

CITY OF PENSACOLA
ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY BOARD
MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, March 7, 2019

Members Present: Neil Richards, Chair, Kyle Kopytchak, Bob Bennett, Blase Butts, Calvin Avant, Katie Fox, Michael Lynch

Members Absent: Steve Elliott, Vice Chair, Dr. Gloria Horning

1. Call to Order/Quorum: The meeting was called to order by Chair Richards. A quorum was established. Chair Richards welcomed new member Katie Fox.
2. Oath of Office for New Member: Oath of Office administered to Katie Fox by City Clerk Ericka Burnett.
3. Approval of Meeting Minutes—February 7, 2019

Motion made by Member Kopytchak to approve the minutes, seconded by Member Bennett and was unanimously carried.

4. Old Business: Chair Richards asked Board Members to introduce themselves and explain their interest. Member Fox indicated that her primary interest is stormwater management, water quality, drinking water quality and restoration.
 - a) Review of Climate Mitigation and Adaptation Task Force Report

Chair Richards opened discussion for Board action on the Climate Mitigation and Adaptation Task Force Report. Member Bennett provided some comparative information between the Climate Mitigation and Adaptation Task Force Report and the environmental focus of Mayor's Transition Team report. The Team's environmental recommendations focus on conducting a greenhouse gas emissions inventory and the commitment to use of renewable energy. Seven Florida cities have committed to 100% renewable energy, three of which have their own electricity company. The City owns a natural gas energy company that contributes significant revenue to the City. Natural gas is considered "clean" but not "renewable". He suggested three recommendations:

- 1) The Environmental Advisory Board recommends that the City of Pensacola assign a staff member as the Sustainability Coordinator to initiate, oversee and coordinate the City's activities relative to climate change mitigation and resilience.
- 2) The Environmental Advisory Board recommends that the City of Pensacola conduct a greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions inventory to serve as the baseline for measuring

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progress on climate change as well as defining how much electricity is currently renewable sourced. [The use of the United States Environmental Protection Agency's "Local Greenhouse Gas Inventory Tool" or another established tool designed to compile a relatively quick and simple GHG inventory is recommended.]

- 3) The Environmental Advisory Board recommends that the City of Pensacola explore and define feasible options for renewable sourced electricity factoring in the limitations and opportunities available under Florida's regulatory system and Federal incentives reporting back to City Council with options for further consideration. [Such items as a renewables-only contract with Gulf Power, a collaborative efforts with NextEra (or private entity if regulations change) to build a renewable energy plant under a power purchase agreement, installation of solar panels on city facilities, etc.]

Member Kopytchak suggested having Board members submit motions and recommendations in advance of the meeting that would include how it would be achieved, what the cost is going to be, where the grants are coming from and give research points that can be reviewed prior to the meeting.

Council Executive reviewed process whereby members could submit items/recommendations to be placed on the agenda for review by the Board.

Chair Richards made a motion that the Mayor and City Council become a member of the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI)—Local Governments for Sustainability. Member Kopytchak seconded.

He indicated that there are a number of cities in Florida who are already members, but once the City becomes a member, they can work with other mentoring cities, obtain software that will help establish the carbon baseline. He was unable to ascertain the exact cost of becoming a member of this organization, it is based on the population size of the area that is joining.

Task Force Member Carrie Stevenson explained that there were a lot of resources that are available to cities, once they become a member of the organization. The on-line software would be free and it is specifically targeted for communities to enter data into the software system about city energy use and then setting benchmarks for how to change it and how to improve performance. The Transition Team also recommended joining this same organization.

Member Kopytchak stated that he thought the Board should understand the costs, who is going to input the data, what data, and where to get the data.

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Further concerns were expressed by Members Fox, Butts, and Kopytchak on the collection of the data and an employee to collect the data. Member Bennett suggested that the City assign a staff member, the Board is not in a position to dictate staffing. Some person or department should be responsible for sustainability.

Task Force Member Stevenson indicated that the cost to join the organization for a city the size of Pensacola would be \$1,200. Perhaps someone in the Planning Department or Building department might be able to start the service.

Chair Richards restated his motion that the Mayor and City Council become a member of the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI)—Local Governments for Sustainability.

