

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

Thursday, November 7, 2019 ~ 2:00 p.m.

**Members Present:** Neil Richards, Chair, Bob Bennett, Vice Chair, Michael Lynch, Blase Butts, Katie Fox

**Members Absent:** Kyle Kopytchak, Calvin Avant, Dr. Gloria Horning

1. Call to Order/Quorum: The meeting was called to order by Chair Richards. A quorum was established.
2. Approval of Meeting Minutes—October 3, 2019

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

3. Presentation: Ms. Dory Larsen, Southern Alliance for Clean Energy

Dory Larsen, Electric Vehicle Program Coordinator with Southern Alliance for Clean Energy gave a presentation on the Southern Alliance for Clean Energy, a regional non-profit and membership organization, working primarily in Tennessee, the Carolinas, Georgia and Florida, to promote responsible energy choices to insure clean healthy communities throughout the southeast through their Electrify the South and Driving on Sunshine programs. The largest contributor of carbon dioxide pollution in the United States is the transportation sector. In 2016, it overtook the utility sector as the biggest contributor of greenhouse gases.

The benefits of electric transportation are they save money, low maintenance costs, save time by not going to gas stations, having oil changes, protect public health and the environment, help provide energy security and help improve the grid. They can be fueled on renewable energy, like solar and wind.

Florida Power and Light has a pilot program ongoing in Palm Beach County Schools where they are using electric school buses. Over the next five years, they are looking at how buses can be used as large batteries during emergencies to power emergency shelters, basically as portable generators, to keep the power on.

Southern Alliance for Clean Energy did some analysis on how electric vehicles could replace the need for off shore oil drilling. Between twenty and forty-five million electric vehicles by early 2030's would offset all of the gasoline that would physically be produced in the current Atlantic, Eastern Gulf and Pacific waters. There are actually 17 million vehicles sold in the United States each year so it would be between seven and sixteen percent of all new vehicles purchased each year by 2030's.

MINUTES OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY BOARD  
NOVEMBER 7, 2019  
PAGE 2

There is a lot of opportunity for education and outreach. A campaign was launched to “Protect Our Coast, Drive Electric”, with the goal to have local governments accelerate the transition to electric vehicles by adopting targeted policies. A digital tool kit was developed and is on line. It can be updated as cities adopt policies. Links are provided to all resolutions, ordinances and executive orders that cities and counties have adopted to make it easier to find sample legislation that is in effect. Further options contained in the tool kit were reviewed.

Ms. Larsen also mentioned the Volkswagen Mitigation Fund where Volkswagen violated the Clean Air Act. Florida’s piece of the pie is \$166 million dollars, The Department of Environmental Protection is the agency that will be distributing those funds. They released their final plan in October and seventy percent of the money is going to go to alternative fueled buses, either transit buses or school buses. Fifteen percent is carved out for electric vehicle charging infrastructure and fifteen percent is for DERA—diesel emissions reduction act matching funds. A request for information was put out on October 8 wanting to know what agencies are interested in what types of projects. They are encouraging anyone interested in the funds to put in a request. The request for information will determine what types of projects will receive funding. Escambia County is one of the priority areas due to the high pollution of nitrous oxide from diesel cars.

Duke Energy has a pilot program where they are installing 450 charge ports across their territory. FP and L just announced a pilot program as well where they are installing 600 ports at over a hundred locations.

She briefly talked about the “Driving on Sunshine Project” where they can bring out models for testing to cities and counties. Drivers just have to be 25 years old and have a valid drivers license.

Member Bennett stated that he had three topics he would like Ms. Larsen to elaborate on. One, has the Duke Energy program been successful. The way they structured that program is very interesting. Two, what has been the risk to EMS personnel of their life in rescues on roads. Three, what is the track record and expected costs on the hazardous waste disposal.

