

**CITY OF PENSACOLA  
ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY BOARD  
MEETING MINUTES**

Thursday, September 5, 2019 ~ 2:00 p.m.

**Members Present:** Neil Richards, Chair, Bob Bennett, Vice Chair, Michael Lynch, Dr. Gloria Horning, Calvin Avant, Katie Fox, Kyle Kopytchak

**Members Absent:** Blase Butts

1. Call to Order/Quorum: The meeting was called to order by Chair Richards. A Quorum was established.
2. Approval of Meeting Minutes—August 1, 2019

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

3. Board Member Comments/Updates:
  - a) 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue Tree Replacement and No Parking Enforcement—Kyle Kopytchak  
Member Kopytchak had no information to provide about the no parking signs. Chair Richards commented on the impact on trees due to compacting of earth surrounding them in the root zone.
  - b) Perdido Pensacola Bay Estuary Program—Michael Lynch  
Member Lynch provided an update on the Perdido Pensacola Bay Estuary Program. New Director, Jim Trifilio is getting settled in. They have formed some technical committees and are starting to get their management plan together. They have advertised for a couple of positions and are looking for office space. They are currently sharing space with the County.

Member Horning inquired what was EAB's charge from the City to do with this program. Chair Richards stated it was the protection of the watershed. Member Lynch stated that is important and is why he is following up on the program. The estuary doesn't follow county or city lines. The Program has expressed an interest in having the EAB have a role, if possible. Member Fox indicated that the focus is on those bodies. There has been an Estuary Program developed to assess the water body conditions and ultimately come up with a plan to restore or do whatever they want to propose to do with it. It is in the best interest, at minimum, to follow the process as projects come down the line. Member Horning indicated that she felt the focus should be on stormwater runoff. Member Avant also expressed concerns about Marcus Bayou, Crescent Lake, all of the toxins from Wedgewood are going into that Bayou and Crescent Lake.

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c) Criteria for Tree Fund Grant Proposals

Chair skipped update on this item. To be considered with Tree Ordinance item.

d) Environmental Justice/Injustice—Calvin Avant

Member Avant inquired about what Council districts were affected with the clear cutting of trees. Member Bennet indicated that it mostly occurred in District 2 and District 5. Member Horning also indicated that the Tanyard neighborhood was also affected.

e) Water Quality of Bay/Gulf—Blaise Butts, Katie Fox

Member Fox indicated that Quite Water Beach has experienced some water quality issues lately.

f) Sanders Beach and Bruce Beach Stormwater Drainage, Flooding/Toxin Issues in Tanyard—Gloria Horning

Member Horning reported that the last storms had water over the curbs at Sanders Beach and Bruce Beach, expressed concerns about the amount of grass cuttings, trash and debris that clog the stormwater drains in that area and other areas of Pensacola. She has reported her concerns about the debris to the City's 311 system. The City is not maintaining the stormwater drains. Chair Richards inquired about whether there was any progress being made at the superfund site at Sanders Beach area. Member Horning expressed her concerns about the amount of industrial pollution that is occurring along Main Street and Government Street and the lack of environmental impact assessments on the new homes that are being built in the area. EPA has handed off the site to the Florida DEP.

g) Environmental Impacts on Disenfranchised Communities—Gloria Horning

h) Renewable Energy Sources—Neil Richards, Robert Bennett

Member Bennett reported that the Solar Together Florida Power and Light hearing is now scheduled for October 15 and they claim they will have something done by November 22.

i) Stormwater Management—Katie Fox

Member Fox has nothing new to report. Chair Richards indicated that it might be something to look into with regard to debris removal prior to storms, etc. Member Fox volunteered to reach out to the City's Public Works department to obtain any information the Board may be interested in getting. Member Bennett also reported that the Blue Green Algae Task Force meeting was canceled/postponed due to the hurricane.

4. Old Business:

a) Referral from City Council—Amendment to the Code of the City of Pensacola - Land Development Code, Section 12-6 Tree/Landscape Regulations (See August 1, Agenda for attachment)

Chair Richards opened discussion on the proposed amendment to the Land Development Code, Section 12-6 Tree/Landscape Regulations, asking the Board

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to pay particular attention to page 19, Section (C) Tree planting trust fund of the draft and that is the neighborhood associations requesting grants for planting of trees within their scope. What's been talked about is how to process that request, either the dollar amount or scope of that recommendation. Member Bennett suggested striking the language of other appropriate landscape vegetation, since trees are what's wanted, not vegetation. Chair Richards indicated that what precipitated the Council moratorium on the tree planting trust fund was the funds were used to purchase irrigation supplies, equipment, trucks, etc. Member Kopytchak asked if there was discussion included in the proposed ordinance to provide for the mitigation money that goes into the trust fund to be used in the same district where the trees were removed. He felt very strongly that the funds should be allocated to the districts where the trees were removed.

