

Coachella General Plan Community Health and Wellness Element Wellness Advisory Committee Meeting #2 Minutes–September 8, 2011

Linda Guillis, City of Coachella Development Services Director opened the meeting with some background on the project. Participants went around the room and introduced themselves stating their name and organization or affiliation.

Attendees

Eighteen WAC members, six California Endowment Partners, and five project staff attended the meeting. The following is a list of meeting attendees’ names and organizations.

WAC Committee Members in Attendance¹	
Organization	Name
Augustine Band of Cahuilla Indians	David Saldivar
Cardenas	Marco Robles
Certified Farmer’s Market	Paul Palodichuk
	Giacomina Marie
	Armando Sepeda
Coachella Valley Community Trails Alliance	John Horton
Coachella Valley Housing Coalition	Britini Edwards
Coachella Valley Rescue Mission	Olga S. Betancourt
Desert Recreation District	Felicia Horton
Future Physician Leaders Program (Dr. Raul Ruiz)	Joshue Leyva
	Juan Guzman
Office of Assembly Member V. Manuel Perez	Carlos Gonzalez
Office of Supervisor John Benoit	Noel Loughrin
Planned Parenthood	Jacqueline Vargas
Sunline Transit Agency	Eunice Lovi
Walgreens	Christine Ramos
	Mark Lardenoit
Resident representatives (ICUC)	Karen Borja (OLOS)
	Rodrigo Munoz (OLOS)
	Cesia Cupil
Resident representative	Abraham Ramirez
Youth representative (BHC ECV youth/Raices)	Denise Torres
Youth representative (Esperanza Youth and Family Center/ICUC)	Ashley Mendoza
Youth representative (ICUC)	Elizabeth Arce

¹ Attendees who failed to sign in at the meeting are not included in this list.

The California Endowment Building Healthy Communities Eastern Coachella Valley Partners in Attendance	
Organization	Name
Building Healthy Communities	Elizabeth Toledo
California Rural Legal Assistance	Cristina Mendez
Inland Congregations United for Change	Yvonna Cazares
	Alex Luna
Riverside County Department of Public Health	Debbie Suess
	Sarah Gaete, RD
	Miguel A. Vasquez

Community Health and Wellness Element Project Staff	
Organization, Role	Name
City of Coachella, Development Services Director	Linda Guillis
City of Coachella, Senior Planner	Gabriel Perez
City of Coachella, Planning Intern	Marcos Coronel
Raimi + Associates, General Plan and Community Health and Wellness Element Consultant	Beth Altshuler

Vision Statement

Beth Altshuler of Raimi + Associates prepared a draft vision statement for Coachella’s vision for a healthy future based on input from advisory committee members from the first Wellness Advisory Committee meeting. Linda Guillis read the vision statement to the committee. Below are responses to the vision statement.

- Transportation should be included in the statement.
- The importance of communication between various groups and individuals in the City.
- Acknowledge the demographics of Coachella – especially the youth population.
- Include importance of family life and activities.
- The actions of the City Council should be action items and their actions should be consistent with the Vision.
- The Vision statement should encourage the youth and community to actively engage in civic engagement.
- Community oriented services for self-sufficiency such as community gardens.
- Programs and activities encouraging family activities should be explored.
- Neighborhoods should be safer.

The revised vision statement can be found at the end of these meeting minutes.

Community Workshop #1 Outreach

Beth Altshuler discussed the Fiesta de la Salud scheduled for Tuesday, September 20 at 6PM. The City created a bilingual flyer for the event which was included in every resident’s water bill this month. To

ensure Coachella renters also know about the event, CVHC indicated that they would be outreaching to all of the residential developments that they manage.

- Linda extended an offer to the partners to have presentation tables. The following are groups that requested a presentation table for the workshop:
 - Assembly Member V. Manuel Perez
 - Certified Farmers Market
 - Coachella Valley Housing
 - Coachella Valley Community Trails Alliance
 - Desert Recreation District
 - Esperanza Youth and Family Center
 - Inland Congregations United for Change (ICUC)
 - John Benoit Youth Advisory Council
 - Planned Parenthood
 - Raices Cultura
 - Riverside County Department of Public Health
 - The California Endowment
 - California Rural Legal Assistance
- If other groups are interested in hosting a table, please contact Gabriel Perez at the City ASAP. gperez@coachella.org or 760.398.3102
- Marco Robles suggested using a fruit smoothie machine operated by a bicycle from Cardenas.
- Usage of Eastern Coachella Valley College of the Desert's culinary school as food providers for the workshop. Chef Beno.
- Explore the possibility of news agencies sponsoring the event.
- The City will provide Wellness Advisory Committee members with an email blurb about the event to forward to community members.

