



Agenda Item #: \_\_\_\_\_

# Staff Report

## City of Manhattan Beach

**TO:** Honorable Mayor Cohen and Members of the City Council

**THROUGH:** Geoff Dolan, City Manager

**FROM:** Sona Kalapura, Environmental Programs Manager  
Lindy Coe-Juell, Assistant-to-the-City Manager

**DATE:** March 04, 2009

**SUBJECT:** Consideration of a Resolution Approving the City's Participation in Earth Hour

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### **RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends that the City Council approve and adopt Resolution No. 6179 in order to support the City's participation in Earth Hour 2009 activities.

### **FISCAL IMPLICATION:**

There are no fiscal implications associated with the recommended action.

### **BACKGROUND:**

Climate change is recognized as a significant environmental issue for the 21st century. The United States is one of the world's largest emitters of greenhouse gases, contributing nearly five times the global average of carbon emissions. The City of Manhattan Beach has recognized the importance of taking action against climate change before its impacts become too dangerous to manage, and has enacted several policies to begin reducing municipal emissions of greenhouse gases.

The World Wildlife Fund sponsors an initiative that is designed to engage the public, and in turn increase individual knowledge of how each person can make responsible energy and environmental choices. Earth Hour began two years ago and is now the largest event of its kind in the world. Last year, more than 50 million participated and made a statement about climate change by turning out all non-essential lights in their homes and businesses for one hour. Many cities also participated as the lights went out at the Empire State Building, the Golden Gate Bridge, the Sydney Opera House and the Coliseum in Rome.

This year, Earth Hour will be held on March 28<sup>th</sup> from 8:30pm to 9:30pm. The event will be even bigger this year than last, with more than 500 cities in 74 countries agreeing to take part including Atlanta, Chicago, Las Vegas, Los Angeles, Miami and Nashville. Around the world cities like Moscow, Hong Kong, Mumbai, Shanghai and Mexico City will turn out their lights during Earth Hour 2009. Additionally, Earth Hour is not a black out. It is a voluntary power down of non-essential lighting by its participants.

**DISCUSSION:**

The City of Manhattan Beach and its residents are concerned about the impacts of climate change as evidenced through their support for the U.S. Mayors' Climate Protection Agreement, and active participation in the resident-based Environmental Task Force. The City and its residents have also shown a commitment to finding solutions to the energy conservation challenge. The City participated in the Earth Hour event last year by turning off all non-essential lighting, including decorative lights at the landmark Manhattan Beach Pier. By taking these actions, the City can lead by example again this year and ask its residents and businesses to do the same.

Earth Hour is not designed to solely save energy during the hour-long event, but is an idea to show that every individual can make a difference on the issue of climate change by doing something as simple as turning off the lights. This event will send a visual symbol to the world's leaders that we are counting on them to work together to find solutions to climate change.

By supporting the World Wildlife Fund's efforts to combat climate change, and encouraging community-wide participation in Earth Hour 2009, the City of Manhattan Beach will provide its residents with the opportunity to take a stand against the impacts of climate change.

By participating in Earth Hour 2009, the City will also encourage energy conservation practices and increases the dialogue on individual reduction of carbon emissions. In addition to raising awareness of the event through this report and resolution, city staff will post information on the city's website and calendar, provide information to key community organizations like the Chamber of Commerce, notify the media through press releases, and publish an ad in the Beach Reporter.

**CONCLUSION:**

Staff recommends that the City Council adopt Resolution No. 6179 to declare support for, and announce the City's participation in, Earth Hour 2009.

Attachments: A. Resolution No. 6179

cc: Liza Tamura, City Clerk

RESOLUTION NO. 6179

RESOLUTION TO SUPPORT TURNING OFF ALL NON-ESSENTIAL LIGHTING IN ALL CITY GOVERNMENT FACILITIES AND PUBLIC LANDMARKS FOR THE HOUR BETWEEN 8:30 PM AND 9:30 PM ON MARCH 28, 2009 AS PART OF THE CITY-WIDE CLIMATE CHANGE EVENT: EARTH HOUR 2009

WHEREAS, our community is deeply concerned about the impacts of climate change and the future health and well-being of our planet and believes energy efficiency, natural resource conservation are important elements to combating climate change; and,

WHEREAS, Earth Hour is both an international and local symbolic event organized by World Wildlife Fund to raise awareness about climate change issues, to encourage businesses, individuals and government to take actions to reduce their carbon emissions and their impact on the environment in their daily lives and operations; and

WHEREAS, Earth Hour asks all citizens, businesses, government agencies, and commercial and non-commercial establishments to turn off all non-essential lighting for one hour beginning at 8:30 pm on March 28, 2009 and to encourage citizens and businesses to commit to actions they can take in the coming year to reduce their carbon footprints and conserve energy; and,

WHEREAS, Earth Hour will be used as a tool to inform local residents and businesses about existing information and tools already available within the community to assist them in increasing energy efficiency and decreasing emissions and use of natural resources; and,

WHEREAS, Extinguishing non-essential lights in all city government buildings and public landmarks for one hour and urging all businesses and citizens to do the same will send a clear message that the people of Manhattan Beach in the State of California in the United States of America are concerned about climate change, stand with the rest of the world in seeking solutions; and,

WHEREAS, Turning non-essential lights off in all city government buildings and public landmarks will serve as an important rallying point for the city-wide energy conservation event Earth Hour.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MANHATTAN BEACH, CALIFORNIA, DOES HEREBY DECLARE, FIND, DETERMINE AND ORDER AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. The City Council of the City of Manhattan Beach hereby makes the following findings:

1. That the above recitations are true and correct.
2. That the City of Manhattan Beach endorses efforts by World Wildlife Fund through Earth Hour to raise awareness around global climate change and energy efficiency.
3. That the City of Manhattan Beach encourages all city employees and residents to turn off all non-essential lighting in city government buildings and public landmarks for the hour between 8:30 and 9:30 PM on March 28, 2009 to conserve energy and raise awareness about global climate change as part of the city-wide Earth Hour event.

SECTION 2. The City Clerk shall certify to the adoption of this resolution and thenceforth and thereafter the same shall be in full force and effect.

PASSED, APPROVED and ADOPTED this 4th day of March, 2009.

AYES:  
NOES:  
ABSTAIN:  
ABSENT:

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Mayor, City of Manhattan Beach, California

ATTEST:

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City Clerk