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CALIFORNIA ENERGY COMMISSION

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Forum Presentation            )  
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Docket No.: 20-LITHIUM-01

LITHIUM VALLEY COMMISSION

REMOTE VIA ZOOM

Thursday, JANUARY 27, 2021  
1:30 P.M.

Reported by:

Elise Hicks

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Ryan E. Kelley, Vice Chair  
Steve Castaneda  
Rod Colwell  
Roderic Dolega  
Miranda Flores  
James C. Hanks  
Ryan E. Kelley  
Arthur "Richie" Lopez  
Luis Olmedo  
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P R O C E E D I N G S

THURSDAY, JANUARY 27, 2022

1:30 P.M.

CHAIR PAZ: Welcome, everyone, to our Lithium Valley Commission Meeting. We are anticipating a few more seconds to allow people to be joining via Zoom.

Great. I think we can get started. So, again, welcome everyone. Just a reminder, we can go to the next slide, we are interpretation services in Spanish for attendees. Unfortunately, the Zoom interpretation function does not work if you're only joining by phone, so we do apologize for that.

At this point, I will invite the Public Advisor's Office to join us and give the public instruction on how to access the interpretation services.

MS. GALLARDO: Thank you, Chair Paz. I'll do that now.

(Speaking Spanish)

Chair Paz, back to you.

CHAIR PAZ: Thank you, Noemi. And before I turn over to Elisabeth to give us our opening instructions, just a reminder for all the

1 Commissioners to make sure you are logged into  
2 the English Channel and that will ensure that  
3 everyone can hear us.

4           And now to you, Elisabeth.

5           MS. DE JONG: Thank you, Chair Paz. This  
6 meeting is being conducted entirely remotely via  
7 Zoom consistent with Governor Newsom's Executive  
8 Order to improve and enhance public access to  
9 state agency meetings during the Covid-19  
10 pandemic.

11           This meeting is being recorded, as well  
12 as transcribed by a Court Reporter. The  
13 transcript will be posted to the docket. The  
14 recording of the meeting will be available on the  
15 Lithium Valley Commission webpage. The Spanish  
16 interpretation will not be recorded or  
17 transcribed.

18           Members of the public will be muted  
19 during the presentations, but there will be an  
20 opportunity for public comment on each Agenda  
21 Item and an additional opportunity for public  
22 comments towards the end of the agenda.

23           To provide public comment, please use the  
24 "raise hand" feature in the Zoom application. If  
25 you've called in by phone, you will need to dial

1 \*9 to raise your hand and \*6 to unmute yourself.

2           When you speak, please provide your name  
3 and affiliation, and please say and spell your  
4 name for the Court Reporter. There is a Q&A  
5 window in the Zoom application, which you may use  
6 to type your questions and comments, and staff  
7 will relay those comments.

8           We also have a chat function available,  
9 but this is to be used only for IT support or  
10 other technical issues. Please do not use the  
11 chat function to provide comments or questions  
12 related to the content of the meeting.

13           We'll go over these instructions again  
14 during the time for public comment. Please  
15 remember to say muted until you've been called on  
16 to speak.

17           We will also be posting the meeting  
18 materials, including the notice and presentation  
19 slide deck that will be posted online for the  
20 Lithium Valley Commission docket.

21           And back to you, Chair Paz.

22           CHAIR PAZ: Thank you. I will now do a  
23 roll call.

24           Commissioner Castaneda.

25           COMMISSIONER CASTANEDA: Here.

1 CHAIR PAZ: Commissioner Colwell.  
2 COMMISSIONER COLWELL: Present.  
3 CHAIR PAZ: Commissioner Dolega.  
4 COMMISSIONER DOLEGA: (No audible reply)  
5 CHAIR PAZ: I'm not hearing. So,  
6 Commissioner Flores.  
7 COMMISSIONER FLORES: Present.  
8 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you. Commissioner  
9 Hanks.  
10 COMMISSIONER HANKS: Present.  
11 CHAIR PAZ: Commissioner Kelley. Vice  
12 Chair Kelley?  
13 VICE CHAIR KELLEY: Present.  
14 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you. Commissioner  
15 Lopez.  
16 COMMISSIONER LOPEZ: Present.  
17 CHAIR PAZ: Commissioner Olmedo. I'm not  
18 sure if Commissioner Olmedo can hear us or if  
19 he's here.  
20 COMMISSIONER OLMEDO: (Inaudible  
21 response).  
22 CHAIR PAZ: Commissioner Ruiz.  
23 COMMISSIONER RUIZ: Present.  
24 CHAIR PAZ: Commissioner Scott.  
25 MS. DE JONG: Sorry, Chair Paz. It does

1 look like Commissioner Scott is here and will be  
2 promoted to panelist in just a moment.

3 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you.

4 Commissioner Soto.

5 COMMISSIONER SOTO: Here.

6 CHAIR PAZ: Commissioner Weisgall.

7 COMMISSIONER WEISGALL: Present.

8 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you. Just waiting to  
9 see if Commissioner Scott -- can you let me know,  
10 Elisabeth, when Commissioner Scott has joined us?

11 MS. DE JONG: Yes. It looks like he's  
12 here.

13 CHAIR PAZ: Okay. And I see Commissioner  
14 Olmedo, but I didn't hear him. Commissioner  
15 Olmedo?

16 COMMISSIONER OLMEDO: I'm here, I'm  
17 sorry, Chair.

18 CHAIR PAZ: And then Commissioner Scott.

19 COMMISSIONER SCOTT: Present.

20 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you. So we do have a  
21 quorum. Before we begin the substance of our  
22 meeting, I do want to take a pause and allow  
23 Commissioner Soto some time to lead us through a  
24 request for a moment of silence. So,  
25 Commissioner Soto?

1           COMMISSIONER SOTO: Sure. So, everybody,  
2 as of Tuesday we lost one of our great icons in  
3 California history, and a great Latino leader,  
4 Congressman Esteban Torres, who many of you may  
5 have known of or known personally.

6           I knew him personally and he was a very  
7 close family friend and a great lawyer, along  
8 with my parents, Assemblyman Phil Soto and  
9 Senator Nell Soto. And he died at the age of 91;  
10 I think today would have been his 92nd birthday.

11           And as you know, he was not only a member  
12 of Congress, but he was also a great labor leader  
13 as head of the United Autoworkers during the  
14 1960s. He was the founder of the East L.A.  
15 Community Union.

16           He became our Ambassador to the U.N.  
17 under Jimmy Carter in the 1970s, and then went on  
18 for a long tenure in our House of Congress and  
19 had a tremendous amount of victories during that  
20 time, including the passage of North American  
21 Free Trade Agreement, which he and I worked on  
22 very very closely on the Labor and Environmental  
23 Side Agreement.

24           So with that, I would just like to  
25 acknowledge and remember a great American Patriot

1 hero for our community, Congressman Esteban  
2 Torres, and maybe we could just have 30 seconds  
3 of silence and then we could proceed with our  
4 meeting. So, thank you.

5 All right, Chair Paz. Back to you.  
6 Thank you so much for being so kind.

7 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you. Thank you,  
8 Commissioner Soto.

9 So if we can put the agenda, the agenda  
10 has been posted and shared with all Commissioners  
11 ahead of time, and it is on the screen for your  
12 reference. Next slide.

13 Well, I'm very excited about today's  
14 meeting. The goal of this meeting is to home in  
15 and come out of the meeting with actionable  
16 recommendations given the governor's budget, as  
17 well as having a window of opportunity through  
18 any legislative early action that this Commission  
19 is interested in exploring, so that will be a  
20 great focus of today's conversation.

21 And to start us off, I'm going to invite  
22 Commissioner Douglas to discuss the highlights  
23 from the recent proposed governor's budget.

24 COMMISSIONER DOUGLAS: Hi. Good  
25 afternoon. So I'm just making sure the audio is

1 okay. Thank you, Chair Paz, for the invitation  
2 to speak briefly to the Lithium Valley Commission  
3 this morning and, as you noted, the Governor in  
4 his proposed budget has signaled and set out a  
5 path of really strong support for the Lithium  
6 Vallely vision, and for the work of the Lithium  
7 Valley Commission in helping us shape and frame  
8 and understand the issues and opportunities that  
9 we have before us today.

10 As was noted in the budget, and as has  
11 been discussed at this Commission, Lithium is a  
12 very critical resource as the state and the world  
13 move to capture our clean energy future and  
14 tackle the climate crisis.

15 California is a world leader in  
16 deployment of electric vehicles, we're a world  
17 leader in manufacture of electric vehicles, too,  
18 here in California, as well as deploying lithium-  
19 ion batteries for electricity storage and grid  
20 support.

21 We have a really strong need on the  
22 demand side, deployment of lithium-based  
23 technologies. And so we have a real opportunity  
24 to bring that together with this abundant lithium  
25 resource in the geothermal brines below the

1 Salton Sea, and to do that in an environmentally  
2 responsible way and with community engagement and  
3 with guidance from the community and from the  
4 experts in this area.

5           So, the Governor's budget sets out a  
6 number of policies and signals for policy  
7 direction that I want to go through. It also  
8 sets aside a very significant amount of funding  
9 for investments in clean technologies that can  
10 help us realize the economic ecosystem that can  
11 be developed around Lithium and clean technology  
12 and clean energy.

13           The kind of multi-pronged policy approach  
14 that is being advanced here is to provide  
15 incentives to advance the clean energy market in  
16 California, provide Californians a share of the  
17 benefit of this development and these projects,  
18 develop labor standards that also deliver  
19 community benefits, economic development, and  
20 labor opportunities, and to really provide a  
21 model here of a way of engaging in and supporting  
22 these clean energy and climate solution driven  
23 opportunity areas that can guide our engagement  
24 in other areas.

25           Offshore wind is mentioned, but there are

1 many opportunities we have here with this clean  
2 energy transition to look at how we support our  
3 energy goals, maintain high environmental labor  
4 standards, engage proactively with communities  
5 with stakeholders, and provide real lasting  
6 benefits.

7           And so that's the very large charge in  
8 front of us as a state, and an area where we  
9 really will be looking to our dialogue with and  
10 recommendations from the Lithium Valley  
11 Commission, you know, and the members of the  
12 Commission in helping shape that.

13           So, the other aspect of this is in  
14 particular the budget puts on the table that the  
15 administration will work with the Legislature,  
16 the Lithium Valley Commission, and our County and  
17 Community partners to develop a model around  
18 revenues from Lithium and from this economic  
19 driver here that will help benefit Californians  
20 and it will help benefit the region. And so  
21 that's going to be an important conversation to  
22 have with our partnership and with the Lithium  
23 Valley Commission.

24           In addition to that, as we look at this  
25 opportunity, this expanded economic opportunity

1 around the Salton Sea community, it will be  
2 really important to hear the voice of the  
3 community in terms of what this development and  
4 this can look like.

5           So, we're also very interested in working  
6 to advance long-term environmental protection and  
7 community benefits, and that's another important  
8 area of discussion. I think that's very much  
9 before the Lithium Valley Commission. And we  
10 want to have a dialogue about how the state can  
11 provide additional certainty and accountability  
12 in permitting, as well as the community benefits  
13 and labor standards side of this.

14           And so we're committed to working with  
15 the Legislature with input from the Lithium  
16 Valley Commission and the community, you know,  
17 and the County and beyond, to simplify permitting  
18 around geothermal facilities and lithium  
19 extraction in the Salton Sea area while  
20 maintaining our environmental standards.

21           And I want to say that kind of loud and  
22 clear because we have heard from the public and  
23 in some of the discussions in front of the  
24 Commission that more information is needed, you  
25 know, more understanding of what potential

1 impacts are, and this is an opportunity to just  
2 really underscore that that environmental vision  
3 here is an important part of this.

4           And so I think the last thing I will say,  
5 the budget proposal is extensive in the climate  
6 area. There are a lot of expenditures that are  
7 proposed that support the Lithium Valley vision.  
8 I'll just give two examples. There's a very  
9 substantial workforce development set of  
10 proposals that can very much be brought to bear  
11 to support the workforce development needs within  
12 the Salton Sea region and beyond, to bring  
13 forward the Lithium Valley vision.

14           There is also a number of investments  
15 that the state is proposing in electric vehicle  
16 and technology manufacturing, for example. And  
17 the clean tech, technology, and business  
18 development side -- and I'll just bring out one  
19 example, which is that we are proposing a clean  
20 energy loan program where, in coordination with  
21 U.S. Department of Energy Loan Program Office, we  
22 would be able to provide predevelopment financing  
23 for projects and technologies that focus on  
24 mitigating climate change in disadvantaged  
25 communities and communities where private capital

1 has not adequately been able to invest through  
2 mechanisms like loan guarantees and direct loans,  
3 and so on. And so in that particular program,  
4 lithium extraction and geothermal energy  
5 production are both called out specifically,  
6 that's just one example, there are multiple  
7 examples and we really see this as an opportunity  
8 to bring this broader vision to fruition. And we  
9 want to do it in close coordination and with  
10 input from the Lithium Valley Commission and  
11 local voices and stakeholders.

12           So I think that's my summary and I'd be  
13 happy to answer any questions or engage in any  
14 discussion if that's helpful.

15           CHAIR PAZ: Thank you, Commissioner  
16 Douglas. And actually, we will be having a  
17 little bit further in the agenda a deeper  
18 discussion and I would invite you to stay on and  
19 participate so that we can be balancing ideas and  
20 then, if questions come up, we can have you back  
21 to answer them, as well.

22           COMMISSIONER DOUGLAS: That's fantastic.  
23 I'll be here. I may turn my video off for some of  
24 this, but I'm right here. Thank you.

25           CHAIR PAZ: Thank you. So next we also

1 have a representative from Assemblymember  
2 Garcia's Office and I know recently Commissioner  
3 Douglas and others visited the area where  
4 Imperial, Coachella, and the Salton Sea Region  
5 and other important conversations had with the  
6 Assemblymember's Office, as well. And again,  
7 there's an opportunity with the budget before us,  
8 and I want to invite Lina Malova from  
9 Assemblymember Garcia's Office to share just one  
10 of the pieces that I think have been discussed  
11 both, again, the Energy Commission and other  
12 Assembly's visits and conversations. So, Lina?

13 MS. MALOVA: Hello, can you hear me?

14 CHAIR PAZ: Yes.

15 MS. MALOVA: Thank you. Good afternoon,  
16 Chair Paz and Commissioners. Thank you for the  
17 invitation to speak. As introduced, my name is  
18 Lina Malova. I'm a consultant to the Select  
19 Committee on California's Lithium Economy, which  
20 is chaired by Assemblymember Eduardo Garcia.

21 Chair Garcia is also very excited in the  
22 efforts for Governor Newsom to build Lithium  
23 Valley. As a follow-up on Commissioner Douglas'  
24 presentation on the budget, we also think there  
25 are opportunities for us to look into some of the

1 recurrent concerns brought to our office by the  
2 local community as relates to any environmental  
3 or public health impacts connected to this  
4 industry.

5           Our office supports the idea for the  
6 state pursuing funding, and they will take a look  
7 at this issue and will relay what the locals are  
8 saying. The Assemblyman also believes that the  
9 Lithium Valley Commission should engage relevant  
10 stakeholders such as Regional Water Board, local  
11 Air Districts, the local Public Health Director,  
12 and others to provide input for the benefit of  
13 the local community.

14           Thank you. And I look forward to  
15 continuing in this discussion.

16           CHAIR PAZ: Thank you, Lina. So, we've  
17 heard highlights from the budget. I'm sure most  
18 of you have followed and done a search on the  
19 number of times that lithium development or  
20 lithium was mentioned in the conversations, so  
21 this will be an opportunity for us to get into a  
22 deeper conversation about -- having seen some of  
23 those budgets, there were many items that are  
24 mentioned that don't necessarily have a value  
25 added right now next to it, not necessarily

1 funding, we have many great statements of intent  
2 and I think it's the right direction; again, we  
3 have an opportunity to maybe respond to the  
4 budget with some of the requests that VCO  
5 (phonetic) will advance, the vision of Lithium  
6 Valley. So I see, Commissioner Soto, I know he's  
7 going to have to step up early, so I'll call him  
8 in first.

9           COMMISSIONER SOTO: Thank you, Chair Paz.  
10 And Lina, nice to see you or at least hear your  
11 voice, I didn't see you on the video. But thank  
12 you for bringing Chair Garcia's concerns. Among  
13 the few that you've expressed on his behalf, I  
14 would like to emphasize the need to look at this  
15 sector, not just the economics, not just the need  
16 for meeting the demand of Lithium in the State of  
17 California where it should be noticed that there  
18 are great economics that we're creating for  
19 others, and we can have those economics and we  
20 can have them in the Imperial Valley, but not at  
21 the expense of good health.

22           And so I think I heard you loud and clear  
23 that Chair Garcia is looking to support efforts  
24 for frankly some form of health risk assessment  
25 that is needed in this sector as we, as a

1 Commission, move forward. I believe if you've  
2 been in some of our discussions, we've very much  
3 highlighted the need for assuring to the  
4 community and to our elected families that, in  
5 fact, we are concerned about the health risks and  
6 exposures that may occur as a result of lithium  
7 extraction in the valley.

8           So, all of that said, I would urge that  
9 we, as a Commission, urge either the Department  
10 of Health Services, or the Energy Commission, to  
11 perhaps determine a path where some form of  
12 health risk assessment could be done within the  
13 life, sooner than later, of this Commission so  
14 that we have that datapoint, those datapoints, as  
15 we move forward toward our own conclusion.

16           I don't want to overstep bounds with our  
17 Chair, with Sylvia, but I believe strongly in  
18 this, I'm sure that our colleagues on the  
19 Commission believe strongly in this need, and I  
20 hope that we could find a place where we could  
21 actually get this assessment discussed and  
22 hopefully executed by some agency or interest  
23 that has the expertise to do so. I don't think  
24 it's the responsibility of the Commission itself,  
25 but we do have to find a pathway to execute that.

1 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you, Commissioner Soto.

2 COMMISSIONER SOTO: Thank you.

3 CHAIR PAZ: While the rest of my  
4 colleagues are maybe starting to brainstorm or  
5 think about what sorts of requests or  
6 recommendations we would like to think about,  
7 it's important for us to think about the time  
8 that we have.

9 So, if we go to the next slide, you see  
10 that we have a short window of opportunity for us  
11 to make our requests. February 18th is the last  
12 day for bills to be introduced, and so anything  
13 that we think should require legislative  
14 attention, we need to submit that before or by  
15 February 18th.

16 And then the May Revise would be for any  
17 budget recommendations that we want to make, as  
18 well.

19 So again, the purpose of the timeline is  
20 just for us to visually see the narrow window of  
21 opportunity that we have, but nonetheless, an  
22 opportunity to start thinking about these  
23 requests.

