

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR STUDY SESSION
OF THE CITY OF SAN CLEMENTE
PLANNING COMMISSION
September 18, 2013 @ 6:00 p.m.
City Council Chambers
100 Avenida Presidio
San Clemente, CA 92672**

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Darden called the Regular Study Session of the Planning Commission of the City of San Clemente to order at 6:02 p.m. in City Council Chambers, located at 100 Avenida Presidio, San Clemente, CA 92672.

ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present: Wayne Eggleston, Michael Kaupp, Jim Ruehlin and Kathleen Ward; Chair pro tem Barton Crandell, Vice Chair Donald Brown and Chair Julia Darden

Commissioners Absent: None

Staff Present: Jim Pechous, City Planner
Eileen White, Recording Secretary

AGENDA

A. Peak Democracy (Brian Judd)

The City of San Clemente is exploring online civic engagement services as the residents are increasingly interested in online interactivity with the City government. This is one in a series of presentations from private consultants regarding tools that can improve public outreach. Brian Judd from the Planning Center and a representative from Peak Democracy will demonstrate some of their outreach tools and how other jurisdictions have put them to use in their communities to enhance public outreach.

Brian Judd, The Planning Center Consultant, introduced Mike Alvarez, from Peak Democracy, a provider of online civic engagement services that are explicitly designed to augment interactivity between the City and residents, as well as diversify the demographics of those providing feedback. He recommended the Commission hear the Peak Democracy presentation via teleconference call and consider the services provided by Peak Democracy when making its recommendation to City Council.

Mike Alvarez, representing Peak Democracy, reviewed Peak Democracy’s website, including its Mission Statement, testimonials, goals, client list, and client satisfaction ratings; displayed sample questionnaire for gathering public input; described methods used to avoid known pitfalls inherent to information gathering techniques; discussed importance of staff guiding the brainstorming process to limit the spread of misinformation and/or potential support for nonexistent projects; displayed live demonstrations from various cities currently using Peak Democracy services; demonstrated how resident participation is monitored.

In response to questions, Mr. Alvarez noted that data would only be handed over to a third party in the event Peak Democracy was required to by law; advised the City will retain all data gathered in the event a contract with Peak Democracy is terminated; demonstrated how administrators of the site can collect and categorize the data. In addition, he noted that although in some instances information collected by Peak Democracy mirrors the comments made during public testimony on controversial issues, some cities have decided that comments made through online forums are more representative of the broader public. He advised the services can be customized to provide forums to address each City’s unique needs.

Chair Darden thanked Mr. Alvarez for his informative presentation and advised the Commission would be reviewing additional product before making a recommendation to City Council.

Report received and filed.


COMMISSION COMMENT: None

RECESS - Recess until 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Julia Darden, Chair

Attest:



Jim Pechous, City Planner