Ms. Larsen indicated that the Duke Project is still trying to site locations for the multi-unit dwellings and she believes they have all of the DC fast charging stations sited and that is an on-going project. The second one concerning EMS risk is that they are doing active training for that with the Clean City coalitions to know where the batteries are located and where to cut power during an emergency. Training will need to be continued and expanded so that all first responders understand how to deal with that situation. With regard to the hazardous waste disposal, Tesla developed a closed loop system where they are taking the battery back and recycling the materials in them. Most of the OEM’s have signed an agreement

MINUTES OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY BOARD

NOVEMBER 7, 2019

Page 3

about sourcing the materials that go into the batteries and then how to deal with them. It's not like they are one big block. The batteries are individual components, they are kind of like a AAA battery. They can be reused and repurposed as well. In Japan, Nissan has a program where they are pairing solar with battery components from Nissan Leaf's to power street lights.

Member Butts pointed out that people were keeping their cars longer and how the replacement time line of electric cars will be affected.

4. Board Member Comments/Updates:

- a) 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue Tree Replacement and No Parking Enforcement—Kyle Kopytchak  
No update provided
- b) Perdido Pensacola Bay Estuary Program—Michael Lynch  
Update provided under announcements.
- c) Criteria for Tree Fund Grant Proposals  
No update provided
- d) Environmental Justice/Injustice—Calvin Avant  
No update provided
- e) Water Quality of Bay/Gulf—Blase Butts, Katie Fox  
No update provided
- f) Sanders Beach and Bruce Beach Stormwater Drainage, Flooding/Toxin Issues in Tanyard—Gloria Horning

Chair Richards indicated that Sanders Beach had a presentation on the superfund site recently and asked if anyone could give an update.

Keith Wilkins, Deputy City Administrator provided an update, indicating that Peter Thorpe from Atlanta EPA office hosted a meeting relative to the American Creosote Superfund site. There were three DEP employees in attendance, two from Tallahassee and one from the Northwest Florida district to give an update on their remedial action design, which is complete now. The status looking forward, is when they could expect funding for implementation of the design, get feedback from the community on the reuse and also letting the community know what is coming up with regards to continued excavation of soils from yards that are identified where contaminated levels still exceed the residential level of 7 parts per trillion of dioxin. They don't anticipating funding on implementation for another year. That decision is made in Washington, DC by an environmental panel representing all EPA regions that prioritizes superfund sites, by risk. Right now, American Creosote is in the middle of the pack. They were close to getting funded this year but they weren't. They expect to do okay next year but it is a dynamic situation when funding will be allocated for the remedial construction. Once they receive funding, they expect it to be two to three years to complete the remediation. One of the questions that is outstanding is can some of these soils be transferred to the Escambia Treating Superfund Site to fill in the big hole that is there. There are some bureaucratic problems with that. DEP would have to agree to it. Escambia Treating Site was cleaned up to 30 parts per trillion for dioxin and so

they couldn't transfer anything over 30 from Sanders Beach to there or they would be contaminating that site. They could construct a new cell in the hole there that creates another waste management unit, which at this point is unpermitted. It would have to be permitted and monitored, and the engineering design would have to take place. There are issues with relocating sediment from American Creosote to the Escambia Treating Site. That is still in flux and DEP is still considering it to some degree. If that happens, it lowers the height of the cell at American Creosote. Right now, the cell at American Creosote is expected to be eight to ten feet above land surface in elevation, because groundwater is about two feet deep there. Other remedial designs are pretty complex because they have multiple types of contamination, multiple locations of contamination and most of it is in the groundwater. It is down to 150 feet, particularly when 148 feet of that is actually within groundwater. So it involves some chemical oxidation, some bioremediation, excavation, and containment in the cell, installation of a slurry wall, down to 150 feet to prevent migration of the worst of the dissolved contaminants to actually migrating it downgrading it to offsite. There are a lot of different remedial technologies to be used there at a cost of about \$30 million. In two to three years they anticipate being done with it and opportunities for reuse. The City does not own any of the eight or nine parcels there now. The City is examining several different strategies to obtain some of those parcels at the direction of the Council last year, to include condemnation, if we have to, as long as the City is protected from liability. They are taking steps to protect the City and citizens of those liabilities, if they assume the properties. It doesn't mean that the City will have willing sellers or willing means of acquisition of the properties. Also they are in discussion with Sanders Beach as to what types of reuse there. Geo-technically, it is going to be limited, because it is going to be capped, which means that you can't put piles in for building construction, the depth is not there to dig for utilities; but a passive park type reuse, walking trails, some pavilions, things like that are certainly in the picture.

