

**Moore, Tania**

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**From:** Mark Sheldon <surfcitysheldon@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 16, 2021 2:00 PM  
**To:** supplementalcomm@surfcity-hb.org; CITY COUNCIL  
**Subject:** Comment on HB City Council 11/16/2021 Item 25

**SUPPLEMENTAL  
COMMUNICATION**

Meeting Date: 11/16/2021

Honorable Mayor Carr and Members of the City Council:

Agenda Item No.: 25(21-863)

I am writing concerning the 11/16/2021 City Council Agenda Item 25, specifically Recommended Action (I) and the proposed Ordinance 4240 "amending the Huntington Beach Municipal Code Chapter 2.102 entitled Environmental & Sustainability Board."

I am concerned that regardless of the desired results of this ordinance that it may lead to consequences that are undesirable for the operation of the Board, for City Council as the beneficiaries of the Board's work, and for the people of Huntington Beach. I voiced some of these concerns in comments to the City Council on 10/19/2021 but wish to speak now to the proposed ordinance as written and presented to City Council for the 11/16/2021 Meeting.

I would argue that one of the original duties of the Environmental Board as stated in the Original Municipal Code language of Original Municipal Code Section 2.102.050 is still a need for our city:

***"Study the environment of the City of Huntington Beach and investigate all actual and potential threats to a clean environment for the City and its inhabitants;"***

...and that a need and benefit from this activity will remain, whether or not there is a body so directed.

By turning the focus of the Environmental and Sustainability Board to that which is defined in a specific Sustainability Master Plan risks limiting the ability of the board to respond quickly to new situations and opportunities where timeliness is important. These situations could range from

- opportunities for community outreach such as the Student Environmental Art Contest which the Environmental Board initially proposed and has successfully conducted in recent years with support by the City Council, to
- review of Environmental Impact Reports (EIRs) for the City Council
- education of the public on environmental matters, some which may change rapidly.

All of these activities are always understood to be at the service, direction and approval of the City Council, regardless of the structure and procedures of the Environmental Board. The concern is how to enable the Board to take those actions, including it's communication with the City Council Liaisons, as effectively as possible.

Toward that end, I would like to point out the following concerns about how the proposed changes to the Board may adversely affect it's operation:

**NUMBER OF MEMBERS**

The Board has previously operated with nine citizen members. That number may seem arbitrary but the Board has found it advantageous for carrying out it's mission:

- Nine members has allowed the Board to divide into up to three separate ad hoc committees for review of EIRs, which make the work of effectively addressing these large documents much more feasible, especially when the number or scope of projects is large.
- The Board benefits from a diversity of professional and citizenship experiences.

## NUMBER OF MEETINGS

- To keep the work of the Board moving forward, monthly meetings are beneficial. It is difficult for the body to conduct planned projects, let alone rapid response, in a timely fashion with less frequent meetings, as has been found when meetings have been unavoidably cancelled. Less frequent nominal meeting schedule would also make the impact of future cancellations even more severe.

## PARTICIPATION OF CITY COUNCIL AS BOARD MEMBERS

While communication with Council Liasons is critical to the Board's operation, placing these Councilmembers into the Board itself will be a strain on their already heavily-demanded time. It will make their attendance, and the subsequent impact on maintaining Board quorums, more problematic.

I ask the the Council considers the impacts to the fulfillment of the mission of the Evironmental and Sustainability Board, and consider a structure closer to that which currently exists, with resolve to maintain active communication with the City Council Liaisons as part of the Boards ongoing work

Thank You for your consideration

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**Mark Sheldon**