Community Health Discussion Toolkit

Beth Altshuler provided a brief presentation on the use of the Community Health Discussion Toolkit. The toolkit was distributed to the members of the Wellness Advisory Committee for review and feedback. The following suggestions were made:

- Offer the survey using an online format such as Survey Monkey.
 - Beth prefers that groups still use the Toolkit to guide GROUP DISCUSSION rather than individuals answering questions alone at home. However we will still create an online version of the survey.
 - The link to the new online version of the discussion questions is:
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/coachellahealth>
- Create a Facebook page to be monitored by youth that can act as an online discussion forum about community health in Coachella.
 - Further discussion was deemed necessary and we need to schedule a conference call or a meeting.

- Youth Representative Elizabeth Arce and California Endowment staffer Elizabeth Toledo will discuss this initiative with Beth and the City.
- Riverside DPH offered to look into surveying WIC participants
- Miguel Vasquez volunteered to provide technical assistance to groups at community meetings where the toolkit is used. He can answer additional questions about the public health and city planning connection as well as technical city planning questions. His information is:

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mvazquez@rivcocha.org • www.rivco-buildhealth.org*
- Community groups or individuals who are interested in hosting / facilitating one or more community health discussions can print out their own English or Spanish materials (attached to these meeting minutes) or they can contact Gabriel Perez (gperez@coachella.org or 760.398.3102) at the City with the following information:
 - # of English and Spanish copies of the discussion questions
 - # of English and Spanish copies of the fact sheets
 - # of facilitator guides
- Facilitators should return completed materials and/or discussion summaries to the Development Services Department at City Hall by Monday, October 31, 2011.

Food System Presentations and Discussion

Sarah Gaete of the Riverside County Department of Public Health Nutrition Services Branch gave a presentation on the hunger and food insecurity. Marco Robles of Cardenas Markets discussed the role of their markets in the food system, the Latino market for food, and health related initiatives. Paul Palodichuk, manager of the Certified Farmer’s Market, discussed their efforts to create a market for affordable, locally grown food and the challenges in providing venues for locally grown produce.

Beth Altshuler posed the following questions about the food system to the committee.

1. What do we want to know about the food system? What data/indicators should we collect and track over time?
2. What aspects of the foods system should this plan address?
3. What are possible solutions/policies to consider including in the health element?

The following are responses to the questions by committee members:

- There is room for more local markets in the food supply
- Transportation remains an important issue for food access. The issue is even more important in unincorporated communities of the Eastern Coachella Valley since Coachella serves as a food source for these communities.
- Cultural biases need to be explored and dealt with.
- Make residents aware that Farmers Market provides a tracking system in order to ensure quality control.

- Community gardens should be created to create self-sufficiency.
- Fundraising through farming and healthy food supplies.
- The quantity of Alcohol establishments and licenses should be evaluated for its community health impact.
- The school lunch system should be considered as a means to improve residents health; limiting the accessibility of junk food.
- Unhealthy foods such as candy and gum are often placed in more accessible areas of a market such as check-out stands and should be limited.
- Look into creating Community Serving Agriculture (CSA) and sharing food recipes in the community.
- Importance of spreading message of healthy eating with children such as the successful anti-litter campaigns in the past.
- Create kid's corner in markets to encourage healthy eating with children.

Coachella's Vision for a Healthy Future *(revised 09.13.11)*

Coachella envisions a future which includes thriving physical, emotional, and spiritual health for the entire community. Coachella is committed to providing a supportive physical, social, and economic environment so this can occur. The City's distinctive and family-friendly neighborhoods will inspire an appreciation of Coachella's history and create unity among community members. Neighborhoods will provide opportunities for residents to improve their physical and mental health while meeting daily needs – walking to the store, meeting friends, bicycling to school, taking transit to work, and having access to nutritious and affordable foods that can be purchased or grown in the neighborhood. The City will find innovative solutions to ensure its streets, parks, and public spaces are safe, accessible, and inviting for all users. There will be ample choices for walking, bicycling, team sports, and exercise programs for people of all ages, and positive social interaction in public spaces.

The City will encourage local businesses that pay living wages and offer safe and meaningful employment for people of all ages and abilities. Residents will have access to educational opportunities that expand their professional skills, foster their creativity, and provide tools to support a healthy lifestyle. When preventive health is not enough, residents will be served by first class health providers and social services in the City. Coachella acknowledges that a healthy planet directly improves human health, and the City is committed to clean air, water, and soil; conservation of resources; and the protection of natural areas. Youth are honored as leaders of tomorrow and are an integral part of the City's robust community planning and civic engagement process. The City will consider health and equity in its actions and decisions, supporting the concept that all community members can live healthy, meaningful lives.