g) Environmental Impacts on Disenfranchised Communities—Gloria Horning

No update provided.

h) Renewable Energy Sources—Neil Richards, Robert Bennett

No updates provided.

i) Stormwater Management—Katie Fox, Blase Butts

Member Butts thanked Roger Williams with the Public Works Department for providing information. He asked about having the EAB members come out and see them emptying out a stormwater vault. It is done twice a year, based on a bid and we missed it by a month. He will get with Roger and find out when the next time it will occur and let the Board know, in case anyone is interested it going. Member Butts was surprised at how much is budgeted for stormwater and the plan they have put forward to do four to six new vaults per year.

Member Bennett expressed concerns that over a five year period, the City is going to spend over \$13 million, of which only \$815,000 is designated for west Pensacola. So the area that really needs it is the disadvantaged area and they

are only spending 6% over the next five years. The rest is going along the Bayou and downtown Pensacola.

5. 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

Council Executive provided the Board with a copy of the draft Tree Planting and Management Plan – FY 2020 item that is being presented to the City Council at the Agenda Conference on Tuesday, November 12 and to City Council on Thursday, November 14.

Keith Wilkins, Deputy City Administrator stated that this is a very quick effort to stimulate conversation with City Council and for EAB input. There hasn't been any money spent for several years, because there wasn't a plan to move forward on how to use the funds that are in the Tree Trust Fund. There is about \$500,000 in the fund right now. He is recommending that \$100,000 be used to implement a short term plan for FY2020 to allocate those funds however they want. The first priority in the Ordinance says that it is the area where the trees came from; however, it doesn't define an area. Is an area a watershed, a Council District or a street. He is suggesting that out of the \$100,000 they take \$10,000 per district for projects in that district. Since most of the money came from District 2, he is recommending an additional \$20,000 for District 2, so that will give District 2 a total of \$30,000. The remaining \$10,000 will go into the grant program that the current ordinance speaks to that hasn't been utilized and developed, so that neighborhood groups could come and request those funds. They will figure out how to work that program, probably similar to the neighborhood challenge grants.

In the long term, he is recommending updating the 2013 Tree Canopy Study that was conducted by the University of Florida and Escambia County's arborist to update the inventory, develop a management plan, and implement that plan.

The current ordinance still stands that requires anything over \$25,000 to come back through the EAB.

Chair Richards indicated that the EAB has had discussions on the grant process, but has not gotten to the point of discussing the right tree, in the right place at the right time. The neighborhood associations would have to assume doing the maintenance and care of the tree, once planted, for the first year.

Keith Wilkins indicated that City Council could designate that all the money go towards one large project, either in a gateway, or to a project that City Council Member Myers is proposing to create a stormwater park off 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

With regard to criteria for planting, he reiterated points from the 2013 plan, like native species, hurricane resistant type trees, right tree, right place, those sorts of criteria. The grant program has not been built yet, so in developing the program, those kinds of guidelines could be included in the requirements and suggestions.

MINUTES OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY BOARD

NOVEMBER 7, 2019

Page 6

Member Butts inquired if there was any consideration for incentives or grants to prevent the trees from being cut down in the first place, especially when you see all the clear cutting being done.

Keith Wilkins stated that part of that was a code question of what the City's code requires, which was not included. If a neighborhood or garden club wanted to take their money to help incentivize a better project, it could be a pretty cool program.

Member Bennett indicated that City Council Member Myers was very interested in protecting the tree canopy through incentives.