City Council Member Myers reminded the Board that under the current form of government, the City Council does not have the authority to even put into an ordinance that the City hire such a person or such an office. Under the Charter, the Mayor determines the organizational structure of the City and is in charge of creating all positions. Where the Council gets involved is funding. The proposed budget is brought to the City Council. It would need to be made a part of the Mayor's budget proposal. The Mayor would have to request the position/office and the Council would have to fund it.

Member Kopytchak asked if the motion to become a member of the Local Governments for Sustainability organization could come before the City Council for action and who would sponsor it.

Council Executive indicated that it could be sent to both the Mayor and to the City Council.

Council Member Myers stated that she could sponsor it and work with the Council Executive to word it so that it would be the City Council recommending it to the Mayor.

Member Kopytchak stated that he was concerned about the information that is going along with this motion. Perhaps the motion could be amended to fill in the blanks for City Council, such as the actual costs, what data is going to be included, what benefits would be included, what would be gained by becoming a member rather than just saying become a member of this organization with no additional information.

Council Member Myers clarified the process for submitting items for the City Council agenda.

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Chair Richards restated his motion that the Mayor and City Council become a member of the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI)—Local Governments for Sustainability and asked if there were any further comments. Vote was taken and carried 6 – 1, with Member Avant dissenting.

Chair Richards asked if Member Bennett wanted to pursue any of his recommendations or other members had any further ideas or motions to make to go before the City Council.

Member Bennett indicated that the public's interest, as well as the Board's, is in a green house gas inventory rather than belonging to an organization. One should be conducted. That organization's or EPA's could be used. EPA's is real easy to use. Both reports have stressed the need for a green house gas inventory. The EAB agreed on the same thing at the last meeting.

Member Bennett made a motion to recommend that the City of Pensacola conduct a greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions inventory to serve as the baseline for measuring progress on climate change. Member Kopytchak seconded the motion.

Concerns were expressed by Member Kopytchak that there just wasn't enough information and that perhaps Christian Wagley could address some of the information that was presented in the Transition Report to assist the Board in prioritizing what actions the Board needs to take. When the Board starts putting forth motions, they need to understand everything it's going to take.

Member Fox pointed out on page 32 of the Transition Report, there is a little more information on getting the baseline. The on-line tool through the organization can be used or contract out to an energy management company or similar. If EPA also has a tool that could be used, it seems like there could be an evaluation made on the most cost effective way to get the information. Perhaps the motion should be to get the baseline done and then figure out the best way to get it done.

Member Lynch agreed with what Member Kopytchak alluded to. He also expressed concerns about staff and the ability to ask them to look at various issues and make recommendations. It would be nice to have someone to rely on.

Chair Richards indicated that the Climate Mitigation and Adaptation Task Force did the heavy work in compiling their report and they agreed that they would help with the EAB's understanding of the Task Force report in more detail as the Board called upon them to do that. If there is a particular item of concern, the person on the Task Force that championed it could come to the meeting and explain that.

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Member Avant also agreed with Member Lynch regarding a staff person. The Board could make all the motions they want. Without a staff person, they will just sit there. You have to have someone step up and make sure that those things happen. That needs to be the lead piece. A person that you bring the stuff to and then they take the ball and start working with it.

Christian Wagley, Member of Mayor's Transition Team dealing with the environment made brief comments on the parallels of the 2 reports and how he could only submit 5 recommendations, 2 of which were climate related. The GHG emissions is a starting point. It is awkward for the EAB to do their work at the meeting. Things come to the City Council in a finished form because they have staff. If the Board could send their priorities ahead of time so that they could be compiled and distributed before the meeting, then the Board would have time to review and discuss at the meeting.

Ron Helms reiterated that under the new charter, the Mayor has to be the one who buys in. If you don't recommend to the Mayor to buy in, you won't get buy in. With the heavy lifting that has been done with the report, the Board is better off doing it in little bites. The Mayor, in the budget process, has the discretion to accept or reject it. In his opinion, that motion should go directly to the Mayor.

Chair Richards explained that the EAB is able to make recommendations to both the Mayor and the City Council and he would encourage Member Bennett's motion to include both, so that whoever wants to act on it can do so. If they need to work together, better yet. Chair asked that the motion be restated.