24 So, I'm going to start adding to some of  
25 the things that I noticed and that I think we

1 should consider as recommendations for either  
2 budget or legislation, based on what I saw called  
3 out in the Governor's Budget.

4           So, the Governor's Budget is highlighting  
5 the commitment to engage in public participation,  
6 community engagement. I know that this  
7 Commission has been proactively asking for that,  
8 and there's members of this Commission who have  
9 had their own meetings at the community level,  
10 but what I keep hearing time and again, and  
11 you'll hear it later from Commissioner Olmedo  
12 when we give updates on the Ad Hoc Committee  
13 Group, is that to be able to do community  
14 participation and engagement, it needs to be  
15 resourced.

16           And I didn't see that necessarily in the  
17 budget, so maybe that's something that we want to  
18 consider, that there is funding available to  
19 effectively engage our community members and with  
20 a recognition that, as we saw with the letter  
21 that was submitted by Chairman Tortez from the  
22 Torres Martinez, that there's a need for  
23 information so that people have a good  
24 understanding of what's happening, what the  
25 technologies, what the opportunities, what the

1 impacts are. So along with addressing the health  
2 impacts, the environmental impacts, the economic  
3 impacts, there's a need to resource that effort,  
4 so that's something I want to uplift.

5           The other piece that I feel is important  
6 is around the benefits conversation, I think  
7 everyone is on the same page from what I've heard  
8 about ensuring that the community surrounding and  
9 in the geothermal resource are benefitting from  
10 these efforts and when mentioned in the  
11 Governor's Budget, I believe I read something,  
12 consideration for royalties, fees, taxes, those  
13 are conversations that we need to be having along  
14 with the community.

15           There's going to be -- I think we're  
16 going to come from different perspectives and  
17 angles as to how to make this happen, but again,  
18 there's a need to resource that and have a  
19 dedicated either space, I don't know if that's  
20 going to be this Commission because if we want to  
21 move quickly, right, and still meet the deadlines  
22 that we have for the report, we might need a  
23 different space.

24           But again, resources -- I think these are  
25 going to have to be negotiated by the different

1 sectors, like we need to find out where the  
2 industry is on priorities and what their  
3 abilities are, what the community needs, and what  
4 their requests are, labor, labor agreements, all  
5 those things require time and attention and  
6 effort to be done right. So that's another area  
7 that I feel needs to find a path to borrow  
8 Commissioner Soto's language.

9 I was going to get into some of the labor  
10 workforce, I mean, maybe consider the carve-out  
11 for the Imperial Coachella Valley that's  
12 dedicated for Lithium and training. So, I've put  
13 out a list of things, I'm sure you've probably  
14 thought about your wish list for this project,  
15 but at this point I will again open the  
16 conversation to the rest of you.

17 I'm looking through the screen to see who  
18 has their hands up. Commissioner Olmedo.

19 COMMISSIONER OLMEDA: Thank you, Madam  
20 Chair. Yeah, definitely very supportive in the  
21 conversation, both as a priority that  
22 Commissioner Soto brought up, as well as the  
23 points you brought up, Madam Chair.

24 I wanted to begin the conversation with a  
25 little bit of sensitivity of what's been

1 happening in the recent months, but rather than  
2 focusing on what's been happening, I want to more  
3 focus on starting by thanking the delegation of  
4 the State and including Department of Energy who  
5 visited us recently, so I do want to thank  
6 Commissioner Karen Douglas, Chairman David  
7 Hochschild, E.D. Meyers from GO-Biz, Department  
8 of Energy, Loren Sanchez from the Governor's  
9 Office, who have committed and have been making  
10 plans to do repeated visits -- that's what's  
11 necessary.

12           Traditionally -- and the other piece I  
13 want to concur with Madam Chair Paz is that one  
14 of the reasons why there's such an urgency to  
15 develop all the necessary elements for lithium to  
16 succeed, and why it wouldn't be at a more  
17 advanced stage, and why there's such an urgency,  
18 and I'm thankful to the Governor's Office for  
19 putting forth the priority on an anomaly, the  
20 lithium, recognizing that, yes, we're going to be  
21 looking at the health, the environmental, the  
22 economics, the jobs, workforce, the entire A-Z of  
23 these projects.

24           For one is, organizations as well, not  
25 just in the hat of a Lithium Commission, but also

1 organizations serving these areas, it's going to  
2 be important that we don't add burdens. In fact,  
3 subscribe to the do no harm policies that have  
4 been persistently expected by Environmental  
5 Justice and to a greater extent, disadvantaged  
6 communities.

7           First of all, I want to support this idea  
8 of putting forward a list of recommendations. I  
9 think that, as we deliver on our expectation of a  
10 full report, we cannot miss these critical  
11 deadlines and I'm here with fellow Commissioners,  
12 I know these are conversations that I've had at  
13 great lengths with Commissioner Kelley, as well,  
14 I've had conversations with Madam Chair Paz. I  
15 think it's fair that we create a local list of  
16 asks.

17           One thing that is going to be critical is  
18 that we need to create these subregions. The  
19 regions that have been created in the past,  
20 whether it's for census, for the economic  
21 development in the past, they don't work. And  
22 the reason why we're not where we need to be is  
23 because of the type of maps that get created that  
24 are not informed by Imperial and Coachella.

25           We live at a time that we've been pushing

1 equity and justice and we have administrations at  
2 the Federal level and State, that have repeatedly  
3 committed. We need to start to begin to utilize  
4 language that recognizes our region as we know  
5 it, which is Imperial Coachella. We need to  
6 recognize that we have been put at a  
7 disadvantage.

8           To some extent, we've been discriminated  
9 because our border region daytime population has  
10 been excluded and we have been excluded and  
11 discriminated when it has come to climate  
12 investments. Still today we are not being given  
13 a fair equitable distribution of climate dollars.

14           So it is going to be important that we  
15 continue to utilize language that characterizes  
16 the opportunity, the region, the community, in a  
17 more accurate way. And the other is that I  
18 appreciate these delegations coming out here  
19 because that way we can inform directly to the  
20 Commissioners, to all the leaders, and to  
21 everyone who is involved in looking at the  
22 possibilities that already tap into some extent  
23 and the possibilities of what the opportunity  
24 could be. So, with that, thank you, Madam Chair  
25 for the time.

1           CHAIR PAZ: Thank you, Commissioner  
2 Olmedo. I mean, I think more recently when we  
3 were speaking about the surf investments, right,  
4 and the CERF investments are a great opportunity  
5 for all of California, particularly for our  
6 region, could be -- again, if implemented right  
7 -- better aligned with where this region is and  
8 what they're exploring. Unfortunately, the CERF  
9 regions have split the Salton Sea Region into  
10 two, and that's what Commissioner Olmedo was  
11 saying, the Coachella Valley is part of Inland  
12 Empire, so we are at a disadvantage competing  
13 with metropolitan areas like Riverside, Imperial  
14 Valley with San Diego, again at a disadvantage,  
15 competing with San Diego, where really Coachella  
16 and Imperial share so much more in terms of the  
17 region, our lived experience, and the  
18 opportunities and challenges we're facing.

19           So, I think again, although somewhat  
20 unrelated specifically to the budget, but the  
21 more that we can start aligning all of these  
22 investments that the Governor has dedicated to  
23 disadvantaged environmental justice equity  
24 communities, then once that we can start aligning  
25 those, the better so maybe every quest for this

1 Commission to support our request to the State to  
2 allow for a subregion that combines the Salton  
3 Sea Region in their CERF. Indirectly related  
4 item, but -- I see Commissioner Colwell.

5           COMMISSIONER COLWELL: Thank you, Chair  
6 Paz. I just wanted to weigh in and I totally  
7 agree with Commissioner Olmedo, I mean, I think a  
8 lot of this information we appear to be going  
9 around and around in circles and the information  
10 hasn't been clearly shared with the public and  
11 the community.

12           Might I suggest, and I know it's on a  
13 topic on the agenda, the CEC fact sheet that we  
14 need to put together because, you know, we can  
15 probably deal with quite a few, I mean, you know,  
16 it's not connected to the Salton Sea, it's not  
17 evaporation ponds and it is a closed loop system.  
18 And I think that's a very very simple fact sheet  
19 that people can read, ask questions, and  
20 reference links, and you know, if I may, Chair  
21 Paz, you know, with CTR, happy to pull a first  
22 draft together. We understand how it all works  
23 and that might deal with not all of it, and I  
24 agree that public engagement is important, you  
25 know, and we might be able to sort of deal with

1 this because I'm sensing that we're going around  
2 and around asking the same questions, but we're  
3 not getting the answers and therefore I totally  
4 agree with Mr. Olmedo and yourself, Chair Paz.

5 And if you feel that's helpful, we're  
6 happy to engage. Thank you.

7 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you, Commissioner  
8 Colwell. You're absolutely right. I feel the  
9 same way, that we've been going around in  
10 circles, and I did make a request from the CEC,  
11 and they'll be giving us an update as to where  
12 they are so that we can start answering those  
13 questions because that's one piece of the  
14 engagement question, having the tools that then  
15 need to be distributed out.

16 So thank you and we appreciate any  
17 support. I was actually looking at websites to  
18 reduce some of your work and Jonathan's work, to  
19 get ideas of, okay, this is maybe some  
20 information that's needed, as well. So, thank  
21 you.

22 I will call on Commissioner Castaneda.

23 COMMISSIONER CASTANEDA: Thank you, Madam  
24 Chair. I appreciate the CEC and the Governor's  
25 Office and everything, and I think this is a

1 tremendous opportunity for us. We don't have a  
2 quick turnaround, so obviously we've got to start  
3 putting our collective brains together and come  
4 up with something very tangible that we could  
5 show to the people of Imperial and Coachella  
6 Valley, that not only are there protections  
7 there, there are opportunities there.

8           And the conversation we just had reminded  
9 me of a conversation I had with a friend of mine  
10 the other day and he was raised and grew up in  
11 Brawley and graduated from Brawley High, and in  
12 his early 20's he moved to San Diego, and he's  
13 been pretty successful here.

14           But he knows I'm on this Commission and  
15 we were talking about it, and he was asking me  
16 about how it's going and so forth, and just  
17 really what the prognosis for success was. And I  
18 told him, look, there's investment out, clearly a  
19 lot of very very well-heeled interests are there.  
20 Everybody is committed to do the right thing.  
21 And he stopped me and he said, "You know, Steve,"  
22 he said, "you're going to have to show the people  
23 of our community that this is real because in all  
24 the time that I was there in the Imperial County,  
25 I can't count on both hands and both feet how

1 many times there was a new industry coming in, or  
2 a new economy coming in, or everything that was  
3 going to transform our community underneath our  
4 feet. And it was all fly by night. None of it  
5 ever happened. We were told when we sold water  
6 to San Diego that that was going to transform our  
7 community. That didn't happen."

8           So, I think that the Governors' overtures  
9 are very positive because I think that if we can  
10 come up with something tangible that the state  
11 can start to invest now, ahead of the development  
12 and the implementation of the recovery process,  
13 we're going to show folks that this is for real,  
14 and this is exactly what the future of both  
15 Coachella and the Imperial Valleys looks like and  
16 will look like.

17           And so, I mean, I'm probably about as  
18 exhilarated right now by hearing the charge that  
19 we've been given and the opportunity that we have  
20 in front of us as I had when I was told that I  
21 was going to be able to serve on this Commission.

22           So, I'm looking forward to doing it. I  
23 support -- I've heard what everybody is saying, I  
24 agree completely, and believe me, I think if we  
25 can put the dollars on the street, people will

1 start to understand this is real and this is  
2 something different than they've experienced over  
3 the last 50 years. So thank you, Madam Chair. I  
4 appreciate that.

5 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you. Again, I know  
6 this is the first time we're having this  
7 conversation, but as we go through this meeting  
8 and you think of those tangible things, maybe  
9 something in the conversation gives you an idea,  
10 this is something we could request, please bring  
11 it up so that we can be documenting that we can  
12 find a way to move towards making those  
13 recommendations. Thank you. Commissioner Ruiz.

14 COMMISSIONER RUIZ: Yes. Thank you,  
15 Chair Paz. I think to appeal well to the  
16 community engagement initiative that has been  
17 discussed here, a communications campaign should  
18 also be developed rather than just putting an  
19 infographic, or a Fact Sheet here and there. I  
20 think it will be better to take a comprehensive  
21 approach, rather than a piecemeal approach. It  
22 will allow the information to percolate to the  
23 different layers in the community.

24 For the importance of this endeavor, I  
25 think it is important to do it in a systematic

1 way that will allow community to be well informed  
2 and not just producing information here and  
3 there. I think it needs to be consistent, it  
4 needs to be intentional, and I think it needs to  
5 be comprehensive.

6 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you. Commissioner  
7 Kelley.

8 VICE CHAIR KELLEY: Thank you,  
9 Chairperson Paz. So I heard Steve Castaneda  
10 talking about Brawley, so I had to jump in. So I  
11 totally agree with his assessment, and the Salton  
12 Sea is a perfect example of the promises and the  
13 tenor of the community not accepting what they're  
14 being told.

15 And I hear yours and Frank's and Ruiz's  
16 about engagement and producing information  
17 sharing what the potential is, but the truth of  
18 the matter is, as our community wants to be able  
19 to see, touch, smell. A promise is not going to  
20 give them any solace of what we are talking  
21 about.

22 So, yeah, I understand exactly what Steve  
23 is talking about, but I can hear it when I'm out  
24 and talking to people, "I'll believe it when I  
25 see it." We talk about species conservation

1 habitat and, you know, some people may not even  
2 know what's happening out there at the bale right  
3 now. It is happening. So we encourage everybody  
4 to go see it now. But that's a long time coming  
5 and that lots of promises have been made over  
6 time. And we can point to, you know, the beef  
7 plant is going to change Brawley, or we're going  
8 to have a new housing project that's going to  
9 make more opportunities for commercial  
10 development, and things like that.

11           And so I'm in agreement, but that  
12 tangible part is about being able to see, touch  
13 and smell.

14           CHAIR PAZ: You're completely right, Vice  
15 Chair Kelley. As you were talking about, you  
16 know, what are the tangibles -- and I heard that  
17 "what are the tangibles?" request, what are  
18 things that can be made tangible to our community  
19 members, and one of them we heard about were the  
20 workforce development allocations in the budget.

21           So, there's the opportunity -- how do we  
22 tap aid to not only those, but I'm sure there's  
23 other investments in workforce development, and  
24 start building up those trainings, the education  
25 pathways, so that the community is going to be

1 ready to fill these jobs and we don't end up  
2 again with people coming from outside, taking  
3 jobs.

4           So that, to me, is a tangible investment  
5 that we could do, like how do we, again, outline  
6 these resources under workforce development and  
7 the training partnerships grant that was shared  
8 with us at the last meeting, and very  
9 holistically start dedicating those fundings and  
10 attention to something that's going to lead our  
11 community or give our community a path up.

12           So that's one thing. The other thing I  
13 know that you and I have discussed is Brawley  
14 came up in our forum; there is this conversation  
15 about jobs and the jobs that may or may not be  
16 available. But again, there's missing gaps and  
17 analysis to really understand the quantity, the  
18 quality of these jobs, so maybe that's another  
19 opportunity and, again, the budget might be a  
20 slow process to get this, and we needed this  
21 analysis before, but that's something that if we  
22 had a true understanding of what those jobs are,  
23 how many, then we can again better prepare our  
24 community for those jobs, and not just the jobs,  
25 but then there's the infrastructure that's going

1 to support all of that.

2           So those, I think, are things that we can  
3 start making requests on this budget, and also  
4 start working with the agencies to help us align  
5 the resources that are available for our  
6 community around this vision that, again, as  
7 Commissioner Olmedo said and I think you probably  
8 agree, that the Salton Sea region has a lot more  
9 in common and if the resources are aligned and we  
10 don't have to compete with San Diego and  
11 Riverside, we could achieve so much more.

12           VICE CHAIR KELLEY: I do agree, and I  
13 think you did hit it, that the funding cycle is  
14 too far. I know that we need to make these asks,  
15 put them forward, but the funding cycle is a ways  
16 away. If there is the opportunity to make these  
17 investments now and start moving things along  
18 today, that would pay a dividend.

19           CHAIR PAZ: So give us your lists,  
20 Supervisor Kelley. What are the investments  
21 besides what's been mentioned? What are they  
22 needing now?

23           VICE CHAIR KELLEY: So we've been working  
24 in that way for the County and these are just  
25 mine because the Board hasn't taken a position,

1 but we'd like to see that delegation for the 49  
2 to 99 megawatts happen now. I know that the  
3 Energy Commission has been working through that  
4 process, but I think that could happen sooner and  
5 it would allow things to move for development  
6 sooner.

7           And then the County of Imperial is moving  
8 forward. We've released a Request for Proposal  
9 over a specific plan and a program EIR, over --  
10 it's over 10,000 acres. And that would be a full  
11 Environmental Impact Report meeting the  
12 requirements of CEQA and taking in the entire  
13 area.

14           But beyond mineral extraction, it would  
15 also take on any of the ancillary businesses of  
16 battery manufacturing, cathodes, battery  
17 recycling, hydrogen capture, and we're still  
18 coming up with more. We'll have the ability to  
19 add Addendums and Amendments to that RFP, or, if  
20 we are successful and we award it, that we would  
21 be able to add to the scope of work for the  
22 consulting company.

23           So, we're waiting to see back what those  
24 results are. And that would help all the  
25 industry, be able to develop having the

1 Environmental Report, and the community would  
2 have the opportunities for public hearings, to be  
3 able to participate, the elements that are inside  
4 there, including housing, transmission,  
5 utilities. It's a big endeavor, but I think  
6 we're moving in that direction to help the  
7 overall project area be successful.

8 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you. Commissioner  
9 Colwell, I saw your hand raised; do you still  
10 want to speak?

11 COMMISSIONER COLWELL: Yeah, thanks,  
12 Chair Paz.

13 I mean, weighing on to what Commissioner  
14 Kelley's points, I mean, really one of the focal  
15 points -- I think we're all aligned here, you  
16 know, with part of it, you know, on Steve's  
17 comments, doubles on the ground or, you know, how  
18 that's going to work, or Frank's comments about  
19 misinformation. We ought to get in a full study  
20 of the Environmental Impact Report, which we've  
21 offered before. The energy source will provide a  
22 Fact Sheet.

23 So, really the point here, I mean, to  
24 attract someone here like big auto and batteries  
25 and all those things we've been talking about,

1 until they have clear direction and until they  
2 understand where they can house, you know,  
3 they've got the local workforce, which we believe  
4 is here, the education is here, it's a sure track  
5 to permitting.

