



City of Pensacola
ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY BOARD

Agenda

May 6, 2021

2:00 pm

Hagler/Mason Conference Room,
2nd Floor

Members of the public may attend the meeting in person; however, there will be limited seating capacity. Consistent with CDC guidelines, attendees will be required to sit at least 6 feet apart and to wear face coverings that cover their nose and mouth. To watch the meeting live visit: cityofpensacola.com/428/Live-Meeting-Video.

1. Call to Order/Quorum
2. Approval of Meeting Minutes:
 - a) April 1, 2021
3. Goal Setting--2021
4. Board Member Comments/Updates, Reports and Announcements
5. Public Comments—Open Forum
6. Adjourn

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC MAY ATTEND AND PARTICIPATE VIA LIVE STREAM AND/OR PHONE.

To watch the meeting live visit: cityofpensacola.com/428/Live-Meeting-Video.

To provide input:

- For Open Forum, for items not on the agenda: citizens may submit an online form here: www.cityofpensacola.com/EABInput **beginning at 11 A.M. until 2 P.M.** only on the day of the meeting to indicate they wish to speak during Open Forum **and include a phone number. Staff will call the person** at the appropriate time so the citizen can directly address the Environmental Advisory Board using a telephone held up to a microphone.

- For agenda items: citizens may submit an online form here: www.cityofpensacola.com/EABInput **beginning at 11 A.M. on the day of the meeting until that agenda item has been voted upon** to indicate they wish to speak to a specific item on the agenda and **include a phone number. Staff will call the person** at the appropriate time so the citizen can directly address the Environmental Advisory Board using a telephone held up to a microphone. **Any form received after an agenda item has been voted upon will not be considered.**

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City of Pensacola
ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY BOARD
MINUTES

April 1, 2021

2:00 pm

Microsoft Teams/Hagler/Mason

Members Present: Neil Richards, Chair, Blase Butts, Katie Fox, Michael Lynch, Alex Kozmon, Kristin Bennett, Kelly Hagen

Members Absent: Kyle Kopytchak, P. Jay Massey

Others Present: Council Executive Don Kraher, Sustainability Coordinator Mark Jackson, Michael Singer and Ryan Miller from Parks and Recreation Department, Christian Wagley

1. Call to Order/Quorum:
The meeting was called to order by Chair Richards. A quorum was established.

2. Approval of Meeting Minutes:

- a) February 4, 2021

Member Kozmon moved for the approval of the February 4, 2021 minutes, seconded by Member Butts. The motion was approved unanimously.

3. Selection of Chair and Vice Chair:

Chair Richards called for nominations for Chair. Council Executive provided information on the role of the Vice Chair and Chair.

Katie Fox nominated Member Kristin Bennett. Chair Richards nominated Member Butts, who declined the nomination. **Member Kozmon moved to close nominations for Chair, seconded by Member Butts. Vote for new Chair Bennett was by acclamation.**

Chair Bennett called for nominations for Vice Chair. **Member Hagen nominated herself for Vice Chair. No other nominations were made. Vote for Vice Chair Hagen was by acclamation.**

4. Old Business:

- a) Review—Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Plan and proposed changes—Mike Singer, Operations Supervisor, Parks and Recreation

Council Executive reviewed the documents submitted in the agenda and indicated that Mike Singer with the Parks and Recreation Department would be available to answer any questions the Board may have and then the Board can take whatever action they would like.

Mike Singer indicated that he was the supervisor over the spraying program and athletic fields. Ryan Miller is in charge of spraying.

Member Fox asked if anything had changed with the program since adoption of the Plan and asked that they explain their approach in preparing the fields. Do they try to avoid the use of chemicals as the first line of defense and how they progress from there.

Mike Singer indicated they try to limit the use of chemicals as much as possible, with the limited amount of funds for chemicals, they try to spray at least three times a year. They try to put a pre-emergent out before the weeds germinate in late February and everything they use, they try to make sure it is as safe as possible.

Member Kozmon asked if when they used the pre-emergent, if it was used on a 90 day schedule.

Further discussion occurred on the number of times, days of the week for spraying, notification process, posting of signs and public awareness of spraying posted on the website. They try to treat the fields prior to the beginning of soccer and baseball seasons and try to limit exposure to the kids, and use of organic means to control the weeds and insects. The main insects they deal with on athletic fields are army worms and mole crickets. The only spraying occurs on the field turf at athletic fields and not in the regular parks throughout the city, which utilize bahia grass that doesn't require much treatment.