Also, a suggestion was made to make the grant program language into Section (D). Further discussion by Board members on the grant program involved community organizations. What types of community organizations, clubs, neighborhood associations, civic organizations, registered as a 501c(3), organizations recognized by the City, etc. could apply. Who would have responsibility of maintaining the trees/landscaping. Have a list of approved trees, that the recommendation can be made from that list. Having the right tree at the right place at the right time. Placement of trees is critical, especially when you are dealing with power lines.

The Board also discussed power grids, lines and underground utilities as they relate to trees and how they are trimmed and the value of trees vs. maintaining power lines.

Member Bennett distributed a proposal for Sec. 12.6.2.- Applicability (d) Heritage Trees for the Board to review and consider at the next meeting.

b) Referral from City Council—Examine Chemicals Used on Athletic Fields and Parks in the City of Pensacola (See August 1, 2019 Agenda for attachment)

Member Fox reviewed information she received from the City on spray dates for the athletic fields in the city limits and also material safety data sheets for each of the chemicals they apply. There is also a spray schedule for insect, pest and lawn control as well as photos at Sanders Beach and a schedule for spring. They are also trying to get the records from Wallace Company. Bill Kimball with the Parks and Recreation Department provided the information and he is open to whatever the Environmental Advisory Board has to suggest. The Pensacola Youth

Soccer organization is also in support of addressing any issues with spraying youth athletic fields.

Chair Richards also reported that the Council Executive has sent a request for information to both Brian Cooper and Derrick Owens.

Member Fox also discussed articles she found on Integrated Pest Management vs. Organic Land Management. (copy attached.)

Member Horning indicated that the use of pesticides and fertilizers also affects stormwater runoff that will ultimately land in the bay.

Member Fox indicated that a comprehensive review of the practice needs to be made.

Member Kopytchak stated that the EAB was tasked to examine the chemicals that are being used. The Board requested this information and that they be identified. Until the Board gets that information, we request that they stop spraying where children are playing. It could be detrimental to the children.

**Member Fox made a motion to proposed a moratorium on spraying of the youth athletic fields within the City limits that are occupied during the season until we have received the data requested and have had an opportunity to review it. Member Horning seconded the motion.**

Member Kopytchak suggested asking for an all inclusive list and the schedule. Further discussion occurred on listing athletic programs, including parks, and researching organic uses. Member Fox indicated that Bill Kimball relayed that 95% of the City's parks are not sprayed with chemicals.

**Member Fox restated and revised the motion to propose a moratorium on spraying youth athletic fields and parks within the City limits until the City provides a comprehensive list of chemicals and the application schedule for the EAB to review. Member Horning seconded the motion.**

Christian Wagley offered a suggestion that the Board specify pesticides, herbicides, and fungicides. Those are the three chemicals typically applied to lawns. Fertilizers are typically not a public health issue. He also suggested doing a couple of fields as a trial with the organics to see what would work and what wouldn't.

**Vote was taken and unanimously carried.**

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### 5. New Business

Chair Richards announced that Keep Pensacola Beautiful, Inc. is launching a campaign to take over the purchase of the old Coca-Cola Bottling Plant on North Palafox Street and convert it into a non-profit environmental study center.

### 6. Reports and Announcements

Member Lynch reported that the Pensacola & Perdido Bays Estuary Technical Committee would be having a meeting on September 19, 2019 at 1:30 p.m. at the Central Escambia County Central Office Complex, followed by the Education Committee at 4 p.m.

### 7. Public Comments—Open Forum

Chris Mauldin with the City Engineering/Public Works Department reported that the FDOT beautification grant is due in October. The City passed on the beautification grant and is going to do the joint participation grant with FDOT. The beautification grant was limited to \$100,000. The joint participation grant would go up to about \$400,000 and would do larger projects and include better plants and vegetation.

Christian Wagley provided information on the reduction in stormwater clean-out crews, the City staff initiated green house gas emissions study done this summer, utilizing an intern, nothing official from the elected officials has happened on some of the Climate Task Force recommendations.

As relates to the tree discussion, he agrees that trees should be planted, not shrubs and also getting rid of the hospital exemption. Money has to be allocated to maintain the trees. Also commented on the grant programs. The Mayor has control over spending money on those tree projects. The Mayor has had conversations with Council Member Myers on where to plant trees. The Council still has to free up the Tree Trust Fund.

He recommended inviting Derrick Owens, the City's Public Works Director to address the Board on the City's Stormwater Plan.

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Member Bennett commented that the businesses along "L" Street, north of Fairfield have taken it upon themselves to clean the stormwater drains and since they have, that area has not flooded once.

8. Adjourn

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 3:54 p.m.