6 Now, one of the parts that the Governor  
7 announced which I thought was extremely  
8 intelligent, and I know that Commissioner Kelley  
9 has been working hard on this, is the royalty  
10 stream. Now, there's no pushback as a commercial  
11 developer on that at all, but I think that's one  
12 of the points that would be very helpful to dive  
13 into because it's a royalty and it's the  
14 administration thereof, you know, administration  
15 to Salton Sea repair, if it's administration to  
16 the community, administration to the County,  
17 administration to infrastructure, fast tracking  
18 of permitting, you know, all sorts of things that  
19 we're all aligned here, and we all want to sort  
20 of get this moving forward.

21 So what they are saying is not my quote,  
22 but 2024 these things need to be up and running,  
23 2025, it's more because the auto industry have to  
24 make decisions now that see their future. If  
25 they don't get some sort of comfort or simply get

1 back to Asia or China, and none of us want that,  
2 I think the United States and particularly the  
3 Imperial Valley can benefit. But no one is  
4 trying to shortcut things, no one is trying to do  
5 the wrong thing, but I think if we can align  
6 ourselves here and focus really on the royalty  
7 side and administration, that's going to lead to  
8 certainty and lead to things that I think across  
9 all Commissioners, I know speaking for myself,  
10 would be very very helpful. Thank you.

11 CHAIR PAZ Thank you. Anybody else? We  
12 still have some Commissioners who have been  
13 quiet, so before I wrap up this segment, thank  
14 you. So I will call on Commissioner Flores and  
15 then Commissioner Weisgall.

16 COMMISSIONER FLORES: You know, I mean,  
17 I've had a chance to talk to the local building  
18 trades regarding these and perhaps in another  
19 subsequent meeting these are some people who can  
20 invite community, talk to us about what types of  
21 jobs or apprenticeships for locals that they  
22 might have available. I know that a lot of times  
23 during the apprenticeship they actually are  
24 receiving a living wage and I definitely think  
25 these types of opportunities are what get us to

1 middle class. So I would expect that  
2 conversation to continue. Thank you.

3 CHAIR PAZ: Yes, there will be, as you'll  
4 see later in the agenda, there's going to be an  
5 opportunity to continue that. Commissioner  
6 Weisgall.

7 COMMISSIONER WEISGALL: Well, let me  
8 weigh in on a couple of points here. I think the  
9 budget -- there are two parts to this proposed  
10 budget -- there are expenditures and there's  
11 revenue. It will be wonderful working on the  
12 expenditures. Commissioner Douglas talked about  
13 some of the big projects; the workforce  
14 development is something we've been focusing on  
15 quite a bit.

16 We're working with Imperial Valley  
17 College even just today on getting the numbers on  
18 projected hires and salaries for plant operators  
19 and lab technicians in order to get more funding  
20 for disciplines and faculty to create programs in  
21 those areas, not to mention other job  
22 classifications, you know, electricians and  
23 engineers and chemists and safety environmental  
24 procurement, and the like.

25 So that's going to be -- I don't want to

1 call it the easy part, but there when you're  
2 looking at distributing dollars to make things  
3 work, getting money on the street, all of that  
4 makes a lot of sense. And good creative thinking  
5 is needed, but the money has to be spent wisely.

6           The second part of the budget is the  
7 revenue side, not the expenditure side. And the  
8 Governor's Budget Proposal specifically talks  
9 about how the Administration wants to work with  
10 the Legislature and, I'm quoting here, "The  
11 Lithium Valley Commission and county and  
12 community partners to develop a model for revenue  
13 sharing and a fund that benefits Californians,"  
14 and Commissioner Douglas just talked about the  
15 need to develop a model around revenue to benefit  
16 California and the region.

17           So let me drill down a little bit on  
18 that. I guess I have three basic points on what  
19 Commissioner Colwell has talked about a  
20 "royalty," call it a "tax," call it a  
21 "severance," whatever. Point number one, the tax  
22 has to be reasonable. There are plenty of places  
23 in the United States and around the world where,  
24 if there is a natural resource either mined or  
25 extracted or removed from underneath the earth,

1 that revenue, royalty, severance, is paid. I  
2 think everybody can accept that.

3           The question is, what's a reasonable  
4 number? And it's obviously premature for this  
5 Commission to weigh in, but I have to remind you  
6 again of one principle, which is if the industry  
7 can't produce lithium at a commercially viable  
8 price that is competitive with other producers,  
9 we're going to be wasting our time. So that's  
10 something to keep in mind.

11           Point 2 on revenue, I've been in any  
12 number of meetings with Commissioner Kelley to  
13 talk about an Imperial County severance tax and I  
14 see in the Governor's Budget a model for revenue  
15 sharing. I would simply say one tax, not two, or  
16 one severance payment, not two, would be the way  
17 to go.

18           My third point, and I will proceed to be  
19 politically incorrect right now, or at least  
20 raise politically difficult issues, I'll put it  
21 that way, where is the revenue going to go? Is  
22 it going to stay in Imperial County? Is it going  
23 to stay in Imperial Valley? Is it going to go to  
24 Sacramento to the General Fund?

25           You know, I will just say 100 percent of

1 the lithium activities happen to be in Imperial  
2 County. My company, we've paid \$45 million in  
3 property taxes in the last eight years to  
4 Imperial County. So, again, I put that to the  
5 group: where should that revenue go? And I'm  
6 not trying to answer any of these questions, but  
7 you wanted to do a deep dive, you wanted to kind  
8 of take gloves off, I think it's time to take  
9 gloves off and start addressing these questions  
10 because someone is going to be making these  
11 decisions and we may as well have that discussion  
12 ourselves.

13 I don't know if we can even make  
14 recommendations, and I don't know what our  
15 timetable is; it's October for our Report which  
16 is going to be too late if the Legislature is  
17 going to be thinking about this. But I do think  
18 that we can put a group together pretty quickly  
19 to at least address some of those issues. So,  
20 I'll get off of my soapbox.

21 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you and thank you for  
22 raising those more difficult conversations that  
23 are on everybody's minds, right? And I think in  
24 terms of early action, what I see the opportunity  
25 here is a request for pathway, the resources

1 pathway where we can have these conversations and  
2 then, when I say "we," it's not only we, the  
3 Lithium Valley Commissioners, but these  
4 conversations need to be had with the community  
5 members, so renew the space where all of our  
6 perspectives are being put at the table,  
7 discussed, and we can come to an agreement and to  
8 answer these questions in community about what  
9 the money is going to be used for, where it goes,  
10 all of those questions that you've raised that  
11 are very appropriate questions.

12           The Administration has a new Office of  
13 Engagement, the Governor's Office of Engagement.  
14 I don't know if that's the pathway, but  
15 definitely we need to be having these  
16 conversations with industry, labor, the impacted  
17 communities, government, everyone who is involved  
18 and who will be affected by this.

19           So maybe that's as far as a  
20 recommendation, maybe, that we can make coming  
21 out of this meeting today and then figuring out  
22 and requesting that support so we can start  
23 having those conversations sooner, rather than  
24 later.

25           I see Commissioner Ruiz and then

1 Commissioner Olmedo.

2           COMMISSIONER RUIZ: Yeah, thank you,  
3 Chair Paz. To add more complexity to the  
4 royalties question, I want to ask the  
5 Commissioners: how do you feel about benefitting  
6 the Salton Sea directly with the royalties? I  
7 know the State of California is legally obligated  
8 to address the issue, but this is an issue that  
9 pertains to the whole region. And this is  
10 something that we haven't discussed.

11           How can the royalties -- can a portion of  
12 it be allocated directly to benefit the Salton  
13 Sea, to benefit the intricacies, the problems  
14 there that go beyond just the environmental  
15 issue? And that is something that maybe we  
16 wouldn't want to discuss, but I think, like  
17 somebody said, remove the gloves. Gloves off,  
18 right? So, I think it is important to have these  
19 conversations.

20           CHAIR PAZ: Thank you. Commissioner  
21 Olmedo.

22           COMMISSIONER OLMEDO: Thank you, Madam  
23 Chair. Just a couple quick points. First of  
24 all, I want to thank Commissioner Weisgall for  
25 those comments; they were all very valuable and I

1 care to differ, I think he's too kind of a guy, I  
2 don't think he's taken off the gloves yet.

3           But I do want to say that, from an  
4 Environmental Justice or disadvantaged  
5 standpoint, we have a long history of industry  
6 developing here -- successful projects or  
7 sometimes projects that don't come to fruition.  
8 But I would say the one thing that I would just  
9 like to highlight as we need to work amongst  
10 diverse stakeholders is the whole narrative of,  
11 the whole sort of trade, right, what's the  
12 tradeoff?

13           And I think we're living at a point in  
14 time that we don't really need to, necessarily,  
15 trade off quality of life, public health risk. I  
16 think we're living at a point in time that all  
17 can be balanced, and all can be successful, and  
18 we're living at a point in time where the  
19 expectations of industry pretty much having its  
20 way with communities and its resources -- I'm not  
21 really sure that the traditional way of doing  
22 business is what we're trying to achieve here,  
23 right?

24           And I think we're all in it for the same  
25 reasons, at least I'm optimistic and hopeful and

1 that's why it's so important that this Commission  
2 was formed in its diversity that it is and having  
3 community participation. To me, I think it's  
4 perhaps a first that I've ever seen in my 20 plus  
5 years working on Environmental Justice in this  
6 region.

7           But with that said, I do want to  
8 highlight something for the list of asks, you  
9 know, something specific. The Government is  
10 getting, as of resources, it has greater  
11 possibility of having resources to develop in  
12 high rates consultants, to bring forth  
13 recommendations, bring forth whether it's  
14 economics, or this workforce development, you  
15 know, the industry certainly have a great  
16 interest and have their consultants to some  
17 extent, right, I don't mean to speak -- I'm  
18 assuming that they do all their market and other  
19 analysis, for whatever a regular analysis they  
20 are.

21           But historically, communities have not  
22 had their own consultants or access to resources  
23 to hire their own consultants that focus on  
24 community priorities. When we bring in the  
25 experts and the analysis from the industry from

1 Government and community, I think that we are  
2 going to create that balance that we seek,  
3 something that we can coexist, something that we  
4 can address all concerns, and something that can  
5 drive and succeed in this opportunity that's  
6 before us.

7           So, I will say that's going to be an  
8 important ask that I hope our Commissioners will  
9 support as part of the ask. I'm assuming at some  
10 point that we as a Commission would put forth an  
11 ask and I want to again thank Commissioner Kelley  
12 for being a good scribe and always trying to put  
13 pen on paper. I think definitely that is one  
14 that is important, and I like to uplift.

15           CHAIR PAZ: Thank you. Commissioner  
16 Kelley.

17           VICE CHAIR KELLEY: Thank you,  
18 Chairperson Paz. So Jonathan opened up the can,  
19 right? Look, I've got a different point of view  
20 and I don't want to take anything away from  
21 Coachella Valley or from Eastern Riverside along  
22 the sea. But Imperial Valley is Lithium Valley  
23 and I am very interested in making sure that the  
24 needs of our communities that have been left away  
25 from the spotlight of Sacramento for so long are

1 going to be addressed.

2           So, I'm not opposed to having some  
3 conversation about how there would be the State  
4 participating in revenue as a junior partner,  
5 very junior. But, you know, we're having this  
6 conversation today, but nobody wanted to talk  
7 about Lithium Valley three years ago. And you've  
8 got to believe me, I was making the rounds and I  
9 was talking in Washington, in Sacramento, and in  
10 San Francisco. Nobody was hearing the needs, the  
11 wants, the identifying of a critical resource  
12 that was here, and nobody was answering that  
13 call.

14           And then, quite similarly, nobody was  
15 answering ten years ago, nobody was answering the  
16 call on the Salton Sea. I was making those  
17 rounds, too, and nobody was paying attention to  
18 that need. We've been having these conversations  
19 in our community since May of 2021, talking about  
20 a severance tax, and balancing that with making  
21 assurance for business to be able to develop  
22 here, and how a severance or other model would be  
23 used so that we could address some needs, make  
24 infrastructure, litigation, and community  
25 enhancement -- community enhancement meaning

1 making it much more attractive for those  
2 professionals to live here so that they don't  
3 migrate from San Diego, or Palm Springs, or Yuma,  
4 come in here and work, and then go back to their  
5 school districts, their municipalities, and  
6 they're not part of our community.

7           So, I am not closed-minded to having an  
8 open conversation, but I do want to reinforce  
9 that Imperial Valley IS Lithium Valley. And  
10 thank you for that.

11           CHAIR PAZ: Thank you, Vice Chair Kelley,  
12 for uplifting those points. I mean, as someone  
13 from Coachella, I wouldn't contest anything of  
14 what you've said. I was born in the MexiCali ,  
15 I've driven across, I've known the region and the  
16 needs and, I mean, my history and involvement in  
17 the Salton Sea here, I'm very familiar with  
18 because I've been in many meetings advocating for  
19 exactly the things that you have talked about,  
20 that it's about the quality of life, so putting  
21 how any royalties and fees and all that need to  
22 be worked out aside, I want to also put on the  
23 table that we are a region.

24           And what happens environmentally on one  
25 side of the lake affects the other side of the

1 lake; what happens in public health, we are a  
2 connected region, our population has traveled  
3 across the valleys to work on the fields, so I'm  
4 with you and, again, I just want to bring to the  
5 forefront that we do need to figure out a way to  
6 enhance the region because if we are looking at  
7 this from a regional perspective, I think we're  
8 all going to win. And that shouldn't take away  
9 from all of the needs that you've mentioned and  
10 the priority that those needs should have in  
11 these conversations. So thank you for raising  
12 that up, too. Commissioner Hicks.

13           COMMISSIONER HICKS: Whenever you're  
14 dealing with geothermal, and you start drilling  
15 down deeper, it starts getting a little hotter,  
16 so let me take it a little deeper.

17           I hear comments today, and I have for  
18 some time, whenever you're talking about  
19 royalties, I think as a group the Commissioners  
20 need to bring in an expert and give us a little  
21 bit of background on royalties, mineral rights,  
22 leases, mining on federal grounds, and so forth.  
23 I think we need to be educated on that before we  
24 get too far down the road because it's going to  
25 be pretty much like water rights. I've lived

1 here all my life and the water has always been an  
2 issue, and I've had the pleasure or displeasure,  
3 whichever way you want to call it, of going from  
4 Superior Court, all the way to the Supreme Court,  
5 more than once. And you find out it's not  
6 exactly the way you think it is.

7           So, I think it would be wise for us when  
8 we're discussing these royalties because we do  
9 have private owners, we do have public land,  
10 there is some fertile ground and I think most of  
11 it is underwater, but I think it would help us if  
12 we had that -- be timed a little bit more for us  
13 before we get too far down the road. Thank you.

14           CHAIR PAZ: Absolutely. Thank you. So,  
15 I will take these last two hands that I'm seeing  
16 to wrap up and move on other items. So, we will  
17 hear from Commissioner Castaneda, Commissioner  
18 Olmedo, and then I'll try to summarize and put  
19 forward a recommendation for us to move.  
20 Commissioner Castaneda.

21           COMMISSIONER CASTANEDA: Great. Thank  
22 you very much, Chair.

23           I think before we can talk about rock  
24 royalties or revenue splits and all of that, I  
25 think that one thing that probably -- and again,

1 I don't want to get between the Coachella versus  
2 Imperial, I think that's something that needs to  
3 work itself out over time because right now we  
4 don't have anything, we're just talking about  
5 concepts, right? But I think what is important  
6 is that before we talk about this community or  
7 that community, or the State, or anything -- and  
8 I agree with Commissioner Ruiz, I believe that  
9 there has to be some priorities with respect to  
10 the dollars that are derived from these  
11 operations.

12 I think one of the top priorities, at  
13 least for me, but I think for a lot of people, is  
14 restoration of the Salton Sea. There have been  
15 plans, I don't know if they're perfect, I don't  
16 know what those dollar amounts are, but there  
17 needs to be a little something put aside for  
18 that, obviously.

19 The other thing -- and again, this is  
20 like a snowflake, everybody sees it differently  
21 -- if we see this opportunity to its greatest  
22 potential, I mean, I think somebody talked about  
23 Western Detroit, you know, what are those impacts  
24 and what kind of infrastructure is going to be  
25 needed to support and sustain the quality of life

1 and the opportunities for the people that are  
2 going to be impacted by these operations?

3           So, there's going to be significant  
4 investment that's going to be required to sustain  
5 all of these activities that are going on, and  
6 that has to be derived probably mostly, because I  
7 don't see Sacramento, basically, sending down a  
8 bunch of money for those purposes, from the  
9 dollars that are derived from these operations.

10           And so, I think that before we start  
11 setting up the table and figuring out who is  
12 going to get what card, and who is going to get  
13 what piece, and everything like that, I think our  
14 due diligence would be to say, what does this  
15 mean for the people of the area that are going to  
16 be impacted directly.

17           And what's it going to cost in the future  
18 to ensure that those impacts are mitigated and  
19 that the infrastructure and the environment --  
20 and again, that takes on all kind of different  
21 meanings -- are taken care of? And what are  
22 those costs? And how long will it take to  
23 amortize and pay for those costs?

24           And then at that point you can start to  
25 see what you do in the long term about kind of

1 divvying up the revenues and all of these kinds  
2 of things.

3           But I think Commissioner Weisgall is  
4 right and we can't starve the golden goose here.  
5 I mean, this resource is only worth so much and  
6 if we want this to be all that we know it can be,  
7 then we have to be circumspect, but we have to  
8 take care of the homeland first.

9           That's the way I look at it and that's  
10 what I'd really like to support. And maybe  
11 that's what we ask the Governor's Office to do,  
12 is to help us understand what kind of  
13 infrastructure, what kind of planning would be  
14 required in order to sustain environmentally and,  
15 you know, I think equitably, for the people, the  
16 communities that are going to be directly  
17 impacted, and then look at those revenues after  
18 the fact. So, I just wanted to -- it came to  
19 mind, so thank you very much for indulging me.

20           CHAIR PAZ: I appreciate that.  
21 Commissioner Olmedo.

22           COMMISSIONER OLMEDO: In the spirit of  
23 offering more asks for the budget, I think it may  
24 be worth asking to incentivize technologies that  
25 are clean, green, see what emissions, see waste

1 streams, to extend possible green certifications  
2 of different industries.

3           I think that industries that do build --  
4 because right now, even though we have some  
5 established business and some pilot projects, and  
6 maybe they need to characterize themselves beyond  
7 pilots, but there will be others who may also be  
8 interested in building. And I think it will be  
9 fair to begin to start thinking about, if we are  
10 truly committed to green energy, cleaner energy,  
11 then we need to also incentivize cleaner  
12 technologies. That's going to help us address  
13 some of the concerns that we're discussing about  
14 public health, about communities bearing the  
15 burden of pollution, and so on.