Member Bennett moved that the Environmental Advisory Board recommends that the City of Pensacola conduct a greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions inventory to serve as the baseline for measuring progress on climate change. The motion was previously seconded by Member Kopytchak. Vote was taken and unanimously passed.

Member Bennett asked if the Board wanted to consider a person again. Somebody has to do something. If there is no recommendation on the table that there needs to be a person, whether it is a new person, current staff person or whatever, it will never appear anywhere in the budget and nothing will ever get done. The money has to be found somehow to pay for this.

Member Butts moved that the Mayor hire a Sustainability Coordinator for running the Climate Task Force report. Member Bennett seconded the motion.

Council Member Myers spoke in favor of the motion, linking it to built environment, complete streets, and sustainability. She feels the Mayor is very receptive.

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The Climate Task Force was a Task Force of the City Council. The Council needs suggestions on how to implement it. When it comes to hiring staff, under the Charter, that is a Mayoral function. The Council can't tell him who to hire, who to fire, how to organize the City, but they can certainly make recommendations.

Council Executive suggested getting both parties on board at the same time. When the Board makes a motion, that a task be put on each part, ie., that the Mayor hire and the City Council fund whatever the position is and that way, both are put on the mark, not just one. You could program it into the FY 2020 budget or no later than the FY 2021 budget.

Council Member Myers also further discussed the issues associated with sustainability and how it relates to all issues in the Task Force's report and felt that there is a need to establish an Office of Sustainability and a Sustainability Coordinator who can coordinate stormwater adaptation and mitigation. Need to look at how and where we build, have to look at stormwater and drainage, also. Need to look at incentivizing businesses to green up their parking lots and use pervious surfacing.

Member Butts made a motion that the Environmental Board recommend the following: That the Mayor, within FY 2020 and no later than FY 2021 program in an Office of Sustainability in accordance with the Climate Mitigation and Adaptation Task Force Report and Recommendations. Further, that City Council fund such Office of Sustainability at the time presented. Member Kopytchak seconded the motion.

Chair Richards called for discussion, public comment.

Christian Wagley clarified what the word "sustainability" means. The real definition of sustainability is the environmental, economic and social and all three are to be treated equally. The way it is typically used, people mean environmental only. It is important to clarify what this position is. The last time the City had an Office of Sustainability, it was strictly environmental. The true definition is equal, having that person look at all three.

Vote was taken and unanimously carried.

Chair Richards advised the Board that there was now a water bottle filling station located on the 2nd floor of city hall. Also another in planned to be placed on the 5th floor. No new Styrofoam products will be purchased by the City. He encouraged people to bring their own water bottles and coffee cups to meetings.

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Member Butts reported that SeaWorld is now eliminating poly-Styrofoam products. This will mean 14 million fewer pieces a year out of SeaWorld. Also, Escambia County is relooking at its Tree Ordinance.

Member Bennett asked for an update on no parking signs in the 12th Avenue Tree Tunnel.

Council Executive indicated he would get an update for the Board.

Member Butts inquired about monitoring of stormwater drains, ditches and baffle boxes and a point of contact. So far this year, one and a half tons of plastics, etc. have been cleaned up from Bartram Park, Bruce Beach, Visitors Information Center, Bay Bluffs Park and Chimney Park. Last year, they picked up 10,000 pounds.

Chair Richards indicated the Public Works Director. There is suppose to be a log book maintained on what's being cleaned out and how much.

Laurie Murphy indicated that Richard Williams with Public Works is the person in charge of all the City's storm water facilities. His boss, Derrik Owens is the Director.

Council Executive indicated that one of the recommendations in the Environmental section from the Mayor's Transition Team was to add an additional clean-up crew to clean and maintain stormwater drains.

5. New Business:

Christian Wagley reviewed and presented the environment section of the Mayor's Transition Team Report, going over the scope, key observations, recommendations, summary part, and measurable achievements. The transportation system referred to in the report includes all means of transportation, not just ECAT, it includes cars, buses, the roads that support that transportation, the airport, etc. He also mentioned the discussion aspects that were included in the Appendix pages of the report, and a sample solar proposal that was included for the City's Public Works complex. *(Report and Appendix on file with the City.)*

Council Member Myers reminded the Board that everything does not have to go to the Mayor to be implemented. The Council can implement ordinances and the Mayor has to enforce them. The Council is the legislative body, the budgetary body. A lot of these recommendations need to happen, like form based code, that would be in an ordinance and in the Land Development Code and would have to be enforced. The Board has a very important role. They can recommend changes to ordinances, new ordinances, and that's

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a powerful position to be in to get things done. The Mayor has to implement our laws, ordinances, and regulations.