Keith Wilkins indicated that another direction would be to help green commercial parking lots. There are several huge commercial parking lots that are solid asphalt, no shade, all run-off. He would like to see a way to incentivize those commercial entities, which is putting public dollars into a commercial parcel, and is sometimes politically tricky to do. Maybe there could be some sort of off sets to the stormwater fee, or some surplus trees being used in commercial parking lots.

Underground utilities are also being encouraged, where feasible, to protect the tree canopy.

Chair Richards indicated that he would attend the Agenda Conference representing the EAB and let them know that the Board stands ready to help with the grants and any thing else that gets referred back to the Board regarding the plan.

With regard to the proposed revision to the Code regarding Section 12-6 Tree/Landscape regulations, there was a public workshop held to receive public input. The EAB has looked at that and realized that most of the Board's concern is how to do the recommendations for the expenditures of the tree fund. The whole rest of the tree ordinance is development and protection of heritage trees.

b) Referral from City Council—Examine Chemicals Used on Athletic Fields and Parks in the City of Pensacola

Member Fox reviewed the sample information on the IPM plan of Monroe County, Florida as well as the sample resolution that was adopted by the City of North Miami as examples of how the City of Pensacola could adopt a similar practice.

Member Bennett voiced his concerns about the usage of Lesco 3-way and Crosscheck and the affects it could have on the environment and aquatic life if it gets into the waterways.

## MINUTES OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY BOARD

NOVEMBER 7, 2019

Page 7

Brian Cooper, Director of Parks and Recreation addressed the Board and expressed his willingness to meet and work with members of the Board to review the information to make sure the city parks, playgrounds, and athletic fields are safe. He will be glad to review the information provided by Member Fox, and to meet with her and Beth Boles from the Extension Office, Mike and the spray guys with the ball crew. There are 93 City parks and only six or eight of those serve athletics on a daily basis. The rest are sprayed by the contractors who manage the parks from a landscape basis, if they spray. They are not required to spray the parks. They usually only spray when they are asked to or by their contract. Community Maritime Park and Admiral Mason Park could get a heavier dose of chemicals than some of the parks that are passively used. It is his understanding that the City is within the law, abiding by the regulations, keeping the logs, and trying to do it in the safest way possible. They are trying to be considerate of the uses of the parks. Typically, when a season is over, there will be a long gap between that and the next season. Right before the next season, a broad brush of preventers will be applied. There is also a point when mole crickets are coming and they will try to get a company out to take care of the fields ahead of the mole crickets coming out, also ants and wasps are a concern.

Most of the outdoor sports that are on the fields are run by parent run organizations, i.e. Bill Bond Baseball, Pensacola Youth Soccer Association, Magee Field Rattlers Organization, Southern Youth Sports Association at Legion Field, Northeast Pensacola Wildcats. They want the fields plush as can be, ant free, weed free and safe. If it can be done in a better manner, they are not opposed to looking at it.

Brian Cooper also addressed the concerns about notification of spraying and how to make improvements to that process.

Member Fox reviewed her purpose in providing the IPM Plan as a model of what other cities all over the State of Florida and other communities are doing that the City of Pensacola could use in developing an IPM plan for the City. The Monroe County example went through a tiered process. It's a thought through process of what to use when. Her personal opinion is that she would like to see the City adopt a plan or guidelines. She is planning to meet with Mr. Cooper.

Chair Richards asked that Member Fox be the key lead person from the EAB in working with Brian Cooper regarding an IPM Plan and to bring it back to the Board.

### 6. New Business

There was no new business.

MINUTES OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY BOARD  
NOVEMBER 7, 2019

Page 8

7. Reports and Announcements

Science Hour will have a presentation on Turtles.

Member Lynch provided an update on the Pensacola Perdido Bay Estuary Program.

On November 14 there will be a meeting held in Ft. Walton on the Restore Projects.

8. Public Comments—Open Forum

There were no public comments

9. Adjourn

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 3:46 p.m.