16           Also, in terms of workforce development,  
17 I think a low risk ask and low risk investment  
18 that the state can do is in our higher education  
19 and vocational institutions. And we need to  
20 bring in what the state has been committing to,  
21 which is environmental literacy, a stand, you  
22 know, this education, even if let's say worst  
23 case scenario this thing doesn't come to  
24 fruition, we can build a workforce and we can  
25 build an educated population that can begin to

1 innovate. It can begin to build start-ups.

2           We need to be able to educate beyond a  
3 certificate to work, for example what happened  
4 with the solar where you have hundreds of people  
5 who can't do anything with a certificate. We  
6 need to be able to give them more education and  
7 opportunities so that they can innovate and build  
8 their own small business, large business, or go  
9 to some other area. Even if they move somewhere  
10 else in California, they're taking that education  
11 with them, and they will be a ready workforce for  
12 that community. So, we need to think about it  
13 that way, not always think that all the entire  
14 investment is here and the workforce needs to  
15 stay here. We can be a community in our region  
16 that can build this type of workforce.

17           I also want to note that, just in the  
18 spirit of what I said earlier, characterizing, I  
19 think it's a really delicate matter of how we see  
20 ourselves; and I understand, Commissioner Kelley,  
21 I've had my own frustrations and I've spoken to,  
22 to mind, Chair Paz, that when we have too many  
23 external forces, putting pressures or trying to  
24 appropriate, or characteristics or dynamics as a  
25 community, as a region, it will create pressures.

1           So, I would say that I think there's  
2 understanding in our region. You know, we've  
3 worked here, we've coexisted, our population and  
4 our communities work together. But if these  
5 conversations are even happening about Coachella,  
6 Imperial, I don't believe that they're real  
7 tensions of our communities and the way we've  
8 existed here in the Salton Sea region, I think  
9 it's because other forces on the outside are not  
10 being respectful and are not consulting and not  
11 working with the local communities as they engage  
12 in this enthusiasm of this industry. Thank you,  
13 Madam Chair.

14           CHAIR PAZ: Please do not raise your hand  
15 when we have two more people, there will be other  
16 opportunities to continue the dialogue. So  
17 Jonathan Weisgall and then Vice Chair Kelley.

18           COMMISSIONER WEISGALL: Well, thanks.  
19 I'll be brief. But I do think, as you summarize  
20 or as you try to, as Chair, look at these issues,  
21 clearly one of the big questions here is are we  
22 the Lithium Valley Commission, or are we the  
23 Salton Sea Commission. I think that I've got to  
24 differ on some of these points.

25           You know, the State of California is

1 statutorily obligated to restore the Salton Sea.  
2 I don't know the exact budget numbers, I want to  
3 say it's over \$200 million, \$40 million this  
4 year, I think \$100 million dedicated in 2022-'23,  
5 and another 40 perhaps in '23-'24. Those are big  
6 dollars that are important. Can the industry  
7 create those kinds of dollars? I don't know. I  
8 mean, we'll start producing commercially in 2026.  
9 What about the Ag community? I mean, the  
10 geothermal lithium industry is not responsible  
11 for any pollution at the Salton Sea; it's pretty  
12 much the Ag community in the Imperial Valley.

13           So, I think you've gotten think a little  
14 bit more broadly about some of these issues. And  
15 frankly, I mean, as I think about where dollars  
16 should go from Lithium production, which did not  
17 cause any problems at the Salton Sea, I'm kind of  
18 more with Luis -- I want to see education, I want  
19 to see hiring, I want to see housing, I want to  
20 see healthcare.

21           You know, Commissioner Kelley, you talked  
22 about, you know, we don't want people coming here  
23 and then driving home to their homes, we want  
24 nice homes in Imperial County. We want better  
25 education. We want better healthcare. That's

1 where I would be spending the revenue.

2 Now, can we do something for Salton Sea?

3 Of course. I'm not saying that we ignore it, but

4 that's a big-ticket item that neither the

5 geothermal industry nor the impending Lithium

6 industry, for which it has caused any problems.

7 My company has no leases whatsoever under the

8 Salton Sea, we do not encroach on the Salton Sea

9 at all.

10 Now, the same cannot be said for the rest

11 of the industry and, again, that could be one

12 area where we take the gloves off and start to

13 lock horns. But anyway, Chair Paz, that's the

14 issue: is the Salton Sea Commission going to be

15 a subsidiary of the Lithium Valley Commission?

16 It's a question we have to ask ourselves.

17 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you. Vice Chair

18 Kelley.

19 VICE CHAIR KELLEY: I promise to be

20 short. Jonathan, you gave me quite a laugh

21 opening up another box with Ag runoff. You

22 should probably go on mute for the rest of the

23 meeting.

24 So, I'll share with you -- these are

25 asks, these are not the Board of Supervisors'

1 asks, but these are for contemplation.

2           We would like the delegative authority  
3 from 49-99 megawatts. We would like the support  
4 and funding of our specific plan and program,  
5 Environmental Impact Report. And to Commissioner  
6 Castaneda's question, this specific plan would  
7 address all of these needs, including education,  
8 infrastructure, housing, environment, all of the  
9 CEQA requirements will be covered, and public  
10 comment would be part of this, many elements in  
11 this specific plan.

12           We would also like to develop a Lithium  
13 Valley Development Office and we are seeking  
14 support and funding of that, five people  
15 dedicated towards moving projects in with county  
16 permitting, planning, zoning, all aspects, so  
17 shepherding projects, limited term, higher wage,  
18 so that we can see this development go to its  
19 full potential.

20           We'd also like support and assistance in  
21 the creation of a severance tax or a resource  
22 levy in Imperial County. And there are different  
23 ways of doing it, but we would like to have that  
24 conversation.

25           And lastly, we would like support and

1 funding for a Cal Poly campus in Brawley,  
2 California. And that plays into our Ag history,  
3 and it plays into the engineering and technical  
4 vocational skills needed for this new industry.

5 And so those are just mine, but something  
6 to share.

7 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you. So I will not  
8 repeat those things that you have shared, but to  
9 wrap up, I see -- I'll cover these very direct  
10 tasks, I see different layers and one of the  
11 things that you probably all agree is critical  
12 and foundational is how are we getting the  
13 information on the get go about whether it's the  
14 economic analysis that needs to inform the  
15 development, the response to the public health  
16 concerns, and those are two -- and then the other  
17 one, how do we build the capacity? I heard, and  
18 I'm forgetting which Commissioner, I think it was  
19 Commissioner Hanks, when we're talking about  
20 royalties and fees and, you know, community  
21 benefits, agreements, and other things, how do we  
22 build the capacity for us as a region to be able  
23 to start having those conversations. So those  
24 are, I think, things that are foundational for us  
25 to move forward, and things that I've heard from

1 this conversation.

2           The other piece is on the workforce  
3 development, making sure that those resources are  
4 being aligned and responding to where we are as a  
5 region in terms of these workforce developments  
6 trainings, needs, gaps.

7           Oh, and then there was the communications  
8 and outreach, I would say communication, outreach  
9 and engagement, because, first, it's critical  
10 that we're putting out the communications of the  
11 conversations. There are questions, what is  
12 Lithium Valley? How do we start defining what it  
13 is, how many projects we're talking about, you  
14 know, basic questions that I'm sure there's  
15 already answers to, but we're just not putting  
16 out there, so we need a communications -- an  
17 outreach campaign.

18           Outreach? It's how do we target the  
19 population that most of the time does not get  
20 access to be at the table. So we want to make  
21 sure that we're not leaving them behind and that  
22 their piece is the engagement when we are having  
23 -- at whatever point when we're ready to have the  
24 conversations around royalties, community  
25 benefits, things like that, we need to make sure

1 -- to Luis' point -- that the community is  
2 supported, has the capacity to come in at the  
3 same level that the County is going to come, or  
4 that the industry is going to come.

5           So there are also things that, taken from  
6 our conversation, including the last comments  
7 that Vice Chair Kelley mentioned.

8           I think my task after this, if you all  
9 agree, maybe Vice Chair Kelley, myself, we can  
10 huddle quickly with Energy Commission to find the  
11 adequate pathways, what we need to do if we're  
12 trying to make some of these recommendations or  
13 items into policy -- we have the February 18th  
14 deadline, or if it's going to be budget requests.  
15 At this point, I could not tell you.

16           There is some need for us to meet sooner  
17 rather than later so that we can be on the same  
18 page, but I think if Vice Chair Kelley, myself,  
19 and Energy Commission staff put our heads  
20 together, we can identify a pathway and then find  
21 a way to communicate with you if there is a need  
22 for us to come back together. Does that sound  
23 like a path forward? Okay. If you really  
24 oppose, you can just say "opposed," but other  
25 than that I am moving forward, then. Thank you

1 very much for this conversation and we will open  
2 it. Next slide, I think it is public comment.

3 This is an opportunity for members of the  
4 audience to comment on the budget discussion that  
5 we just had. Elisabeth?

6 MS. DE JONG: Thank you, Chair Paz. So  
7 if you're joining us by Zoom on the computer,  
8 please use that "raise hand" feature. If you've  
9 called in, please dial \*9 to raise your hand, and  
10 then \*6 to unmute your phone line.

11 We'll go first to the hands raised, then  
12 phones, and then written comments in that Q&A  
13 box.

14 The first hand raised I see is Ronald  
15 Spears. You should be able to unmute yourself.

16 MR. SPEARS: Okay, that was quick. I  
17 wasn't prepared to go that quickly.

18 Hi. Ron Spears. I'm President of the  
19 Bahia Del Mar Property Owners Association out at  
20 Desert Shores and a strong advocate of the Salton  
21 Sea Chanel Restoration. When I was listening to  
22 all of you, and you're probably all going to be  
23 shocked, I'm a 70-year-old American, I still  
24 believe in capitalism, and I believe that  
25 companies have a right to make a profit. They're

1 investing their money, their energy, their time,  
2 in order to create a product and a service that  
3 is going to reward them.

4           I think the way that these things should  
5 be resolved is on the back end where taxes are  
6 paid. Those taxes should go to things that  
7 improve the communities, improve education,  
8 improve schooling. It would be nice if the  
9 corporations involved in the Lithium extraction  
10 wanted to build schools or build education  
11 facilities that would help them to run their  
12 business better.

13           The main thing I would like to see is  
14 working on a solution that the product that is  
15 developed -- the Lithium, itself -- benefits the  
16 community. Most of the time in Coachella Valley,  
17 either through geothermal, or through wind with  
18 the windmills, and things like that, it seems  
19 like it's sold off to the highest bidder which  
20 happens to be Los Angeles, or San Diego, or  
21 wherever, so you're using the Valley and the  
22 product is going to the highest bidder.

23           Now, there could be a way that the  
24 Imperial County Board of Supervisors, or Imperial  
25 County Government, can work with the Lithium

1 extraction industry in order to make sure that  
2 the profit that they deserve, and that they  
3 should get, stays within the Coachella Valley,  
4 Imperial County area, through either offsetting  
5 subsidies, or carbon taxes, or whatever other  
6 means you have available at your disposal to make  
7 it economically feasible to sell that lithium  
8 where the benefits go to the Imperial County and  
9 Coachella Valley. And that's all I have to say.

10 MS. DE JONG: Thank you. Our next hand  
11 raise is Alex Cardenas. You should be able to  
12 unmute yourself.

13 MR. CARDENAS: Yeah. Good afternoon. I  
14 do appreciate all the efforts of the Commission  
15 and I appreciate the conversation. Alex  
16 Cardenas, I currently sit on the IID Board and  
17 have the privilege and honor to serve with  
18 Commissioner Hanks, who I really appreciate.

19 My only comment is in relation to  
20 transmissions, and I would just encourage that  
21 we, the Commission, have a clear understanding of  
22 our transmission capabilities and the feasibility  
23 of moving energy to areas like the Coachella  
24 Valley.

25 I would caution before we would make the

1 request for increasing the permitting for  
2 geothermal, that a good understanding of what our  
3 capability is and what's in the queue, and how  
4 much is available in terms of capacity, that the  
5 Commission have a clear understanding and the  
6 best Statesmen for that would be Commissioner  
7 Hanks.

8           But everything that I'm hearing today is  
9 exciting, but I think one of the challenges is  
10 going to be transmission. And I know that our  
11 system, which is strategically positioned for  
12 Lithium Valley, but there still needs to be an  
13 understanding of what capacity we have to wield  
14 the power to some of the most needed areas so  
15 that we can mine out that Lithium.

16           So, I'm going to stop there. And if I  
17 may make an inquiry, has there been any  
18 discussions regarding assessing the transmission  
19 capability, and who is currently in the queue,  
20 and what we're doing to maybe address that? And  
21 I'll defer to Commissioner Hanks, I don't want to  
22 walk on or step on his toes, he'll let me have  
23 it, but I just wanted to put that on the white  
24 board. Thank you.

25           MS. DE JONG: Thank you. Okay, the next

1 hand raise is Nikola Lakic. You should be able  
2 to unmute yourself.

3 MR. LAKIC: Good afternoon. Can you hear  
4 me?

5 MS. DE JONG: Yes. We can hear you.

6 MR. LAKIC: Thank you very much, Chair  
7 Paz and Commissioners, for this opportunity to  
8 say a few words.

9 I was listening to the conversation, and  
10 a little debate, and I see some friction. The  
11 Commissioner Jonathan Weisgall says, well, there  
12 is paying for restoration of the Salton Sea, and  
13 there is paying for what you're doing right now,  
14 harnessing Lithium. That's true, but that's  
15 wrong.

16 There is a solution, I happen to be the  
17 author of that proposal, that you right  
18 restoration of the Salton Sea and harnessing  
19 Lithium from geothermal brine.

20 And also, Commissioner Steve Castaneda  
21 mentioned restoration of Salton Sea, you are  
22 arguing about revenue and how to share it,  
23 expenses. There could be more and more of that.

24 Please read my proposal, I did send you  
25 one, an extensive letter of 15 pages. I hope you

1 read it. If you didn't, this is not the  
2 opportunity for me to speak about my proposal,  
3 but it unites all of you, it would be very good  
4 for the community. We are talking about a half  
5 billion to a billion revenue, in addition that  
6 you can generate from harnessing Lithium.

7           So, it's not something to ignore. My  
8 expertise is exactly that, solving problems like  
9 this. Engineer, architect, nine semesters plus  
10 graduate work. I graduated ten out of ten. I  
11 spent a lot of times working on it.

12           Unfortunately, nobody invited me to  
13 explain that; nobody asks questions about it. I  
14 will send some emails to all Commissioners. If  
15 you have time, take one hour or hour and a half  
16 of your time one afternoon, each of them  
17 separately, I don't mind, it would be wise. Time  
18 is passing. One year already passed. You have  
19 to make a decision very soon. I see the deadline  
20 is February 18 for some -- what it was, something  
21 -- well, February 18, last day for Bill to be  
22 introduced.

23           But you are making a decision without  
24 really seeing the whole picture. Please invite  
25 me. I will be glad to visit each of you

1 separately if necessary. It's very important.  
2 We are talking about only \$15 Billion project  
3 cost, but much much more than just importing sea  
4 water. And we are talking about \$1 Billion  
5 revenue. If it had been my proposal, the numbers  
6 are very very conservative; I didn't want to go -  
7 - but it's between a half billion and billion in  
8 addition to your way of producing Lithium.

9           So don't be selfish, don't just look  
10 short-sighted into something. See the broader  
11 picture. I will be glad to see, interview.  
12 Thank you very much for this opportunity.

13           MS. DE JONG: All right. So thank you.  
14 And the next commenter with the hand raise is  
15 Jose Flores. You should be able to unmute  
16 yourself.

17           MR. FLORES: Good afternoon,  
18 Commissioners and Chair Paz. My recommendation  
19 is in regards to living in here, in the ring of  
20 fire, and maybe a good idea, I think, would be to  
21 have some sort of independent seismicity study  
22 since we live in proximity to three faults and we  
23 have plenty of earthquakes as it is, and a couple  
24 times even earthquake swarms. It is crucial, I  
25 think, to prepare and be proactive and have some

1 sort of emergency response plan and team in case  
2 this, hopefully this lithium reality comes to  
3 fruition in the proper way. And if, God forsake,  
4 some earthquake 7.2 or above comes to fruition,  
5 that we are prepared. And even though hundreds  
6 of workers that are working there are taken care  
7 of, because we cannot just pool resources from  
8 Niland and the CaliPat, worth one in Brawley  
9 which are the nearest Cities, so again just  
10 trying to be proactive with our seismic activity  
11 here in Imperial Valley.

12           My other comment was in regard to in  
13 support of the Lithium industry that will be  
14 coming in line after this takes off. If any  
15 future corporations, industries do come in, I  
16 think it behooves us to go totally green and, if  
17 possible, I don't know how that would be, but if  
18 possible it would be lovely to enforce some sort  
19 of mandate where these green companies that come  
20 in surely put their money where their mouth is,  
21 and other trucks and autos within their  
22 government fleet and bikes, if necessary,  
23 everything is electric. So they kind of show a  
24 model that they practiced what they preach, and  
25 that we are truly trying to change this region of

1 Coachella Valley and Imperial Valley and make it  
2 a model, not only for California, for the U.S.,  
3 but also global, as well. Thank you very much  
4 for your time.

5 MS. DE JONG: Thank you. The next hand  
6 raised is by Orlando Foote. You should be able  
7 to unmute.

8 MR. FOOTE: Can you hear me?

9 MS. DE JONG: Yes, we can hear you.

10 MR. FOOTE: My name is Orlando Foote.  
11 I'm an attorney practicing here in Imperial  
12 Valley. I've been here for 50 plus years, one of  
13 the rare birds that moved here from another area  
14 and stayed over the last 50 plus years.

15 I've had the pleasure of serving on part  
16 of the organizing group that formed the Imperial  
17 Valley Commission, the Imperial Valley  
18 Development Corporation, and as well I've served  
19 on the Workforce Development.

20 My comments are two: 1) I think the  
21 previous comments related to the outreach of  
22 members of the Commission and various others with  
23 stakes in the geothermal and in the Lithium  
24 development industries, they need to get out in  
25 the community and sell this. I think it's not

1 under-understood, but it certainly is going to  
2 help to appear before public agencies, service  
3 clubs, various governmental agencies, that's  
4 going to help a lot.

5           The second thing, and I think this is  
6 extremely important, is that with regard to the  
7 water issues, there is an inherent competition  
8 between the Ag industry and between industrial  
9 development here. It's been true from at least  
10 the last half century that I've been here.

11           And I think there is a sweet spot that  
12 can be reached, and I think that means overcoming  
13 some concerns on both sides with regard to water,  
14 water allocation, water use, and the seemingly  
15 inevitable litigations that follow. I would  
16 encourage the Imperial Irrigation District and  
17 also Lithium proponents and advocates to get down  
18 to the community and get to work on selling this  
19 to the members of the Ag community, as well as  
20 members of the communities, in general. Thank  
21 you.