6. Reports and Announcements:

Member Avant reported that on March 30, 20 individuals will be graduating from the environmental career worker training program. He will be attending the Citizens Science Conference in Raleigh next week doing a poster presentation on the Wedgewood Community and the citizen science work that is being done out there. He hopes to bring back some citizen science things that the Board could do in the City.

Member Butts mentioned the Ocean Hour clean up scheduled for Saturday at the Bay Bluffs, Chimney Park.

Chair Richards announced the Science Hour, which is the 2nd Thursday of every month.

Member Fox announced Keep Pensacola Beautiful will have an earth day clean up in April.

7. Board Member Comments: None

8. Public Comments—Open Forum

Mr. Hugh Turner, resident of Pensacola expressed concerns with stormwater and the ability to have stormwater held on individuals property to help support the groundwater situation. With sea level coming in, the groundwater is necessary to support the well system. Catch it before it gets to the street.

Further comments were made on various stormwater problems and retention in other communities.

Council Executive reminded the Board that in April, they will be selecting a Chair and Vice Chair.

Ms. Sharon Dickinson made the Board aware of the proposed YMCA land swap with the City to build soccer fields and the impact of noise, and the elimination of trees at the site. She is concerned with the environmental impact with the additional 3 hangars at the airport as well as drainage impacts.

Laurie Murphy addressed some of the stormwater concerns that she has been made aware of by city and county constituents with regard to stormwater facilities in the city not being

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maintained. Stormwater is complex and need to take a watershed approach. Need to look at staffing, budgetary constraints and infrastructure. Development is important and the proposed revised tree ordinance will hopefully be going on the April agenda to be handed down to Planning. There is a lot of landscape mitigation in there, not just on trees. Looking at ways to capture stormwater on site, that is low impact development.

There will be a Carpenters Creek clean-up a week from Saturday over at the Mellow Mushroom.

9. Adjourn

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 3:50 p.m.

The Climate Mitigation and Resilience report has laid out many meaningful recommendations. The March 4, 2109 Mayor’s Transition Team report provided a community consensus on actionable plans will set sustainability efforts up for success. The Team’s environmental recommendations focus on conducting a greenhouse gas emissions inventory [without which the city has no baseline to assess progress or define how much action is required] and the commitment to use of renewable energy. Note, the City owns a natural gas energy company that contributes significant revenue to the City. Natural gas is considered as “clean” but not “renewable”. Seven Florida cities have committed to 100% renewable Energy; three of which have their own electricity company easing their way forward.

City	Year Committed	Utility
Tallahassee	2050	City of Tallahassee Electric Utility
Gainesville	2045	Gainesville Regional Utilities
Orlando	2050	Orlando Utilities Commission
Largo	2035	Duke Energy
St. Petersburg	NO Date	FP&L
Dunedin	2050	FP&L
Sarasota	2045	FP&L

In order to initiate action, I suggest the following resolutions:

1. The Environmental Advisory Board recommends that the City of Pensacola assign a staff member as the Sustainability Coordinator to initiate, oversee and coordinate the City’s activities relative to climate change mitigation and resilience. [City job description 1191 can serve as a starting point.]
2. The Environmental Advisory Board recommends that the City of Pensacola conduct a greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions inventory to serve as the baseline for measuring progress on climate change as well as defining how much electricity is currently renewable sourced. [The use of the United States Environmental Protection Agency’s “Local Greenhouse Gas Inventory Tool” or another established tool designed to compile a relatively quick and simple GHG inventory is recommended.]
3. The Environmental Advisory Board recommends that the City of Pensacola explore and define feasible options for renewable sourced electricity factoring in the limitations and opportunities available under Florida’s regulatory system and Federal incentives reporting back to the City Council with options for further consideration. [Such items as a renewables-only contract with Gulf Power, a collaborative effort with NextEra (or private entity if regulations change) to build a renewable energy plant under a power purchase agreement, installation of solar panels on city facilities, etc.]

Robert R Bennett
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