Council Executive indicated that the Public Works department handles the maintenance of the stormwater areas at Community Maritime Park, Admiral Mason Park and the Corrine Jones Park.

The IPM Plan is for athletic fields. Is there a need to look at a city-wide IPM plan vs having one for athletic fields and one for stormwater. As a body, does the EAB want to look at an IPM plan for the City that incorporates not just athletic fields, but some of the other things. It might be worthwhile to have someone from Public Works come in and explain how they handle the stormwater areas.

Sustainability Coordinator stated that around stormwater areas and waterways, the Clean Water Act provides regulations and what type of chemicals can be used. They have to be approved for use by water.

Chair Bennett suggested having an update from Public Works at the next meeting on what they are doing.

Member Butts suggested that Public Works be given a copy of the IPM Plan for Parks and Recreation to see if it would be beneficial to them.

Council Executive indicated that he would incorporate the recommendations made by Member Kozmon into the revisions provided by Member Fox and come up with a revised document for the Board to determine what to do.

After further discussion, Chair Bennett stated that the next steps would be to review the final draft document for the athletic fields, someone from Public Works to explain what their process is and if they have an integrated pest management plan and then whether the Board should consider recommending a city-wide integrated pest management plan.

b) Revisit EAB Meeting Schedule

Member Hagen asked to revisit the action to meet quarterly and thought that meeting only four times a year would greatly limited what the Board can achieve. **Member Hagen made a motion to go back to monthly meetings, seconded by Member Richards.**

Member Fox indicated that the Board could keep this on the agenda for every month, pending review of existing COVID conditions.

Council Executive advised that the Mayor's State of Emergency for the City expired on March 25th and the mandatory mask ordinance will expire on April 22.

Christian Wagley voiced support for going back to monthly meetings.

Vote was taken on the motion and carried 6 – 1, with Board Members Bennett, Richards, Butts, Hagen, Fox, and Lynch in favor; Board Member Kozmon dissenting.

5. Updates from Sustainability Coordinator Mark Jackson

Sustainability Coordinator reported on the demonstration he received from SustainaBase from the website for the greenhouse gas inventory. There were some issues identified in seeing some of the data and they are working with the utility companies to fix that, since the data is being entered into from 2018.

Parks and Recreation are doing tree plantings in seven parks, one in each council district as part of the replacement from tree damage caused by Hurricane Sally as well as looking to do additional plantings during the next season in the rest of the parks. A majority of the trees planted were long leaf pines, with the rest being live oaks.

On Reus and DeVilliers, they did plant a lot of trees and put down a ground cover, instead of grass. That was a CRA project.

Member Richards asked about the source of funds to purchase the trees, whether it came from FEMA money, the Tree Trust Fund or from operational funds in the Parks and Recreation budget.

Council Executive indicated that the Tree Trust Fund budget sheet was through January. There was no activity in February and March data was not available, since the month just ended. He is not certain where the money came from but he would check on that. The trust fund money has been frozen by City Council and no money can be spent out of there without it going to City Council first. The allocation of money to individual Council Members for trees in their district was carried forward, with several Council Members making allocations for the purchase of trees. He gave a brief history of the prior uses for the tree trust fund and expenditures made from it. The Mayor was authorized to spend up to \$25,000 from the Tree Trust Fund without Council approval. The only thing that has happened to the Tree Trust Fund is money has been added to it, no money has been taken out of it other than the \$100,000 that Council agreed to come out for individual Council districts.

Sustainability Coordinator indicated that the amount for the work being done on the tree plantings referenced earlier is under \$9,000 but he still doesn't know where it is coming from. He addressed changes made in the new ordinance regarding irrigation for trees, that at the most, trees should only require watering the first year of planting that could be handled with going buy and dumping water on it. The City should get trees that can take root pretty easily, especially in this area. They

moved away from buying equipment and such as that to vegetative materials, and things directly required for survival of trees, some shrubbery, pine straw, mulching and those kind of things that are needed to supplement a good urban forest. They are trying to get an urban forestry and tree canopy assessment done and these studies are going to cost money. The Tree Trust fund is a possible source for funding those studies.