22           MS. DE JONG: Thank you. The next hand  
23 raise is by Eric Reyes. You should be able to  
24 unmute yourself.

25           MR. REYES: Hello. Eric Reyes, Executive

1 Director of Los Amigos de la Comunidad, Imperial  
2 Valley. And I think you as Commissioners have  
3 had a dynamic discussion and I'm able to pick up  
4 a lot of different ideas from what I'm capturing.

5           As to some of the issues there, yes, we  
6 want the Lithium industry to be in Imperial  
7 Valley. We definitely need those jobs, we  
8 definitely need the investment from the State,  
9 the Federal, which is already happening. I think  
10 people forget that there's already been millions  
11 allocated, and millions more.

12           And we want it to be, to Weisgall's  
13 comments, we want the Lithium industry,  
14 regardless of you directly are funding you or  
15 not, or work on the Salton Sea, is that it would  
16 be part of the solution. You all know, you will  
17 not be able to cure the issues of the Salton Sea  
18 from Lithium extraction, let's make that clear  
19 from the beginning. You can be part of the  
20 solution and that is what we as a community are  
21 asking, that any taxes, any levies, any fees be  
22 part of the economic engine that we need in  
23 Imperial County and Coachella Valley Region, that  
24 it be part of the environmental mitigation and  
25 enhancement programs of Imperial Valley,

1 Coachella Valley Region, that is already  
2 environmentally impacted previously by many many  
3 years of many issues. And, yes, the Agricultural  
4 industry, Mr. Weisgall, I have to applaud your  
5 frankness and the fact that you as an outsider  
6 were able to see what is obvious to people like  
7 me that other people are afraid to say, so I  
8 thank you for that.

9           The Agricultural industry has had a very  
10 large impact on us, and they should also pay  
11 their fair share, as well. I appreciate that,  
12 and how we can do that is from water transfer  
13 money that is going towards it and we can enhance  
14 altogether in partnerships.

15           And we also want in the budget that there  
16 will be funding for CBOs such as ours to partner  
17 with local agents and we can find our own  
18 economists, our own consultants, so we can have  
19 direct impact on how those funds are spent as we  
20 continue to develop the region. I thank you for  
21 your time and I really enjoyed this conversation  
22 and much more to spin off of it. Thank you.

23           MS. DE JONG: Thank you. Our next hand  
24 raise is by Tom Sephton. You should be able to  
25 unmute.

1           MR. SEPHTON: Thank you and thank you for  
2 the moment to talk with you, Commissioners. And  
3 I appreciate what you've discussed. You've  
4 raised some key issues and one of them is water  
5 demand, that there will be some additional need  
6 for water for the Lithium industry in an area  
7 that has a limited supply of water. And the  
8 other is the Salton Sea which, granted, is a much  
9 larger issue to truly restore than what the  
10 Lithium industry and the profits thereon can  
11 probably pay for.

12           But what I'd like people to understand is  
13 that the Lithium brings with it a benefit that  
14 helps solve both of these problems. As you bring  
15 Lithium out of the ground, out of the deep  
16 aquifer, you're also bringing heat. Some of this  
17 heat is used to make power and that's excellent.  
18 But you're actually bringing more heat than what  
19 you need for power production and that is  
20 actually the key to taking some of the vast  
21 impaired water resources that we have in Imperial  
22 Valley.

23           Under the farms you have brackish water.  
24 Under the ground of these geothermal plants you  
25 have brackish water. In the drains, of course

1 you have brackish water, that is sustaining the  
2 Salton Sea. And in the Salton Sea, itself, you  
3 have hyper saline water.

4           But bear in mind that if you take  
5 advantage of the brackish groundwater below all  
6 of these plants and below these farms, you have  
7 the opportunity to create new clean water supply  
8 in the Imperial Valley that helps provide the  
9 water needs for the Lithium industry without  
10 impacting the Ag needs, that helps provide the  
11 water needs for expansion of industry and jobs  
12 and homes, without diminishing the Agricultural  
13 industry.

14           The opportunity is here, and the ring  
15 source is there as you bring out the geothermal,  
16 the hot -- very hot, 500 degrees Fahrenheit  
17 geothermal brine. You have more heat than you  
18 need to produce power.

19           You have the opportunity to clean up the  
20 water resources, the currently unusable water  
21 resources that we have in the Imperial Valley.  
22 So bear in mind, this can be a win win. You  
23 don't have to take off the profits of the  
24 Lithium, you can use the extra heat that comes up  
25 with it to clean up the water resource, provide

1 warm water, and additionally clean water for  
2 environmental restoration of habitat areas around  
3 the Salton Sea. You can do all of these  
4 together.

5           The Lithium industry could actually be  
6 the Geothermal Lithium industry, it could  
7 actually be paid rather than cutting into their  
8 profit margin to help provide more water and  
9 restore the environment. Thank you for the  
10 opportunity to speak.

11           MS. DE JONG: Thank you. The next hand  
12 raise is by Mariela Loera. You should be able to  
13 unmute yourself.

14           MS. LOERA: Hello. Mariela Loera with  
15 Leadership Council. And I just wanted to  
16 acknowledge this conversation in the public and  
17 thank you all for having it. I know that it's  
18 very tense and controversial, but it was good to  
19 see it happen, basically.

20           I hope that it is one of many and that  
21 community is meaningfully included in these same  
22 kind of conversations and that the feedback  
23 received by the community is implemented into the  
24 decision-making process and into the report that  
25 you all will be developing. Thanks.

1 MS. DE JONG: Thank you. The next hand  
2 raise is by Luis Lopez. You should be able to  
3 unmute.

4 MR. LOPEZ: Hello. My name is Luis Lopez  
5 and I'm a resident of Imperial County. I just  
6 want to say that I do agree with Commissioner  
7 Kelley in regard to Lithium Valley being Imperial  
8 Valley. Imperial County is the poorest county in  
9 California and if the State of California is  
10 serious about achieving equity, then there needs  
11 to be a focus on Imperial County.

12 At the end of the day, Imperial Valley  
13 needs a lot more development than Coachella  
14 Valley, so it is concerning that other regions  
15 are being mentioned. It must be clear that  
16 Lithium Valley is not San Diego County, Riverside  
17 County, or Coachella Valley; it is Imperial  
18 Valley.

19 Another concern would be some of the  
20 revenue generated from a tax, or fees, levies,  
21 being sent to a General Fund to Sacramento,  
22 right? We want to be able to keep some of the  
23 funds here in Imperial Valley and make sure to  
24 create long-term jobs and make sure our workers  
25 have skills they can take anywhere. Thank you.

1 MS. DE JONG: Thank you. The next hand  
2 raise is Isabel Solis. You should be able to  
3 unmute.

4 MS. SOLIS: Good afternoon. My name is  
5 Isabel Solis. I am Imperial Valley College Board  
6 of Trustee, Area 4. I am also President of a  
7 community-based organization, Los Amigos de la  
8 Comunidad.

9 We ask that for dedicated funds for  
10 workforce development related directly to this  
11 industry that makes the trainees competitive for  
12 other jobs in other regions, higher grade skill  
13 sets building also similar to STEM.

14 And as a CBO participant that  
15 concentrated outreach to the underserved by  
16 funding the budget for CBOs to partner with  
17 training agencies and educational institutions so  
18 that we can build our community up.

19 Our community has to progress with this.  
20 We want to make sure that our community is able  
21 to get that skill set so that they can get that  
22 wage, those jobs --

23 MS. DE JONG: I think we might have lost  
24 connection with Isabel.

25 MS. SOLIS: -- so this next chapter that

1 is going to hopefully take us to success. Thank  
2 you.

3 MS. DE JONG: Okay, thank you. So we are  
4 going to move on to the written comments and let  
5 me go ahead and read through the items that were  
6 sent into the Q&A. The first is by Christina  
7 Marquez. It says: "Good afternoon honorable  
8 commissioners. Maybe suggest to include a  
9 Project Labor Agreement for Lithium Valley that  
10 can include local hire, state-approved  
11 apprenticeships, prevailing wages, and  
12 identifying all the disadvantaged communities to  
13 hire them. Thank you. Christina Marquez, IBEW  
14 Local 569, Environmental Organizer."

15 And then the comments from Hector Meza  
16 say, "'The Workforce' is here. IBEW and all of  
17 the Building Trades I am sure are ready to sit  
18 and have a talk."

19 And John Cubit wrote in: "To expand on  
20 Rob Colwell's comments: To counteract  
21 misinformation about the Lithium activities we  
22 need a central source of factual information  
23 about the Lithium extraction at the Salton Sea  
24 region. This is not expensive and could be done  
25 very quickly. It could be accomplished by

1 establishing an easily accessible website. As  
2 much as possible, it must communicate in clear  
3 graphics, not text. Can this commission do this  
4 relatively simple project soon?"

5 I do see Hector Meza who had written in  
6 comments has a hand raised. So if you would like  
7 to add to your comments, you should be able to  
8 unmute.

9 MR. MEZA: Hi. I just want to comment on  
10 something quickly. I'm a local journeyman with  
11 IBEW 56. I am an electrician, certified  
12 electrician with the state.

13 We have hundreds of local electricians  
14 with experience in photovoltaic, nuclear), and  
15 geothermal power here in the region. They can  
16 build anything that has to do with power. Our  
17 apprentices go through a five-year training that  
18 is a combination of hands-on at work, any class  
19 training, and our apprentices actually get  
20 college credit through the Palomar College.

21 And we are ready to build anything you  
22 guys need. And if you guys need to contact  
23 Building Trades, I could also get you that info.  
24 Thank you.

25 MS. DE JONG: Thank you. All right,

1 Chair Paz. That looks like all of the public  
2 comments at this time. Back to you.

3 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you.

4 MS. LEE: This is Natalie. I just wanted  
5 to take a moment. Isabel Solis, I just wanted  
6 you to know that we did not hear all of your  
7 comments. We had a break in connection, so if  
8 you would like to address them in written form to  
9 the docket, or submit them in another form, I  
10 just wanted to let you know we did miss a portion  
11 of your comment.

12 MS. SOLIS: Okay, you know what? I will  
13 do that. Do I put it in the chat? Is that where  
14 you would like for me to put those in?

15 MS. LEE: In the Q&A for -- and Elisabeth  
16 De Jong, can you just make sure we get the full  
17 comments into the transcript?

18 MS. DE JONG: Will do. Thank you.

19 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you. And thank you  
20 everyone. That was a very good conversation and  
21 I would like to have as much of a robust  
22 conversation in the next topic, so maybe we can  
23 take a five-minute break to stretch, recharge,  
24 and come back and take a deep dive into the other  
25 items that are, I think, equally important and

1 will generate a lot of conversation. So if  
2 everyone is okay, is a five-minute break -- is it  
3 too much or are we good with five minutes? So,  
4 Elisabeth, we'll take a five-minute break.

5 MS. DE JONG: Thank you. See you back at  
6 3:35.

7 (Break at 3:30 P.M.)

8 CHAIR PAZ: Elisabeth, thank you for  
9 removing the screen share, especially during  
10 conversation. That way, we can all see each  
11 other on the screen and it helps a lot when we  
12 can have access to that gallery.

13 Okay, I see that people are back. The  
14 next item on the agenda, it's a continuation of  
15 the conversation we had at the last meeting. We  
16 have been thinking about how to maybe make some  
17 changes to how we do the workshop planning, how  
18 to start highlighting in those conversations  
19 potential recommendations or actions that we can  
20 take.

21 So what I'm going to do is, instead of  
22 talking about the process or how we can do it.  
23 We're ready to demonstrate how this new process  
24 can look like when it comes to the sub bodies.  
25 There is, for example, a request that a month

1 prior to your workshop when you bring your plans  
2 to the Commissioners and then give input. So,  
3 I'll be demonstrating that with the Workforce  
4 Development Workshop. Jonathan and I were able  
5 to connect, this is before this, so that we were  
6 ready for that. And to really focus the workshop  
7 presentations to ensure that there's information  
8 specific to the Salton Sea Region, making sure  
9 that we're capturing findings and recommendations  
10 during the meeting and not waiting until we come  
11 back, encourage Commissioners that have  
12 additional viewpoints or who want additional  
13 viewpoints represented in whatever it is the sub  
14 bodies are proposing, to have that opportunity to  
15 bring that up. And where to focus on  
16 conversations and dialogue that's going to lead  
17 to the recommendations at the end of the report.

18           So that's essentially what I'm going to  
19 try to do in this next section as we are talking  
20 about the Workforce Development Workshop that  
21 will be taking place in February.

22           If you go to the next slide, thank you.  
23 So again, originally it was Commissioner  
24 Castaneda and I who started on these sub bodies,  
25 so there are still some items here that we talked

1 about and then more recently there was that  
2 switch with Commissioner Weisgall. This is what  
3 we are proposing.

4           We are proposing that there's a  
5 presentation that will focus on these two large  
6 items, 1) identifying the landscape of workforce  
7 development efforts that are related to Lithium  
8 development.

9           I think that time and again we've heard  
10 about the work that maybe Ryan Kelley is doing,  
11 work that Jonathan Weisgall is doing, work that  
12 the Imperial College maybe, steps that they're  
13 taking towards workforce development, so this is  
14 an opportunity again to hear -- get a landscape  
15 of what's happening now, what are the efforts,  
16 and inform us so we have that baseline.

17           The other topic that would be important  
18 is to start identifying what are the jobs  
19 associated with Lithium development. So those  
20 would be presentation items. And then to have a  
21 panel discussion around how do we create access  
22 to economic and job opportunities. And again, if  
23 we recall, the values of equity, inclusion, and  
24 diversity are very important to the community and  
25 I think to many of us here in the Commission, if

1 not all, so this is an opportunity to have a  
2 panel discussion on what does that look like,  
3 right, when we're talking about access to  
4 economic and job opportunities, and what needs to  
5 happen to ensure that those pathways are there.

6           So that is the overall picture. And I  
7 can -- if there are any comments at this point,  
8 and if you feel that those are the viewpoints,  
9 the right viewpoints to represent, or if you have  
10 additions -- but the next slide shows you like  
11 the sub-questions under each one of them.

12           So these are the questions that would  
13 fall under those topics. So when you're talking  
14 about the landscape of workforce development,  
15 it's getting speakers who can share about what  
16 are the education and training efforts that exist  
17 right now; what are the gaps that this region is  
18 facing; and what are the potential  
19 local/regional/ state actions needed to advance  
20 workforce development in the Salton Sea Region.

21           So again, this is not only the approach  
22 we want to take next, but let's get to some  
23 tangible recommendations out of all of these  
24 discussions, right? So that's what this last  
25 question under that section is trying to do.

1 Under the other larger topic of what are  
2 the jobs associated with Lithium development, the  
3 sub questions would be what are the jobs and then  
4 what stage in the development of Lithium are they  
5 needed; what are the skills, the training  
6 associated with the Lithium development sector;  
7 and then what needs to happen to ensure that we  
8 have a workforce ready, on time. I think I heard  
9 Commissioner Weisgall talk about 2026. I mean,  
10 that's just around the corner, so what do we need  
11 to be doing now.

12 For the panel conversation, it's a  
13 dialogue around coming together on a definition  
14 of what is a good job, what are the tools or  
15 actions that are needed to increase opportunities  
16 for equitable, sustainable and inclusive jobs.

17 So that again paints the picture of the  
18 type of conversation that we want to have during  
19 the February meeting. And I will tell you,  
20 again, with the focus of getting people who are  
21 knowledgeable of what's happening on the ground.  
22 We have identified a list of potential speakers  
23 that would include -- and we haven't reached out  
24 to all of them, and this has been a work in  
25 progress, but on our list it's, you know, labor,

1 there's academic institutions including IID,  
2 Imperial Valley College. Also we have on the  
3 list the County, Workforce Development, and then  
4 some community and Environmental Justice groups.

5           So they're trying to get a mix and,  
6 again, focus it as much as possible with people  
7 who have an understanding of the landscape, but  
8 then maybe also people who from an academic  
9 perspective can especially speak to these other  
10 concepts around good jobs and pathways that we  
11 can create.

12           So that's a snapshot. Jonathan, is there  
13 anything that I missed? Do you want to add  
14 anything?

15           COMMISSIONER WEISGALL: No. I think you  
16 hit on them. I think we also maybe talked about  
17 Imperial Valley Economic Development Corporation,  
18 but no, no, no, that's a great list. And other  
19 Commissioners, other ideas, please let us know.  
20 We want to get a broad range here.

21           Oh, yes, there's the Employment Training  
22 Panel, that's part -- it's not part of GoBiz, I  
23 think it's under Labor, but anyway it's the  
24 Sacramento group. And I'm sorry I don't have my  
25 notes in front of me, but they have terrific

1 training programs, as well. And that's for  
2 existing and new workers. So maybe hearing from  
3 them also. Thank you very much.

4 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you, yes. So at this  
5 point, if there are any feedback, input, things  
6 that maybe another perspective you would like to  
7 see that has not been covered, please, I will  
8 take those comments now. Commissioner Olmedo.

9 COMMISSIONER OLMEDO: Thank you, Madam  
10 Chair. A lot of these are framed as questions,  
11 but I do -- let me see -- I think it's important  
12 to recognize that, while we're trying to  
13 customize a workforce, we can't ignore the fact  
14 that we've been excluded from developing a  
15 workforce to meet the current needs right now.

16 We need to be able to train a workforce  
17 that would be ready to enroll in more technical  
18 type of workforce opportunities. We're talking  
19 about timelines. We need to stay -- and perhaps  
20 this is also a direction of budget asks, we need  
21 investment right now. We need to put the money  
22 to work that is currently in the previous budget,  
23 and we need to put in -- ask for the existing  
24 negotiated budget. We need to have a workforce  
25 that is ready to engage in more technical and --

1 I think we need to consider even soft skills,  
2 right? Because if we're just focused on who is  
3 going to do the specific jobs for this industry,  
4 we're missing the opportunity for all of the  
5 other folks, industries that will accompany, you  
6 know, that will service or that will result as a  
7 result of this industry. We need to consider the  
8 whole spectrum of the workforce needs from the  
9 full perspective, the full range. Thanks.

10 CHAIR PAZ: You are absolutely right,  
11 Commissioner Olmedo. This is our pre-priming for  
12 the conversation that we want to have in  
13 February, so these questions are meant as  
14 guidance to the speakers so that they can give us  
15 information on some of the things that you're  
16 asking right now.

17 Like we want to hear from the experts,  
18 right, what are the gaps in the region? What are  
19 the skills that might include understanding what  
20 the skill sets that we have right now? Where do  
21 we need to go?

