



PAUL CUNNINGHAM

WARD 2

December 29, 2017

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PAUL'S NOTE

In our last December meeting, my colleagues and I heard a report of the installation of solar panels on city facilities. Councilmember Paul Durham requested the report, and I happily signed on.

As many of you know, I am deeply frustrated and disappointed with the recent decision by the Corporation Commission that sided with our local electrical utility (now owned by a Canadian-based holding company). The decision changed the rate structure, but more importantly for us as policy makers, changed a policy that helped make rooftop solar more economically viable for homeowners, businesses and the city.

The policy is known as "net metering." Solar panels will often generate power when it isn't being used. For example, if you aren't home around noon, your panels are generating power

at a time when you can't use it. That unused power goes back into the local grid to be used elsewhere. What a net metering policy does is compensate you by offering credits (at retail price) for the power you supplied back to the grid.

The existing policy, agreed to by utilities and regulators decades ago, encouraged more use of solar by making it pay off more quickly for those that installed them. It resulted in less use of energy from polluting power plants and just made sense given how much sun we get here in Tucson.

Durham worked with the council even before he was a councilperson on the city's effort to lobby the Corporation Commission to keep net metering. Unfortunately, we lost that fight. Now, excess solar power will still go to the grid, but it will be pur-

chased at half of the retail price instead of being credited at full retail value. That change will mean there will be little incentive for local power users to build larger systems.

As a city, though, we still have a chance to get other solar projects online before the deadline. That was the purpose in bringing the item up on the agenda this week. Councilmember Durham and I want our city manager to get as many solar interconnection applications (the paperwork to make city projects eligible for net metering) as possible before the rules change, which is expected to happen in February. Many of our potential projects would be less economically viable.

We want these projects done because not only does it wean the city off of polluting fossil

PAUL'S NOTE (CONTINUED)

fuels which contribute to global warming, but they also can save our taxpayers' money. The solar panels at Udall Park, for example, are estimated to save the city \$200,000 dollars in avoided costs over the life of the project.

(By the way, whenever I write about the Udall project, someone asks how much it cost the city. The answer is: nothing. A private vendor agreed to build the panels in exchange for paying them for the power rather than the local electric company.)

The city's first solar project was built in 1999 and powers the Ward IV council office. Since then, several others have been built, and they are going to save the city \$7 million in avoided costs.

The city consumed 201 Megawatt Hours of electricity in fiscal year 2016. Because of these solar projects, 15% of that electricity came from renewable sources, the equivalent energy use of 2,880 houses in a given year. In terms of pollution that is not being released, that portion from renewables is equivalent to 5,714 passenger cars not being driven for a year.

The city has identified 80 sites that are the most viable for adding solar power, if we can get the paperwork in before the deadline. 40 of them are on the "A list." These are, by and large, places most affected by the new "peak demand" rate structure and that have space for panels. These locations have been judged the most likely to save the city money in avoided costs. Our city's energy management office is confident that all of these projects will have applications completed by the deadline.

The other 40 projects are not perfect candidates like our "A list" is. Some have lower energy use, some don't have a convenient place for a large solar array. Still, the message my colleagues and I sent to staff on Tuesday was to get the paperwork done on as many of these projects as possible. Both the City Manager and the head of Environmental Services assured us that this will be a top priority over the coming weeks. I'd like to thank my new colleague Councilmember Durham for prioritizing this issue.

Lowell Rothschild passed away just before the new year. He is the father of Mayor Rothschild, but also had a remarkable impact on our community in his over sixty years practicing law. His legal work, which he continued past his ninetieth birthday, included the negotiations to keep El Rio Clinic open to serve Tucson's poorer residents. His community activities included being president of Temple Emanuel. Along the way, he was also inducted into the United States Bowling Congress Hall of Fame.

When he turned 90, he told the *Arizona Daily Star* "My life is full." I hope we can all say that some day.

My deepest condolences to Jonathan and his family.

TREECYCLE

If you still have your once-living Christmas tree, there's time to recycle it through the City of Tucson's TreeCycle program. Eight collection sites are open in Tucson and Oro Valley through Monday, Jan. 15. Please remove all lights, ornaments, decorations, plastic tree bags, and tree stands before bringing your tree to a TreeCycle site. Trees collected are chipped and these items can cause damage to people and equipment. The City of Tucson does not collect Christmas trees from curbs and alleys. Other green waste is not accepted at TreeCycle sites. Commercial tree lot overages may be taken to the Los Reales Landfill (commercial rates apply).