Chair Bennett asked for clarification on what the freeze is and also types of expenses that are permissible and how the tree fund works.

Sustainability Coordinator indicated he would forward her that section of the plan. He does not believe there is a definitive interpretation that spells out what it means and what can be bought under that section of the Tree Trust Fund. The new revised Tree Ordinance has three main areas—streamlining and moving to one department, adding stronger protection to heritage trees and added trees to the tree list.

Council Executive clarified the recent tree ordinance that Council passed. The Tree Trust Fund is one small section of the Tree Ordinance, it is not its own ordinance. It addressed three specific issues. It did not take an overall, comprehensive review of the entire tree ordinance. That is something that will probably come up later. The Emerald Coastkeepers re-write of the ordinance is still up in the air. Their may be a recommendation to do a comprehensive review of the Tree Ordinance, that includes staff, public input and hearings, keeping in mind that when the Tree Ordinance was originally written, it took about two years to get done.

There was further discussion about tracking the expenditures from the tree trust fund and the information contained on the tree planting trust fund monthly budget information and the Board's input on the expenditures.

Sustainability Coordinator explained that what would come to the Environmental Advisory Board as an expenditure to recommend would be the grant section. In order for the public to do it, there needs to be some process in place for them to do it. The ordinance just says that these things could be done. It does not supply the application or the process for how to apply for the grants.

Council Executive indicated that the Board could never agree on an application or process.

Member Hagen suggested that coming up with the application and process should be high on the Board's priority list.

Council Executive stated that an individual could not apply for a grant. It has to be a neighborhood association or something like that and it has to go on common ground. It can't go to the benefit of a single individual or resident.

Member Butts asked if the Sustainability Coordinator was aware of any other cities in Florida that may have a grant process in place that could be a starting point for the Board to look at.

Sustainability Coordinator indicated that he had not looked into that specifically, but possibly Tampa, Orlando, and Gainesville would be good starting points.

Member Butts volunteered to look into what other cities may have. Chair Bennett suggested looking at the beautification grant in Jupiter as well.

Member Kozmon suggested that when the Board is considering items before it, that they look at the item in a comprehensive fashion.

6. New Business:

a) Goal Setting—2021

Council Executive explained that he took the goals that he received from individual members of the Environmental Advisory Board and compiled the list in no particular order. In addition, Member Richards submitted some items after the agenda went out which are not included. Board members might want to review the list and send him their top five priorities and then at the next meeting, the Board can review. He did indicate that the only span of control that the Board has is within the City limits.

Member Kozmon made a suggestion to have the Goal Setting for 2021 as the only item for consideration either by a committee of the Board or at a regular meeting or a special session so that the Board could review and prioritize.

Council Executive cautioned that the Board could not appoint sub-committees. That would be up to the City Council. In so far as special meetings, as staff, it becomes a challenge. Once a month meetings can be handled. He will add the

additional items submitted by Member Richards to the goals list and send back out for the Board to review.

Chair Bennett indicated that if other members who have not submitted any goals or if there were changes to ones that were submitted that the Board members forward their changes and priorities to the Council Executive so that a comprehensive list can be prepared and distributed.

Member Richards stated that the number one priority should be the development of the application form and criteria for what species we would recommend to the Council, and then proper planting procedures to support the survival of that tree.

Chair Bennett indicated that would be part of the discussion at the next meeting, which will focus on prioritizing the Goals for 2021.

Member Butts will investigate any existing municipal tree grant application processes and forward information he receives to the Council Executive so that it can be shared with other Board members prior to next meeting.

b) Draft Proposal—Recommendation to Establish Committee to Develop a Sustainability Action Plan—Member Kozmon

Member Kozmon gave a brief power point presentation on developing a Sustainability Action Plan for the City's internal operations. Many of the recommendations from the Climate Change Task Force will fit under one of the three pillars of sustainability—Environmental, Social or Economic. A Sustainability Action Plan will address many of the Task Force recommendations, can identify many of the City operations and pressing issues through planning, and expand beyond climate change and acknowledges the far-reaching impacts of sustainability and puts the City front and center to provide for the future.