22 Again, I think part of the task ahead of  
23 us to provide recommendations, it's also being  
24 able to understand the landscape or what the  
25 landscape is so that we can be ready, then, to

1 provide a recommendation. So that's the intent  
2 for today is -- and I apologize if I didn't make  
3 this clear -- these are the questions that are  
4 going to be given to the speakers so that they  
5 can elaborate, they can bring this information,  
6 and then we can from there lift up. Okay, what  
7 are the recommendations based on this? And some  
8 of the items that you're talking about, I can see  
9 potential recommendations, and maybe they will be  
10 more targeted once we've heard from our  
11 presenters.

12           So that's the intent of today and, again,  
13 it's modeling an approach that we would like to  
14 see, or I would like to see as we're planning  
15 this workshop so that all of us have an  
16 opportunity to say, hey, maybe this information  
17 is missing, can we get someone to come and talk  
18 about that topic during this workshop.

19           Commissioner Weisgall.

20           COMMISSIONER WEISGALL: Yeah, you really  
21 hit the nail on the head. I couldn't agree with  
22 you more, Commissioner Olmedo. We are asking  
23 ourselves these questions already; I mean, we're  
24 doing job fairs, we're doing internships, we want  
25 to go to high schools. And we don't want to go

1 to seniors, we want to go to 10th-graders. We  
2 need that now. We're starting that now.

3 But these are questions where we as a  
4 company hope to learn even more. You know, what  
5 are our gaps? What more should we be doing?

6 But I couldn't agree with you more. No  
7 one, certainly our company, and I think the other  
8 two major developers, we're not waiting. But we  
9 need our skill sets embellished and that's what  
10 we're looking forward to. But your point is well  
11 taken.

12 CHAIR PAZ: I don't see any other hands  
13 up. And I will -- this is a specific request  
14 that maybe you can help me lift: from the list  
15 of potential speakers, we have identified  
16 speakers who can speak to the sub questions  
17 around what the landscape of workforce  
18 development ethics currently is; we can identify  
19 speakers who can talk about how we create access.  
20 But I'm being challenged around identifying --  
21 and maybe this is industry who is going to have  
22 the information -- but identifying speakers who  
23 can speak to what are the jobs associated with  
24 Lithium development, and at what stages.

25 So, to your point, Commissioner Olmedo,

1 that this could include, if we can find the right  
2 person to speak about what are the jobs  
3 associated directly with the piloting and the  
4 extraction of Lithium, and then maybe whatever  
5 jobs associated with the related industries,  
6 because I haven't identified someone who can give  
7 us this information as of yet.

8           So if you all have any ideas, and I see  
9 Rod Colwell.

10           COMMISSIONER COLWELL: Thank you, Chair  
11 Paz. I would suggest our Chief Operating  
12 Officer, Jim Turner, who has operated plants,  
13 developing our plant, has been in the Salton Sea  
14 since the early '90s, '90 or '91. So just a  
15 suggestion. I haven't asked Jim, but I'll just  
16 throw it in the mix.

17           CHAIR PAZ: Thank you. Anyone else?  
18 Just real quick, so then before we wrap this I'm  
19 going to just ask you if you have any comments on  
20 this process. Again, to clarify, in an effort to  
21 give more voices or viewpoints into the planning,  
22 the recommendation is that we would ask the sub  
23 bodies to present to the Lithium Valley  
24 Commission one month before their topic area, in  
25 a similar way to tell us what the plan is, get

1 input, things like that.

2           So I will welcome any comments that you  
3 have around this new process that we want to  
4 implement. Jonathan.

5           COMMISSIONER WEISGALL: Just real quick,  
6 I mean, much like Rod -- and I'll work with you  
7 before next month -- we have a very detailed list  
8 of job classifications and all of that. And, in  
9 fact, IBC also is working on it, so we'll have  
10 that well covered. And Jim Turner at CTR, I  
11 mean, between -- we have HR people and CTR does,  
12 EnergySource, so we'll make sure that's covered.

13           CHAIR PAZ: Perfect. I appreciate that.

14           COMMISSIONER WEISGALL: Thank you.

15           CHAIR PAZ: Well, thank you again for the  
16 input. And again, I hope that this is valuable  
17 for the sub bodies and for the rest of the  
18 Commission because it gives us an opportunity to  
19 prepare ahead of time and think of questions we  
20 might have if we know sort of what is coming  
21 ahead in terms of the conversations. Next slide,  
22 please.

23           And Elisabeth, I need a reminder, I don't  
24 know if we go directly here to public comments or  
25 if we go into -- yeah, I think we probably do, or

1 am I missing a step?

2 MS. DE JONG: Yeah, so slide 16 actually  
3 will be next to talk about the schedule of those  
4 workshop meetings, and close out this agenda item  
5 with public comments.

6 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you. Okay, so then  
7 next item is to find dates for these workshops.  
8 We've had sort of a gap, so the original timeline  
9 that we had needs to be updated.

10 Like I said, our workforce development,  
11 Jonathan and I are working on having that ready  
12 for the next workshop in February, and then I do  
13 want to recommend that we do a continuation of  
14 the environmental impacts.

15 And the purpose of doing a continuation  
16 of this topic is, again, that this idea of honing  
17 in on what's happening on the ground, I believe  
18 the conversation that we had, the workshop was a  
19 lot more like global and it provided that  
20 holistic perspective, and now would be a good  
21 opportunity to understand from the projects that  
22 are happening on the ground.

23 So my recommendation is maybe we do that  
24 in March, and I believe it was Commissioner  
25 Olmedo and Commissioner Flores who worked on

1 that, and I can touch bases with both of you just  
2 around the planning and all of this. Would that  
3 work with Commissioner Olmedo and Commissioner  
4 Flores to have the environmental impacts part 2  
5 in March? I'm not sure if we've lost them.  
6 Anybody else? Do you think that would be -- or  
7 is there a reason maybe to push it to later?

8 MS. DE JONG: You have a hand raise from  
9 Commissioner Colwell.

10 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you, Commissioner  
11 Colwell.

12 COMMISSIONER COLWELL: Hey, Chair Paz.  
13 Just a suggestion, but I think that, you know,  
14 earlier that the legislative and regulatory  
15 recommendations very close knitted with  
16 environment here because, you know, the  
17 Governor's statement about a royalty and  
18 mitigation, mitigation meaning how things are  
19 going to be environmentally held and mitigated,  
20 could be a healthy subject for Tom --  
21 Commissioner Soto and I to dive into in the  
22 background, and then bring that in line somewhere  
23 with the proposed environmental planning. I  
24 think it's a lot closer associated than what it  
25 was since the Governor's announcement. Thank

1 you.

2           CHAIR PAZ: Yes. Thank you for that  
3 recommendation. And I think we should be having  
4 legislative and regulatory recommendations along  
5 all of our conversations. So I think maybe  
6 reframing or rethinking how this last sub body is  
7 going to be working, it could be a summation of  
8 the things that we are discussing along the way,  
9 but we shouldn't wait to discuss legislative and  
10 regulatory recommendations until the end. Does  
11 that make sense?

12           COMMISSIONER COLWELL: Absolutely. And I  
13 think that, you know, it actually merges into  
14 workforce development, everything we've been  
15 talking about today. It really has, again, been  
16 accelerated for when we originally designed the  
17 agenda, the order, and order of magnitude here,  
18 but environmental workforce development is all  
19 going to sort of swing around legislative and  
20 environmental, also regulatory recommendations.

21           CHAIR PAZ: Correct. So I will rely on  
22 the sub body and obviously everyone else, but the  
23 sub body who is part of the legislative and  
24 regulatory recommendations, that when we're  
25 discussing these topics you come in with that

1 lens and you can help us uplift from the  
2 conversation or the topic, you know, these are  
3 things that we can already start framing  
4 recommendations around, and bring that  
5 conversation to the workshops so, again, so that  
6 we're not waiting until the end. Jonathan.

7           COMMISSIONER WEISGALL: And to state the  
8 obvious, if we really come up with very good  
9 creative ideas that need legislation, we've got  
10 the standing -- the select committee. We've got  
11 Lina Malova and we have Assemblymember Garcia, so  
12 even though we'll have a formal report in  
13 October, the door is open for us. We know that.

14           CHAIR PAZ: Yes. Thank you. And I think  
15 to the extent that we do that, I think we can  
16 bring a lot more life to these conversations and  
17 the action that not only the community, but these  
18 Commissioners have been looking for. It's like,  
19 okay, we need to get the ball rolling and take  
20 actions on these items.

21           So here is a recommendation, then, that I  
22 will put forth. Workforce Development, like I  
23 stated, is in February, continuation of  
24 Environmental Impacts during March. We can do  
25 Environmental Impacts and Economic Impacts in

1 one, and then we can have Benefits of Geothermal  
2 Plants in April, overcoming challenges to Lithium  
3 extraction along with the incentives workshop in  
4 May, and then we can use June, July to wrap up  
5 and bring up all of the recommendations that have  
6 been discussed along the way.

7           So, if everyone is okay with that  
8 timeline, that's what we will try to follow.  
9 Obviously if anything comes in the way and we  
10 need to change it, feel free to reach out to me  
11 if anything affects your sub body's ability to  
12 keep the timeline. Maybe we can switch it.  
13 Okay. So, Elisabeth, I think this concludes this  
14 section. We have the dates already and we'll  
15 continue to look in that direction.

16           Now, this is an opportunity for public  
17 comment relating to the workshop on workforce  
18 development, the text of information that members  
19 of the community would like to see there that  
20 maybe we've not covered already. We're open for  
21 those suggestions and the timeline for the  
22 workshops.

23           MS. DE JONG: All right, so to open  
24 public comment, if you're joining us by Zoom on  
25 your computer, please use the "raise hand"

1 feature. If you called in, please dial \*9 to  
2 raise your hand and \*6 to unmute your phone line.

3 First we'll go to hands raised in the  
4 Zoom application and then the phones, and then  
5 the written comments. So let me go ahead and --  
6 Ronald Spears is the first hand raise. You  
7 should be able to unmute yourself.

8 MR. SPEARS: Yeah, hi. Ron Spears again.  
9 On the previous slide that you were talking  
10 about, you know, work qualifications and what  
11 types of skills employees might need, what you  
12 might look at is the companies that are already  
13 producing Lithium in other countries, such as  
14 China. I don't know what other countries -- I  
15 don't know if it's Chili or Peru, or somewhere in  
16 South America, I think they're doing that also.  
17 And use those as a prototype as to what type of  
18 job skills are needed, even though some of those  
19 might be from landfills that you're extracting  
20 the Lithium.

21 But I think the work of the operation  
22 itself to deal with the Lithium would probably be  
23 fairly similar, except converting it to the  
24 Geothermal portion of it. So I think the skills  
25 are already known by the companies that are

1 already producing Lithium. So that's my two  
2 cents.

3 MS. DE JONG: Thank you. And the next  
4 hand raise, Jesus Arguelles, you should be able  
5 to unmute yourself.

6 MR. ARGUELLES: Hello, Rod. This is  
7 Jesus. Greetings. Jesus Arguelles, I'm a  
8 business strategist in impact investing. First  
9 of all, may I suggest, Chair, that you use your  
10 outline of the topics you're going to be  
11 addressing as your table to contents.

12 You in essence dropped an economic  
13 development strategy and that could be in essence  
14 your recommendation. So if I may, I've been on  
15 other Commissions and I'd like to work to the  
16 call (phonetic) that is known as reverse  
17 engineering. Also, your topics, what can be  
18 perhaps considers working groups. You don't have  
19 a budget, so as everything is penned in essence  
20 to the good will and resources of nonprofits,  
21 very little from government, and some from  
22 private industry. But I think you need to come  
23 out a collected genius if you will, and take that  
24 and rake it down into the pieces, management 101,  
25 and have those working groups produce an actual

1 product, and then present that to the total body.

2           So my recommendation is, 1) use the  
3 workshop material in English and Spanish to frame  
4 your recommendations with timelines, with  
5 milestones, with benchmarks, with budgets, if you  
6 will, and then follow it up by getting that  
7 information to working groups. So that's kind of  
8 a thought for your consideration.

9           MS. DE JONG: All right, thank you. So  
10 to turn to the written comments in our Q&A, oh,  
11 Jesus actually had said, "The Commission needs to  
12 be funded immediately." And then there is one  
13 more comment here from Luis Plancarte, and it  
14 doesn't look like it went through, so if you  
15 would like to try again, we can read your Q&A  
16 during the next public comment period, or you're  
17 welcome to submit to the Docket.

18           So that looks like all the questions at  
19 this time. So, Chair Paz, we did just want to  
20 apologize and say in all of our excitement to  
21 return from the break, we did skip one of the  
22 agenda items, the discussion on the development  
23 of the initial findings and recommendations.

24           CHAIR PAZ: I was looking at that, too,  
25 Elisabeth. Thank you.

1 MS. DE JONG: Thank you. So would you  
2 like us to go back to slide 11 and have that  
3 discussion?

4 CHAIR PAZ: Please.

5 MS. DE JONG: Okay.

6 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you. And this will be  
7 to your point, Commissioner Colwell, about  
8 getting to the legislative and regulatory  
9 recommendations sooner, rather than later. And  
10 one of the proposals, or a practice that, again,  
11 I'm going to model briefly here, but there will  
12 be an opportunity to continue at the following  
13 workshop, is that after every workshop discussion  
14 we are highlighting and extracting, based on our  
15 findings and understanding, what are the items  
16 that we need to address as either a  
17 recommendation, how do we hone in and identify --  
18 so the findings, if there needs to be quicker  
19 action than not, then we can also explore that,  
20 doing that workshop topic and not having to wait  
21 at the end. And although we haven't done the  
22 workforce development workshop, I just want to  
23 present to you some of the initial findings,  
24 potential recommendations that have arisen  
25 through the planning itself. So, again, this is

1 just an example. And, Elisabeth, was this shared  
2 with all the Commissioners, the findings? Was  
3 there a document?

4 MS. DE JONG: I see Natalie --

5 MS. LEE: No, it was not.

6 CHAIR PAZ: It was not, okay. I mean, is  
7 there anything that we can put on the screen or  
8 -- I mean, I could just --

9 MS. LEE: Yes. Let me send a document to  
10 Elisabeth. Elisabeth, are you able to facilitate  
11 bringing up a separate document?

12 MS. DE JONG: Yes, I can do that.

13 MS. LEE: Alright, it will take us just a  
14 moment. Why don't we go ahead and close off the  
15 slides and let the Commission start conversation,  
16 and we'll get that going.

17 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you. So like I was  
18 saying, in the process of planning the economic  
19 development workshop, we had specific findings  
20 that I think is relevant to the report that we're  
21 going to be creating.

22 We have explored opportunities for  
23 workforce development and the Lithium Valley  
24 Commission has found that reports, studies and  
25 project development materials have provided

1 general job estimates and descriptions of  
2 anticipated workforce needs associated with the  
3 additional of Lithium extraction at existing  
4 plants, as well as the development of new  
5 geothermal facilities with integrated Lithium  
6 extraction.

7           So, we have, again, some information  
8 generally more so about the geothermal jobs and  
9 what the industry has provided us in terms of job  
10 estimates that are associated with the project.  
11 So, for example, the EnergySource project to  
12 construct and operate a Lithium facility co-  
13 located with an existing geothermal power plant  
14 is the furthest along in development and has  
15 obtained approval from Imperial County, following  
16 the County certification of an Environmental  
17 Impact Report, or EIR, prepared under California  
18 Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

19           The EIR states that approximately 200-250  
20 workers are anticipated to be required at peak  
21 periods of project construction and begin with  
22 startup operations, will be operated by  
23 approximately 62 full-time on-site employees.  
24 The project developer expects to utilize  
25 available workers from the local and regional

1 area and is establishing a project labor  
2 agreement with local labor organizations to  
3 support employment in the county.

4           Okay, that's from one of the projects.  
5 Control of resources is currently in the  
6 development phase for the first stage of the  
7 Hell's Kitchen geothermal facility, which is  
8 planned to be built with integrated Lithium  
9 recovery. CTR documents indicate that when all  
10 its stages are fully developed, the estimated  
11 total local impact is over 4,000 jobs, inclusive  
12 of 1,400 permanent jobs at the facility, and 480  
13 continuous construction jobs for the duration of  
14 the eight stages of this project, as well as  
15 2,500 ancillary jobs based on an Imperial Valley  
16 Economic Development Corporation Economic  
17 Assessment.

18           And then they have Berkshire Hathaway  
19 Energy. BHE plans to modify its existing  
20 geothermal power plants operating near the Salton  
21 Sea for Lithium extraction. BHE has estimated  
22 that the average monthly construction employment  
23 when projects begin construction will be 230  
24 workers, and that the projects will support 400  
25 full time and administrative jobs when completed.

1           So what we have in front of you and that  
2 I started reading, and I will stop reading  
3 because now it's in front of you, it's again an  
4 example of how we can start capturing these  
5 findings and then have conversations about what  
6 information is still missing, what  
7 recommendations we want to make. So an example,  
8 based on the findings that we have so far, we  
9 know we have a rough estimate of jobs. Back to  
10 the conversation we were having and what we're  
11 trying to fill in during the workshop is, well,  
12 what kind of jobs, what are the skill sets, and  
13 we have heard multiple times, even from the  
14 community, the importance of having that  
15 information. We have received input that  
16 additional and more detailed information is  
17 needed regarding the types of jobs that will be  
18 created, the skills and training, the anticipated  
19 time frame, for demand to increase first specific  
20 job types and the expected longevity of each job.

21           So based on these findings, one  
22 recommendation could be a workforce analysis and  
23 I know we've discussed briefly doing a budget  
24 conversation.

25           I don't know if there are any other -- we

1 talked about many potential recommendations ahead  
2 of this topic already, so maybe the benefit of me  
3 just going through this and going back to it is  
4 to hear from you your thoughts on how we can be  
5 uplifting these types of findings and  
6 recommendations in alignment when the workshops  
7 are happening. And again, this is an example of  
8 how we can do it. And if you think there's any  
9 support, what support do we need from CEC so that  
10 we can be elevating these findings ahead of time?

11           So, I will open it up for any comments,  
12 1) do you feel that these are so far the accurate  
13 findings? Or do we have agreement? And 2) we've  
14 talked of multiple recommendations that can help  
15 us address some of the findings and the gaps. So  
16 I'll open it for discussion.

17           Commissioner Rodwell -- or Colwell -- I'm  
18 joining your first and your last name.

19           COMMSSIONER COLWELL: That's fine. I've  
20 been called worse. Look, I think all of us, we  
21 have a very detailed breakdown of the jobs and  
22 we'll provide that stage by state, I think well  
23 ahead of the workshops in the coming days, we've  
24 got that broken out. And we'll get that through  
25 you, Chair Paz, and we'll go from there.

