



# City of Pensacola

## Environmental Advisory Board

### Minutes

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Thursday, July 6, 2023, 2:00 PM

Hagler/Mason Conference Room,  
2nd Floor

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**Members Present:** Kristin Bennett, Chair, Katie Dineen, Vice Chair, Neil Richards, Kyle Kopytchak, Katie Fox, Blaise Butts, Jay Massey

**Members Absent:** Kelly Hagen and one position vacant

**Others Present:** Don Kraher, Council Executive, Sonja Gaines, Council Assistant, Carrie Stevenson, Angelica Tilton

### CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME:

The meeting was called to order by Chair Bennett.

### ROLL CALL AND DETERMINATION OF QUORUM:

A quorum was established.

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

1. [23-00039](#) APPROVAL OF ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY BOARD MEETING  
MINUTES OF JUNE 1, 2023

**Recommendation:** That the Environmental Advisory Board approve the meeting minutes from the June 1, 2023, Board meeting.

**Sponsors:** Kristin Bennett

**Attachments:** [EAB Minutes 06.01.2023](#)

**Member Kopytchak moved for approval of the June 1, 2023 minutes, seconded by Member Massey. The motion carried 7 – 0, with one member absent and one position vacant.**

## **PRESENTATIONS:**

### **2. [23-00503](#) PRESENTATION FROM CARRIE STEVENSON ON BATS, BAT HOUSES AND LOCATIONS**

**Recommendation:** That the Environmental Advisory Board receive a presentation from Carrie Stevenson, Coastal Sustainability Agent with the UF/IFSA Escambia County Extension Office regarding bats, bat houses and the appropriate location for installation.

**Sponsors:** Kristin Bennett

Ms. Carrie Stevenson, Coastal Sustainability Agent with UF/IFSA Escambia County Extension Office made a power point presentation (copy on file) on bats, dispelling myths about bats, and explaining the benefits bats bring in the eco system by eating insects such as mosquitoes, flies, and moths, dispensing seeds, pollinating flowers and making guano. There are 13 species of bats that live in Florida, 48 species that live in the United States and 1,400 species in the world. The most common species in the United States are the Brazilian free-tailed bat, the Southeastern Bat, the Big Brown Bat, Evening bat, the endangered Gray bat that lives only in a few caves in north Florida. There are two large bat houses in the Pensacola area—one at the Roy Hyatt Environmental Center and one on the Langley Bell 4 H property in Molino. She reviewed hints for building a bat house, how-to put-up bat houses, and placing them in the best locations and answered questions from Board members.

## **STAFF COMMUNICATIONS:**

There were no staff communications. Council Executive indicated that Deputy City Administrator David Forte is out on paternal leave for the month of July.

## **ACTION ITEMS:**

There were no action items.

## **DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

Chair Bennet mentioned the information provided by Board Member Butts on Hillsborough County's tree fund and their grant program. She has mixed feelings on the Board continuing to discuss the ordinance, since the Land Development Code is going to be revised and that includes the tree ordinance.

Member Butts explained that he wants to stay away from the ordinance. However, the Board has spent a lot of time on the tree ordinance. There is a pot of money and the EAB wants to

use it to plant trees. There has to be a process to do that and that is why he looked to find some city that already had a process in place. He volunteered to reach out to someone in Hillsborough County to get further information and get answers to any questions the Board might have.

Council Executive pointed out an important question would be to find out what type of government they have. Since it is Hillsborough County, the commissioners may make all the decisions vs our form of government where there are 2 distinctive branches—the Mayor which is the executive branch and the legislative branch, which is the City Council. The Mayor controls all of the operations. The council controls the money. The City just recently underwent a tree canopy study and a tree assessment study. As a result of those studies, administration is coming up with a tree planting plan that will identify, based on the data they received, where trees need to be planted. The goal is that each year, the account would be zeroed out with tree planting on a yearly basis. There is a pilot program they are talking about that is similar to the East Pensacola Heights program that involves planting trees on city property as well as private property that insures community buy in. They hope to bring the plan forward to the EAB either in August or September. The City would still control the right tree in the right place. The goal would be to make it a more cohesive, collaborative process.

After further discussion, Chair Bennett suggested the board receive an update on the proposed plan from administration when appropriate.

#### **BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS:**

Vice Chair Dineen stated that she has looked through the draft Active Transportation Plan the City has developed for a more bikeable, walkable community and she encouraged others to review. They are accepting public comments on the plan until sometime next week. She also suggested having ECUA do an educational presentation at the next meeting on their recycling program.

Member Massey suggested that members of the EAB take an educational “field trip” to tour the recycling facility and then follow it up with having a representative from ECUA recycling facility come to a meeting of the EAB for a follow-up question and answer session.

Council Executive indicated that all of the EAB meetings have to be open to the public and if the EAB goes off site, then how would it be open to the public. He would have to check with legal.

Member Richards suggested possibly receiving a presentation from the City’s Sanitation Director on the City’s recycling efforts.

Chair Bennett didn't see the need to have a separate presentation. The City's Sanitation Director could attend the meeting whenever the ECUA recycling program is scheduled to make a presentation.

Since there is no action item for consideration in August, discussion occurred on whether to have an EAB meeting in August. The Council Executive will check to see if the pilot tree planting plan will be ready to present to the Board in August and will let the Chair know.

Member Kopytchak indicated he might have an item on the City processes of dealing with trees in the right of way and their ordinances. The EAB needs to be aware of the City's actions, in actions, inconsistencies, roles and fines of other people and how they are addressing dealing with trees on the right-of-way.

Member Butts informed the Board that Ocean Hour is applying for a grant from Impact 100 to buy \$100,000 worth of solar water bottle filling stations.

Chair Bennett indicated the draft Active Transportation Plan is on the City's website and the deadline for public comment is July 12. She thanked Carrie Stevenson for her presentation. The other person who attended the meeting came to specifically hear her presentation. Vice Chair Dineen relayed that she is a very talented artist, who makes her own paints from natural pigments.

If the pilot program presentation is not ready for the August meeting, then the next meeting of the EAB will be in September.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

There were no public comments.

#### **ADJOURNMENT:**

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 3:51 p.m.