor the budget and will work with the Sustainability Commission to ensure that the proposed Series is conducted within the approved budget.

PUBLIC CONTACT

Public contact was made by posting the Council agenda on the City's official-notice bulletin board outside City Hall, at the Sunnyvale Senior Center, Community Center and Department of Public Safety; and by making the agenda and report available at the Sunnyvale Public Library, the Office of the City Clerk and on the City's website.

RECOMMENDATION

Approve the 2019 Sustainability Speaker Series Topics as proposed by the Sustainability Commission, with the provisos that:

1. Implementation of up to four events to occur between spring 2019 and June 2020 will be contingent on speaker availability, staffing resources, and available budget, and
2. The Subcommittee will provide enhanced support to coordinate logistics for speaker panels when proposed.

Staff proposes that the implementation of the Speaker Series align with the fiscal year rather than the calendar year. To that end, the proposed series will be implemented between now and June 2020, and future Series will be proposed in the spring for the subsequent fiscal year.

Staff has reviewed and collaborated with the Subcommittee during the development of the proposed Series and generally supports the topics selected. The Budget Supplement approved by Council specified up to four events per year, which is consistent with the proposed Series.

Based on staff's experience with the Speaker Series, panels of speakers and high-cost speakers requiring contracts increase staff time spent per event. Staff supports the current proposal, which potentially includes two panels, with the understanding that the Subcommittee take on additional coordination with panelists to ensure a cohesive event.

Prepared by: Nupur Hiremath, Environmental Programs Manager

Prepared by: Melody Tovar, Regulatory Programs Division Manager

Reviewed by: Ramana Chinnakotla, Director, Environmental Services Department

Reviewed by: Teri Silva, Assistant City Manager

Approved by: Kent Steffens, City Manager

ATTACHMENTS

1. Budget Supplement No. 7
2. 2019 Sustainability Speaker Series Proposal Report from the Sustainability Commission
3. Excerpt from Draft October 24, 2018 Sustainability Commission Meeting minutes