1 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you. Jonathan.

2 COMMISSIONER WEISGALL: Yeah, as do we.

3 I mean, I'm just thinking of how to use  
4 resources. We'll have a pretty good picture of  
5 exactly what our workforce needs will be,  
6 certainly on job classifications we've got that  
7 nailed down. But again, in the coming months  
8 we'll refine that. And then if a study is  
9 needed, so be it.

10 CHAIR PAZ: Appreciate that. I don't see  
11 any other hands up. And again, in this example  
12 we already, or I came already with a specific  
13 potential recommendation, but the intent as we  
14 move forward is for all of you, as we are  
15 hearing, you know, the findings and gathering  
16 information, that we don't delay that and that we  
17 can start off for any additional recommendations  
18 ahead of time. That's this section.

19 Are we opening that for public comment,  
20 Elisabeth?

21 MS. DE JONG: Yes, we will. If we could  
22 put that presentation slide back up. And I will  
23 go ahead and open the public comments. If you  
24 are joining us by Zoom on your computer, please  
25 use the "raise hand" feature, and if you called

1 in, please dial \*9 to raise your hand, and \*6 to  
2 unmute your phone line. First, we'll go to hands  
3 raised in the Zoom application, then the phones,  
4 and then any written comments. Okay, I see a  
5 hand raise from Nikola Lakic. You should be able  
6 to unmute yourself.

7 MR. LAKIC: Nikola Lakic, like C-H. But  
8 thank you very much for this opportunity again.  
9 I'd like just shortly, less than a minute, just  
10 to say that with my proposal there will be many  
11 many employments, many people local and abroad.  
12 And again, please my letter summarizes -- I don't  
13 want to take your time, just to let you know we  
14 are going a little bit far away discussing some  
15 elements and missing big picture. Again, I don't  
16 want to be critical, but talking about extraction  
17 of Lithium right now and ignoring the restoration  
18 of the Salton Sea, it's wrong. And somehow later  
19 on we can -- "let's focus on extraction of  
20 Lithium, and then later on we can do a  
21 restoration of the Salton Sea." It doesn't work  
22 that way. It's like a Swiss watch, if you think  
23 one gear will not work, it's comprehensive in  
24 design that incorporates all those elements and,  
25 again, thank you very much for this opportunity.

1 Please read my letters, or at least something --  
2 ask me some questions. I will try to reach you,  
3 maybe hopefully, maybe explain a little bit more  
4 in details. By thank you very much.

5 MS. DE JONG: Thank you. And the next  
6 hand raise is Eric Reyes.

7 MR. REYES: Yeah, I didn't touch on the  
8 original ideas that were presented at first about  
9 community health survey, just that that is a  
10 fantastic idea to see about this development.  
11 One, the main point was that we can't make things  
12 worse that were already used, so I hope you guys  
13 move forward with that as a recommendation as  
14 soon as possible. It's something we really truly  
15 need, to have a baseline and move forward from  
16 there. Thank you very much.

17 MS. DE JONG: Thank you. All right, and  
18 we do have one written comment and let me just  
19 get to that. Okay, great. So Bjorn Paulson  
20 wrote: "Is this document available on your  
21 website? And if so, please provide the URL." So  
22 that document, further recommendations, was just  
23 an example for Chair Paz to discuss. But I will  
24 share the link in the chat for where the meeting  
25 materials for this meeting are posted. Thank

1 you.

2           And Chair Paz, there are no other public  
3 comments at this time, so back to you.

4           CHAIR PAZ: Thank you. So, I think we  
5 will advance to slide 20. Yes.

6           We're coming back to the discussion and  
7 priming for further community engagement. Again,  
8 this is a discussion that we started at the last  
9 meeting. And since then, there has been action  
10 on multiple levels.

11           One of the things that I did is I did  
12 submit the request with specific asks to the CEC  
13 and those include the -- it's getting late --  
14 what I will call the Fact Sheets. So they will  
15 give us an update a little bit later on those  
16 Fact Sheets, and I also asked them if they can  
17 respond directly to the questions that have been  
18 submitted by Leadership Council for Justice and  
19 Accountability, and those questions were  
20 submitted in October. So, CEC will speak to  
21 where we are with that.

22           And the other thing that has happened is  
23 that, if you recall, Commissioner Olmedo, Vice  
24 Chair Ryan Kelley, and Frank Ruiz were going to  
25 be meeting as an ad hoc committee to discuss this

1 topic and I was able to join them on this  
2 committee, and Commissioner Olmedo will be giving  
3 us an update from that conversation. So, I will  
4 start with Commissioner Olmedo first to speak  
5 about the ad hoc group.

6 COMMISSIONER OLMEDO: Thank you, Madam  
7 Chair. Just give me a second and I will try to  
8 find my document here. There we are.

9 So, in the last meeting I brought up the  
10 importance of making sure that community  
11 engagement, as we have repeatedly heard, be a  
12 critical element to assure the success of our  
13 efforts. And I appreciate highlighting the  
14 letters and the constant asks of Leadership  
15 Council, and I know about your organizations, as  
16 well, and all the community leaders that have  
17 asked. I think it's a fair ask. And what I'm  
18 about to read here -- and I'll read it word by  
19 word as to what we have.

20 So first of all, Commissioners and Madam  
21 Chair, we want to propose an ad hoc committee on  
22 community engagement. The meeting that we had as  
23 an ad hoc committee included Commissioner Ryan  
24 Kelley, myself, Commissioner/Chair Sylvia Paz,  
25 and Commissioner Frank Ruiz.

1           The background on it is on Monday,  
2 January 10th of 2022, Governor Gavin Newsom  
3 presented a new budget proposal that focuses on  
4 fighting climate change and developing green  
5 energy opportunities. This entire past week,  
6 there had been a series of online engagement and  
7 outreach opportunities by the state's different  
8 secretaries and agencies.

9           This roll-out gives a road map to  
10 continue on the Governor's plan of a statewide  
11 engagement. And it's important that the CEC and  
12 the Lithium Valley Commission allow the affected  
13 communities to continue to dialogue and not only  
14 inform the residents, but also to listen to the  
15 concerns and advice. And proper engagement can  
16 also be delegated to community-based  
17 organizations with approval record of engagement  
18 and productive engagement that provides equity  
19 that cannot be an occasional activity, but rather  
20 a constant continuous engagement throughout this  
21 entire endeavor.

22           So with that said, the Ad Hoc Committee  
23 on Community Engagement will consist of no more  
24 than two official Commissioners, if required, but  
25 actually I would correct that and I will say it

1 would consist of three. And the reason for that  
2 is you're proposing as an ad hoc, not as a  
3 subcommittee, which from what I understand it  
4 would not trigger the Bagley-Keene limitations.

5           Point 2 is that the Ad Hoc Committee will  
6 exclusively work with local community-based  
7 organizations in the Salton Sea Region, providing  
8 proper community outreach and education in regard  
9 to the extraction of Lithium. And also,  
10 considering the fact that there is still the  
11 ongoing characterization of extraction and  
12 recovery, but for the purposes of what I'm  
13 proposing, I'm calling it extraction. The Ad Hoc  
14 Committee would develop materials in English,  
15 Spanish, Purepecha, which is necessary,  
16 community-based organizations, continuing  
17 information about Lithium. Information will  
18 range from upcoming Lithium Valley Commission  
19 meetings to what Lithium is and what it is used  
20 for. We've had much conversation of that today.  
21 And thank you to Commissioner Rod Colwell, who  
22 also is focuses to, you know, your offers of  
23 bringing forth information.

24           Point 4 is with transparency in mind, the  
25 subcommittee will regularly update local

1 community-based organizations on any new  
2 development and interim discussions within the  
3 Lithium Valley Commission.

4           The Ad Hoc Committee will work with local  
5 community-based organizations and exercise all  
6 options for proper community outreach. This will  
7 include, but is not limited to informational  
8 flyers, social media posts, presentations,  
9 workshops, and tours.

10           The Ad Hoc Committee will coordinate with  
11 local community-based organizations in order to  
12 estimate a number of community members reached  
13 and report back to the Lithium Valley Commission.  
14 The Ad Hoc Committee will prioritize community-  
15 based solutions and present solutions to the  
16 Lithium Valley Commission.

17           The Ad Hoc Committee will regularly  
18 report back on any and all information to the  
19 Lithium Valley Commission. Lithium Valley  
20 Commissioners not part of the Ad Hoc Committee  
21 can but are not obligated to participate in  
22 community outreach strategies.

23           The Lithium Valley Commission needs to be  
24 allocated a budget to assure community engagement  
25 strategies are implemented to achieve equity and

1 meaningful engagement into all activities of the  
2 Lithium Valley Commission.

3           So that's the list of and a little bit of  
4 background as to the importance of this Ad Hoc  
5 Committee, that it will continue to meet.

6           So, Madam Chair, I bring it back to you  
7 and to the Commissioners for consideration and  
8 advice, you know, how we can proceed on this.

9           CHAIR PAZ: Thank you. So in this case  
10 we are not establishing any formal body. The  
11 group has already met, they're going to continue  
12 meeting in the same manner that they did today,  
13 they are going to be doing report outs to the  
14 Lithium Valley Commission on the efforts that  
15 they've taken, the issues that maybe they are  
16 seeing in the community. So they want to be very  
17 proactive and I thank you for doing that and to  
18 share the result of the conversation that was had  
19 I don't know how many days ago, a few weeks ago,  
20 and this is what they want to do, right? So one  
21 of the things that I do want to encourage is  
22 pairing up or teaming up with maybe some CEC  
23 support, whether that's the communications, I  
24 mean, recognizing that you all are busy people,  
25 you have your own organizations that you're

1 running, and if there is that support that we can  
2 establish that and make that request from the CEC  
3 to meet with you and collaborate with you on how  
4 to continue the engagement that you want to see.  
5 But I will invite both Frank Ruiz and Ryan Kelley  
6 to see if you want to add anything else.

7           VICE CHAIR KELLEY: I would just add,  
8 Chairperson Paz, that it was a good conversation.  
9 There has been plenty of follow-up, and it's been  
10 discussed here today about the reason, the  
11 rationale for being able to explain what this is.  
12 And I fully support it. I'm ready to go out with  
13 Luiz and Frank and yourself and engage.

14           CHAIR PAZ: Great. Thank you.

15           COMMISSIONER RUIZ: I have nothing to add  
16 at this time.

17           CHAIR PAZ: Thank you. Jonathan?

18           COMMISSIONER WEISGALL: I just want to  
19 say that we're intending to commission our  
20 Lithium Recovery Demonstration Plant this spring.  
21 Right now, things are under construction. We've  
22 got an outage there, a planned outage, of course,  
23 you know, upwards of 400 contractors on site.  
24 But when things settle down we very much want to  
25 bring in community-based organizations to see our

1 operations, to see the Lithium demonstration  
2 plant, and really to contribute any way we can on  
3 outreach, education, and the like.

4           So I don't need to be part of this group,  
5 and I certainly will work this through you, Chair  
6 Paz, and then others and then this would not be a  
7 commission-type meeting, we just want to get as  
8 many -- you know, you don't drive by the  
9 geothermal plants, you know, they're somewhat  
10 isolated. And as soon as we can get the  
11 demonstration plant up and going, we really do  
12 want to bring folks in. And I simply will make  
13 that pledge.

14           We had a town hall meeting, goodness,  
15 last March. We haven't really had much to report  
16 other than we're building a one-tenth commercial  
17 scale plant to see if this thing works. And I  
18 think that is commissioned and going, we  
19 certainly want to do as much outreach and  
20 education as we can.

21           CHAIR PAZ: Thank you, Jonathan. I don't  
22 want to speak for the committee, but I know any  
23 opportunity to be able to see and experience what  
24 it is that we're talking about makes it more real  
25 for all of us and the community members included,

1 so we will remind you in the springtime.

2 Commissioner Olmedo.

3           COMMISSIONER OLMEDO: Yeah, just  
4 recognizing that many times organizations and  
5 community leaders often are the go-to's for  
6 community information, either messengers or  
7 trusted sources, and that happens in any  
8 community, but I do want to acknowledge and  
9 recognize that the industry folks and probably  
10 more frequently Commissioner Colwell has extended  
11 invitations. So I do look forward to learning  
12 more about the operations, the industry, and  
13 getting as much information as possible, and  
14 certainly making more information available to  
15 other community organizations such as leadership,  
16 and I know Alianza is highly engaged in all of  
17 this, but there's Los Amigos and many others who  
18 are working to gather as much information.

19           I also want to make note that  
20 representing Environmental Justice organizations,  
21 you also want to build a knowledge and experience  
22 so that when we do these tours, we need to ask  
23 the right questions, able to understand, come  
24 with some level of understanding. So,  
25 Commissioner Colwell, we look forward to doing a

1 tour soon, but if we haven't accepted it's  
2 because we want to make sure that we come in with  
3 some good questions once we get there. So, thank  
4 you.

5 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you. If there are no  
6 other questions, feedback for the Ad Hoc  
7 Committee, we now transition to updates from the  
8 CEC efforts.

9 So, regarding the letter that was  
10 submitted by Leadership Council for Justice and  
11 Accountability, in October and then again in  
12 November, I have sent out a response letting them  
13 know, and you all received a copy of this  
14 response, letting them know that we highly depend  
15 on the support, administrative support, technical  
16 support from CEC, and so I have asked the CEC and  
17 they have agreed to look at those questions and  
18 work to answer the questions. So, this has  
19 already been communicated. I want to know,  
20 however, that, you know, the questions might  
21 require CEC to coordinate or collaborate and  
22 involve other agencies. So it will take a little  
23 bit of time. But thank you, and we appreciate  
24 the patience as we're working to respond to these  
25 -- you know, to the concerns that the community

1 has submitted.

2           The other aspects are the CEC is  
3 developing Fact Sheets and they are anticipated  
4 to be finalized and made available in the next  
5 few weeks. I have seen the draft of one of them,  
6 and I'm providing feedback based on discussions  
7 we've had here, the needs and what we've heard  
8 from the community. So those are in development.

9           The Lithium Valley Commission will  
10 continue to receive updates and if they're  
11 speeded and timely, we can discuss the materials  
12 at future meetings. But those are, again, the  
13 efforts that we are taking on to further our  
14 engagement with the community. Are there any  
15 questions? No questions. Elisabeth, next slide.

16           So this is an opportunity to hear from  
17 members of the public on the efforts to continue  
18 to engage the community.

19           MS. DE JONG: Thank you, Chair Paz. So,  
20 if you're joining us by Zoom on your computer,  
21 please use the "raise hand" feature. And if you  
22 have called in, please dial \*9 to raise your  
23 hand, and then \*6 to unmute your phone line.

24           We'll go first to any raised hands in the  
25 Zoom application, then to the phone, and then any

1 written comments. I do see a hand raised by Jose  
2 Flores. You should be able to unmute yourself.

3 MR. FLORES: Once again, Jose Flores and  
4 I want to show my appreciation for the  
5 consideration of having an Ad Hoc Committee, it's  
6 a great idea. The ideas and ideals of a  
7 community representation is imperative in our  
8 neck of the woods. Also, the traditional  
9 representation by proxy in our community needs to  
10 be to a minimum. And just to close, I think the  
11 nexus to our community must not only be  
12 informational, but also to have a platform to  
13 receive input, questions, and concerns. Thank  
14 you for your time.

15 MS. DE JONG: Thank you. And the next  
16 hand raised is Mariela Loera. You should be able  
17 to unmute.

18 MS. LOERA: Thank you. I just want to say  
19 thank you for all of the effort that went into  
20 doing this to give special tools for an ad hoc  
21 group that was put together and all of you who  
22 participate on that.

23 I do want to highlight the need, and this  
24 was mentioned earlier, but I wanted to mention it  
25 -- the transparency in these conversations with

1 community they need also for when community is  
2 asking questions, to respond to those questions  
3 in a direct way, and not in a way that is  
4 avoiding that question. If there's not an answer  
5 to that question, be very clear about that, as  
6 well, because that will also just discourage  
7 community and makes them more skeptical of what  
8 is being said.

9           And then also just to keep in mind, you  
10 know, a lot of folks in this group already know  
11 this, but to keep them learning the history of  
12 the region and the cumulative pollutants that  
13 they are already living with and all of that.  
14 But overall, thank you for all of these efforts.

15           MS. DE JONG: Thank you. And the next  
16 hand raised is Victor Beas. You should be able  
17 to unmute.

18           MR. BEAS: Hello everyone, Madam  
19 Chair Paz, Commissioners. I just would like to  
20 support the idea to create an Ad Hoc Committee  
21 for engagement because, I mean, I've seen and you  
22 saw, as well, on the November workshop, there was  
23 a lot of participation from the community and  
24 there were a lot of questions and some of them  
25 probably were not answered because of the time,

1 so I think it's very important to being in  
2 contact with the community and there's a lot of  
3 expertise on this Commission, you know, Alianza  
4 with Mrs. Paz, and then also Comite Civico and so  
5 I think this is really an important topic and  
6 should be discussed. And of course, I agree to  
7 create a committee. So that's it. I just want  
8 to support the idea to create this. Thank you.

9 MS. DE JONG: Thank you. And the next  
10 hand raise is Will Pettitt.

11 MR. PETTITT: Hi. This is Will Pettitt.  
12 I'm the Executive Director of Geothermal Rising.  
13 So, thank you for allowing me to speak and hello  
14 Commissioners and Chair Paz. I just wanted to  
15 accept direct community engagement, but I just  
16 wanted to bring awareness to everybody about  
17 Geothermal Rising.

18 We are the Trade and Industry Association  
19 for geothermal energy. And we have about 1,300  
20 members and over 90 industrial corporate members.  
21 And so, we really represent the geothermal  
22 industry. One of the things that we do each year  
23 is we have the largest annual conference, which  
24 many of you will know about. The conference is  
25 really dedicated to geothermal energy and getting

1 the kind of messaging out about geothermal, but  
2 obviously now with this fantastic opportunity for  
3 Lithium recovery, in co-production with  
4 geothermal, there's a lot of excitement about  
5 that in the industry.

6           So, the conference this year is in  
7 August, it's the 28th through the 31st of August  
8 in Reno, and obviously everybody is invited to  
9 attend. We have a great program coming together  
10 for that which Lithium recovery is a big piece.

11           In our technical program on our  
12 exhibition floor, as well as having workshops and  
13 field courses, as well, so you know, there's a  
14 lot of opportunities for engagement with the  
15 industry, as well as wider engagement outside  
16 with communities and specialists outside the  
17 geothermal industry, so, we welcome everybody's  
18 participation. And thank you very much for the  
19 opportunity to speak. And I just want to say,  
20 you guys, this is a fantastic commission and  
21 you're doing a really great job. So please keep  
22 it up. Thank you.