- Oro Valley Naranja Park, 810 W. Naranja Dr., (Only open through January 7, 2018)
- Tank's Roll-offs & Recycling, 7301 E Speedway (turn north on Prudence Rd., Open M-F, 7 am - 4 pm; Sat, 7 am - 2 pm; *Only During Business Hours*)
- Golf Links Sports Park, 2400 S. Craycroft Rd. (7 am - 5 pm)
- Tucson Rodeo Grounds, on 3rd Ave. (east of Rodeo Grounds, on S. 3rd Ave.)
- Los Reales Landfill, 5300 E. Los Reales Rd. (Entrance is at intersection of Craycroft Rd. & Los Reales Rd., follow signs) 6am-5pm; *Closed Sundays*
- Silverbell Site, (northeast corner of Silverbell Rd. & Goret Rd (follow signs))
- Purple Heart Park, 10050 E. Rita Rd.
- Randolph Golf Course, 600 S. Alvernon Way, (southeast corner of parking lot)

WINTER CLOTHING DRIVE

Every December and January, we try to collect winter items for a local charity. This year, we are collecting coats and winter clothing items for the Tucson Interfaith HIV/AIDS Network.

TIHAN serves people living with HIV from all walks of life and backgrounds, and also works to educate the broader Tucson community about HIV. Although medications are helping to keep people with HIV alive longer than ever, there are still thousands of people in Pima County with HIV, and TIHAN serves to help them live well.

For more information on TIHAN, you can visit tihan.org.

PARKS PROGRAMS

Activity Guide: Tucson Parks and Recreation's Activity Guide for spring 2018 has arrived, and copies are available for pick up at all Parks and Recreation facilities. It can be viewed online at: www.tucsonaz.gov/parks.

The Activity Guide contains complete information on leisure classes, KIDCO after-school, aquatics, sports programs, registration, and the Discount Program. Registration dates are as follows:

The deadline for session 2 is March 13

All leisure class listings are online at www.EZEEreg.com. Please see the Activity Guide for more information on registration and deadlines. Whether you enjoy being active in slow-pitch softball leagues, want to design amazing jewelry, or get healthy and fit, there truly is something for everyone at Tucson Parks and Recreation. For questions or more information on registration or programs, contact Registration Services at 791-4877.

Senior Olympics: Tucson Parks and Recreation presents the 34th annual Senior Olympic Festival. This festival is a celebration to promote fitness, health, and an active lifestyle among adults 50 years of age and older. Events include volleyball, bowling, bridge, racquetball, basketball shoot, pickleball, archery, golf, tennis, horseshoes, badminton, and so much more. The festival takes place Jan. 6—Feb. 4 at various venues throughout the city.

Register online at www.EZEEreg.com, the deadline is Dec. 29 for events from Jan. 6-21 and Jan. 12 for events from Jan. 22—Feb. 4. Entry fees vary by event. For complete Senior Olympic Festival information visit www.tucsonaz.gov/parks/senior-olympic-festival. Contact Amber Hart at TucsonSeniorOlympics@tucsonaz.gov or 837-8153.

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Remember to like
Paul on Facebook!

Please bring these items to the Ward 2 Office
for the following charities:

**THE COMMUNITY FOOD BANK—Non Perishable
Items**

**DIAPER BANK OF SOUTHERN ARIZONA—
Infant/Child/Adult Diapers**

**TIHAN - Personal Care Items for Individuals
and Families in Need**

LIONS CLUB—Eye Glasses

**DANCING IN THE STREETS ARIZONA—Ballet/
Dance Equipment**

CASA MARIA—Plastic bags

**SR. JOSE WOMEN'S SHELTER—Summer items
and clothing, athletic shoes, back packs, tote**

MAYOR AND COUNCIL

The first regular Mayor and Council meeting of the new year will be on **Tuesday, January 9**. Regular Session starts at 5:30 pm following an afternoon study session. There is always a short call to the audience before the business portion of the meeting. Council chambers are located downtown at 255 W Alameda.

The agendas for the meetings are posted online at <http://cms3.tucsonaz.gov/clerks/mcdocs>