23           MS. DE JONG: Thank you. There are no  
24 written comments at this time, so back to you,  
25 Chair Paz.

1           CHAIR PAZ: Thank you. Thank you for  
2 those good comments. I do want to note and  
3 appreciate the response and the support from the  
4 members of the public for this Ad Hoc Committee,  
5 and clarify that the Ad Hoc Committee is active,  
6 they activated themselves the moment that they  
7 met a few weeks ago, and they will continue to be  
8 active.

9           And I want to thank the Commissioners who  
10 volunteered to be part of that work, which  
11 includes Frank Ruiz, Luis Olmedo, and Vice Chair  
12 Ryan Kelley. So those members of the LVC  
13 Commission, I have the members of the Ad Hoc  
14 Group, and they will continue to further our  
15 efforts to engage the community, as was presented  
16 by Luis. So again, thank you everyone for these  
17 efforts. Next slide.

18           We are coming down now to the acceptance  
19 of Minutes. So, I hope you all had some time to  
20 review the past Minutes. Are there any questions  
21 at this point around the Minutes?

22           COMMISSIONER WEISGALL: I move to  
23 accept. Jonathan here.

24           CHAIR PAZ: Thank you, Jonathan. I will  
25 come back to the vote after we open this section

1 to public comment. So, Elisabeth, we can open  
2 the public comment for the approval of the past  
3 Minutes.

4 MS. DE JONG: Yes. Okay, thank you. So  
5 if you're joining us by Zoom or on your computer,  
6 please use the "raise hand" feature, and if  
7 you've called in please dial \*9 to raise your  
8 hand, and \*6 to unmute your phone line. First,  
9 we'll go to the hands raised in the Zoom  
10 application, then any phone calls, and then  
11 written comments.

12 I don't see any hands raised. There is a  
13 question, but we'll save that for the general  
14 public comment period, as it's not pertaining to  
15 the Minutes. So back to you, Chair Paz. Oh, I'm  
16 so sorry, a hand just raised. Let me go ahead  
17 and check. Will Pettitt, you should be able to  
18 unmute yourself.

19 MR. PETTITT: Yes, thank you, Elisabeth.  
20 One thing I just wanted to raise awareness again  
21 is that I forgot to mention in my previous  
22 comment is that our call for abstracts is  
23 currently opened for the Geothermal Rising  
24 Conference this year and it closes on Monday. So  
25 if you have a burning desire to get a paper into

1 the Conference, then please get your abstract in  
2 by Monday. Thank you very much. Thanks for the  
3 opportunity.

4 MS. DE JONG: All right, thank you. Back  
5 to you, Chair Paz, for the vote.

6 CHAIR PAZ: So, there was a motion by  
7 Jonathan. Is there a second?

8 COMMISSIONER COLWELL: Second.

9 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you. I think that was  
10 Rod. So, I will do roll call now.

11 Commissioner Castaneda: Yes.

12 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you. Commissioner  
13 Colwell.

14 COMMISSIONER COLWELL: Yes.

15 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you. I don't think  
16 Commissioner Dolega was here.

17 COMMISSIONER DOLEGA: Nope, I'm here.

18 CHAIR PAZ: Oh, perfect. Sorry.

19 Commissioner Dolega.

20 COMMISSIONER DOLEGA: Yes.

21 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you. Commissioner  
22 Flores.

23 MS. DE JONG: Does not look available on  
24 Zoom anymore.

25 CHAIR PAZ: Okay. Thank you.

1 Commissioner Hanks.

2 COMMISSIONER HANKS: Yes.

3 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you. Commissioner  
4 Kelley. Vice Chair Kelley.

5 VICE CHAIR KELLEY: Yes.

6 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you. Commissioner  
7 Lopez.

8 COMMISSIONER LOPEZ: Yes.

9 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you. Commissioner  
10 Olmedo.

11 MS. DE JONG: He still shows on Zoom, so  
12 maybe you can come back to him.

13 CHAIR PAZ: Okay. Commissioner past yes.  
14 Commissioner Ruiz.

15 COMMISSIONER RUIZ: Yes.

16 CHAIR PAZ: Commissioner Scott.

17 COMMISSIONER SCOTT: Yes.

18 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you. I think

19 Commissioner Soto had to leave early.

20 Commissioner Weisgall.

21 COMMISSIONER WEISGALL: Yes.

22 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you. Coming back to  
23 Commissioner Olmedo.

24 COMMISSIONER OLMEDO: Yes.

25 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you. So we have a

1 quorum and they accepted the Minutes.

2           The next item is on the sub body member  
3 list. If there are no actions related to this  
4 topic, we just want to know that the CEC has  
5 prepared and will post an updated list based on  
6 the discussions during our last meeting. And  
7 also want to know that the CPUC Appointee seat  
8 is currently vacant, and we will update all the  
9 documents when a new appointment is made.

10           I think that's it. There are no  
11 questions on this item, it was mostly an  
12 informational item. We can go to the next slide.

13           So at this point, we're coming into our  
14 media and legislative updates. I believe we have  
15 some staff from the CEC. Lindsay?

16           MS. BUCKLEY: Greetings, Commissioners,  
17 Chair Paz. I will keep my update brief today. I  
18 provided this list of clips to staff, to docket,  
19 so everyone can have access because it has been a  
20 busy six weeks or so since we've spoken.

21           A significant amount of national coverage  
22 on the topic of Lithium at the Salton Sea from  
23 CBS, NBC, Politico, CNBC, Yahoo, as well, also  
24 International AFP and Euro News. So, there is a  
25 lot to go over and a lot to see.

1           There is also a significant amount of  
2 local coverage on the issues, Calexico Chronicle,  
3 does it review Imperial Valley Press reported  
4 Lithium at the Salton Sea in the last six weeks.

5           We've also seen some coverage as a result  
6 of the Governor's budget announcement and  
7 mentioned during his press conference.

8           So again, this is a lot of coverage and  
9 I've provided this to staff, they will docket it  
10 so that everybody can check this out for  
11 themselves.

12           Also notable, there's a number of  
13 articles in Spanish, including the Yahoo article,  
14 and I'd encourage folks to share those, some good  
15 explanations of what's happening at the Salton  
16 Sea, and some excellent videos, as well, from the  
17 national coverage.

18           And then lastly, there is a poem that was  
19 printed in the L.A. Times, related to Lithium at  
20 the Salton Sea, that I included in the clips and  
21 it did get a lot of reach and it's an interesting  
22 piece. So that's it for me and I will pass it  
23 over to my colleagues in the Governor Affairs  
24 Office.

25           CHAIR PAZ: I don't think we have any

1 legislative updates regarding geothermal at this  
2 time. Is that correct, Elisabeth?

3 MS. DE JONG: That is correct. Seanna  
4 Griffis from our office is on if you'd like  
5 anything from her, though.

6 CHAIR PAZ: Unless there is anything from  
7 my colleagues. (Undiscernible) or someone from  
8 the office will continue to provide us updates as  
9 legislation gets introduced. So, thank you for  
10 that.

11 I will now move on to updates from  
12 Lithium Valley Commissioners. So, this is an  
13 opportunity where any of the Commissioners can  
14 use time to give us an update on things you might  
15 be working on, related to Lithium or Lithium  
16 activities.

17 I'd request that our Commissioners  
18 consider limiting their comments, so make them  
19 brief. I'm not going to be timing you, but we  
20 have been asked to be equitable with our public  
21 comment period, so maybe try to keep it under  
22 three minutes. And I will do this in the form of  
23 roll call to make sure that everyone has an  
24 opportunity to provide updates. I will start  
25 with Vice Chair Ryan Kelley. Any updates, Vice

1 Chair Kelley?

2 VICE CHAIR KELLEY: No. Thank you,  
3 Sylvia.

4 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you. Any updates,  
5 Commissioner Castaneda?

6 COMMISSIONER CASTANEDA: No. Thank you  
7 very much.

8 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you. Any updates,  
9 Commissioner Colwell?

10 COMMISSIONER COLWELL: Just a brief  
11 update, Chair Paz. First, I'd like to commend  
12 Vice Chair Kelley's work on the big vision and  
13 plan for the Valley. I mean, there's a lot going  
14 on here, well before the Commission, as was  
15 mentioned earlier, was formed. So a big shout  
16 out to Ryan.

17 On the Hell's Kitchen project, we've  
18 completed our second production well, very good  
19 wells, good Lithium content, good staying  
20 resource as far as physical work goes, and we  
21 continue to negotiate more Lithium offtake bills.  
22 Thank you, Chair Paz.

23 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you. Commissioner  
24 Dolega.

25 COMMISSIONER DOLEGA: No update. Thank

1 you.

2 CHAIR PAZ: Commissioner Flores.

3 COMMISSIONER FLORES: (Inaudible reply).

4 CHAIR PAZ: Commissioner Hanks.

5 COMMISSIONER HANKS: No updates.

6 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you. Commissioner

7 Lopez.

8 COMMISSIONER LOPEZ: (Inaudible reply).

9 CHAIR PAZ: Commissioner Olmedo.

10 COMMISSIONER OLMEDO: Thank you, Madam

11 Chair. Just a brief comment to say that, when

12 we're planning the present and future, it's

13 important to recognize that in the past we could

14 have had a well-established Electric Vehicle

15 charging station network in Imperial, and

16 definitely in Coachella. But we can do it now.

17 And I don't think we need to wait for a

18 lot of what's being discussed here. That

19 infrastructure should be built as we're speaking.

20 This is stuff that we should have had. And I

21 can't stress enough that we've got to play some

22 catch up. And I'm hoping in the next few months

23 that we're getting repeatedly good news about

24 resources coming into our community to make them

25 affordable and to be able to build it. Thank

1 you.

2 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you. Commissioner  
3 Ruiz.

4 COMMISSIONER RUIZ: No.

5 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you. Commissioner  
6 Scott.

7 COMMISSIONER SCOTT: Not at this time.

8 CHAIR PAZ: Commissioner Weisgall.

9 COMMISSIONER WEISGALL: I've talked  
10 enough.

11 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you. I don't have an  
12 update, but I do want to thank all of the  
13 Commissioners who are making themselves available  
14 when media calls and they're coming on tours and  
15 you're answering their questions. I know it  
16 takes time from you and your already busy  
17 schedules, but I've been aware of many of those  
18 requests to speak with some of the Commissioners,  
19 so thank you for that.

20 We will now go to public comment.

21 MS. DE JONG: All right, so while we're  
22 getting that screen back up, if you are joining  
23 us by Zoom on your computer, please use the  
24 "raise hand" feature. And if you've called in,  
25 please dial \*9 to raise your hand, and then \*6 to

1 unmute your phone line. First, we'll go to any  
2 hands raised, then the phone lines, and then any  
3 written comments.

4           The first hand raised is Thomas TorteZ.  
5 You should be able to unmute yourself.

6           MR. TORTEZ: Can you hear me?

7           MS. DE JONG: Yes, we can hear you.

8           MR. TORTEZ: Okay, very good. Thank you  
9 for the opportunity to have me on, Chair Paz and  
10 California Energy Commission members. My name is  
11 Thomas TorteZ, Jr. I'm Chairman of the Torres  
12 Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians. We are a  
13 Federally recognized tribe. And I did submit my  
14 comments, so I hope that got on today's agenda  
15 and can be memorialized for this meeting. Again,  
16 I just wanted to make sure that my comments are  
17 on there.

18           And just two concerns that the tribe  
19 basically has. And when we're talking about the  
20 rulemaking that the Energy Commission has  
21 adopted, especially the Docket 210IR-02, when  
22 we're talking about transferring the State  
23 requirements to the County, the Torres Martinez  
24 Tribe would greatly welcome the opportunity to  
25 meet with the Energy Commission, the County and

1 the California Geological Energy Management  
2 Division on any regional Lithium extraction in  
3 the geothermal plant, proposals early in the  
4 permitting process.

5           The second concern the Tribe has is  
6 making sure that the Tribe is doing all that we  
7 can do to encourage the Commission to adopt an  
8 inclusive workforce. I know we talked about that  
9 earlier with the other public comments,  
10 developing workforce development opportunities  
11 within the Lithium Valley, Imperial County. So,  
12 we just respectfully request to be included again  
13 in the initiatives and the job opportunities that  
14 we'll avail during this event.

15           And those are the main concerns of the  
16 Tribe, so I appreciate the invitation to be here  
17 to discuss all of the opportunities abounding in  
18 the total Coachella Valley, Southern California,  
19 Imperial County, and even parts of Arizona.  
20 Thank you for your time and consideration and,  
21 again, I look forward to hearing any comments on  
22 my submitted statement to the agenda. Thank you,  
23 Chairman Paz and Energy Commission members.

24           MS. DE JONG: Thank you. And I did just  
25 include in the chat a link to the Lithium Valley

1 Commission Docket where you can find the  
2 submittal that Thomas was referring to.

3           The next raised hand is by Charlene  
4 Wardlow. You should be able to unmute.

5           MS. WARDLOW: Good afternoon. Charlene  
6 Wardlow. I am the Geothermal Program Manager for  
7 the California Geologic Energy Management  
8 Division. We're one of the agencies under the  
9 Department of Conservation.

10           And I just wanted to advise the  
11 Commission and members of the public that on  
12 Monday, January 31st, 2022, we will finally be  
13 posting a Notice of a Public Workshop and Notice  
14 of Public Comment Period on the Pre-Rulemaking  
15 for the Development of Updates to the Statewide  
16 Geothermal Regulations.

17           And there will be two public workshops,  
18 they'll be virtual, one will be March 8th from  
19 6:30 to 8:30, and that one will be in Spanish;  
20 and then one on March 10th that will be in  
21 English.

22           And I'll just say, these regulations,  
23 many of them are 40-50 years old and we have  
24 learned a few things in that time period, and  
25 most of the regulations have to do with oversight

1 of the well drilling and well operations, and  
2 oversight of the resource side of the operations.

3           They will be posted on our website:  
4 [www.conservation.ca.gov](http://www.conservation.ca.gov) under our rulemaking  
5 page, and we hope to get a lot of input from the  
6 public and the operators so we can get these  
7 regulations updated into the 21st Century. Thank  
8 you very much.

9           MS. DE JONG: Thank you. And the next  
10 hand raise is Tom Sephton. You should be able to  
11 unmute yourself.

12           MR. SEPHTON: Thank you. I'd like to say  
13 that, as current Board President of the EcoMedia  
14 Compass local nonprofit -- and directed to  
15 Jonathan Weisgall -- we would like to take you up  
16 on your offer to have a tour and learn more about  
17 your demonstration plant under construction at  
18 Region 1. We would appreciate any opportunity to  
19 learn more about how it works and to share that  
20 with the public. It's a very key part of our role  
21 as a community organization to share information  
22 with the public relating to everything in this  
23 Salton Sea Region.

24           And I'll give you a quick update,  
25 actually, your Region 1 plants are coming out of

1 their maintenance shutdown and are starting up  
2 today. We have beautiful columns of geothermal  
3 steam rising up right now, so you're about to be  
4 back on line. Thanks.

5 MS. DE JONG: Thank you. We do have a  
6 written comment from Nilda Ruiz. It says: "Thank  
7 you for listening to the community's needs for  
8 engagement with the Lithium Valley Commission in  
9 the and the work put in to start a community-  
10 focused space. Have there been discussions about  
11 how these ad hoc committee meetings are going to  
12 be held, i.e., virtual, in person, or hybrid?"

13 That is the only written comment at this  
14 time, so back to you, Chair Paz.

15 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you. And we will open  
16 to general public comment.

17 MS. DE JONG: All right. So those  
18 instructions one more time: if you are joining us  
19 by Zoom on your computer, please use the "raise  
20 hand" feature. If you've called in, please dial  
21 \*9 to raise your hand, and \*6 to unmute your  
22 phone line. We'll go to hands raised in the Zoom  
23 application first, then the phone lines, and then  
24 any written comments.

25 There is a hand raise by Cristina

1 Marquez. You should be able to unmute yourself.

2 MS. MARQUEZ: Hello. Good evening, now,  
3 right? It's 5:04. I'll make this brief. I just  
4 wanted to say thank you so much for the time that  
5 you guys are putting into this. We really  
6 appreciate it and I'm very excited about the ad  
7 hoc group. Also looking forward to the Workforce  
8 Development panel next month and I hope that we  
9 can still possibly have somebody on that panel,  
10 that would be highly appreciated. We're so  
11 excited also because we do have 68 apprentices  
12 out in Imperial Valley, and that doesn't include  
13 all the journeymen and the electrical trainees  
14 that we have out there, as well, already working.

15 So, I just wanted to make sure you guys  
16 were aware that we do have the workforce, as  
17 Hector Meza had stated earlier, and we're excited  
18 to complete this work, especially the work like  
19 the Atlas Project that we have the project labor  
20 again at work. So again, thank you so much on  
21 behalf of IBEW Local 569. Take care. Have a  
22 good night.

23 MS. DE JONG: Thank you. And we do have  
24 one comment in the Q&A from Tom Sephton that  
25 says: "Nice to see the baby," and that's

1 directed to you, Chair Paz.

2           So with that, I don't see anymore general  
3 comments. Back to you.

4           CHAIR PAZ: Thank you. Thank you for the  
5 conversation today and for the public comments, I  
6 presume there was a recommendation from our group  
7 meeting and you all are still on our list.  
8 Jonathan and I will be working to reach out to  
9 the speakers in time for the February workshop.  
10 So at this point, just a reminder that our next  
11 regular meeting is February 24th. And the  
12 meeting is now adjourned. Thank you everyone.

13           (The meeting adjourned at 5:06 P.M.)

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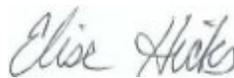
25

CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

I do hereby certify that the testimony in the foregoing hearing was taken at the time and place therein stated; that the testimony of said witnesses were reported by me, a certified electronic court reporter and a disinterested person, and was under my supervision thereafter transcribed into typewriting.

And I further certify that I am not of counsel or attorney for either or any of the parties to said hearing nor in any way interested in the outcome of the cause named in said caption.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 10th day of February, 2022.



\_\_\_\_\_  
ELISE HICKS,

IAPRT CERT\*\*2176

CERTIFICATE OF TRANSCRIBER

I do hereby certify that the testimony in the foregoing hearing was taken at the time and place therein stated; that the testimony of said witnesses were transcribed by me, a certified transcriber and a disinterested person, and was under my supervision thereafter transcribed into typewriting.

And I further certify that I am not of counsel or attorney for either or any of the parties to said hearing nor in any way interested in the outcome of the cause named in said caption.

I certify that the foregoing is a correct transcript, to the best of my ability, from the electronic sound recording of the proceedings in the above-entitled matter.



MARTHA L. NELSON, CERT\*\*367

February 10, 2022