Member Kozmon made a motion that the Board recommend to the Office of the Mayor that the City build an internal committee tasked with developing a Sustainability Action Plan (SAP) for the City's internal operations. That this Committee and its resulting Action Plan would serve as a play book on how to obtain Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Timed (SMART) Goals set by the committee to improve the city's sustainability in a rapidly changing world. Included in this recommendation is that at least one (1) committee seat be reserved for the Environmental Advisory Board (EAB).

Member Fox seconded the motion.

Council Executive cautioned the Board to consider saying just one member because if there is more than one member of this Board on the committee, you have now created a meeting of this board and then you fall under the sunshine.

Member Kozmon amended his motion to strike “at least” and just have one committee seat. Member Fox seconded the motion.

Member Butts asked how the Council would feel about creating another committee.

Council Executive explained that this committee would not be a council created committee, but would rather be a Mayor’s internal committee of city staff members so it would not fall under sunshine.

Sustainability Coordinator relayed his thoughts on the proposed recommendation to forward to the Mayor for the establishment of an internal committee to develop a sustainability action plan and how it ties in with the Task Force Recommendations and also with ICLEI--Local Governments for Sustainability. He also reviewed some of the ongoing programs within various city departments that could be tied into the sustainability plan.

Vote was taken on the motion as amended and was unanimously carried.

7. Board Member Comments/Updates, Reports and Announcements

Member Richards inquired as to whether there was any update on the City being a definitive sponsor on the solar Co-op. Sustainability Coordinator indicated he had no further communications with the Co-op. Moving into 2021 they were having internal meetings to set up their priorities and goals and they would get back to him if the panhandle was a part of that.

Member Richards also inquired about the status of Gulf Power’s Solar Tree and the project at Sanders Beach.

Member Hagen provided an update on the solar project at Sanders Beach. It is nearing completion and will hopefully be finished by the end of April. She also reached out to the Recycling Educator at the Sanitation Department and learned

that she is leaving. She does not have her replacements contact information. She also scheduled a tour of the MURPH recycling facility at ECUA through Jim Roberts and provided his contact information to the Board and encouraged other Board members to schedule a tour, if they haven't already toured the facility.

Member Butts mentioned the Living Shoreline Course being offered. There is a \$50 registration fee for the two day course.

Chair Bennett indicated she was familiar with the Marine Contractors course.

8. Public Comments—Open Forum

Christian Wagley made brief comments on how engaged the new EAB members are and strongly encouraged the EAB members to reach out to City Council Members, attend the meetings and let them know about the important work of the Board. He also mentioned the need for money to maintain trees, especially trees in an urban environment. There is a need for climate change and clean energy and in the Legislature now, the biggest struggle is over energy and the control of energy over solar panels and the use of fossil fuels. Having served on the Mayor's Transition Team addressing the environment he is encouraged by the positive response and how engaged Mayor Robinson has been in regards to the environment.

Earth Day is April 22, however no official activities have been planned due to COVID. They are looking at possibly doing something in the fall.

9. Adjourn

Chair Bennett thanked the Board for their confidence in voting her Chair and she thanked Member Hagen for stepping up to be Vice Chair. With no further comments, the meeting was adjourned at 4:45 p.m.

Environmental Advisory Board

Goals 2021

1. **Application form for Tree Fund money**
2. **Update city Building Codes to reflect Climate Task force, Green Building Certification.** Example – when installing new parking lot, an electric charging station needs to be installed per # of stalls. Have credit card initiated.
3. **Designate a specific amount of money to installing energy or water savings equipment.**
4. **A webpage added to city's website highlighting business/city activities related to (2).**

Example – when a city building or business converts to all LEED lights at what cost, what savings and reduced carbon footprint. Allow for a small placard (with QR Code) to be installed on the improvement. Citizens want to know where their tax money goes.

Example – installing a solar panel to run a piece of equipment. The solar tree installed by Gulf Power. This is the only statement I found specific to Pensacola on Gulf Power's website:

- Two 1.85-kilowatt solar trees at the corner of Main and Reus streets, at the crosswalk to the Blue Wahoos Stadium in Pensacola.

So? What does this mean? As of last month there was no placard describing the benefits.

5. **Purchase an electric car with charging station – lead by example.**

City employee that drives the most yearly miles to have the car. Charging station to be placed where the car is most frequently parked. Highlight on website with monthly updates on savings compared to previous years costs. Placard with car info and QR Code with updates.

6. **To be kept informed of the Emerald Coast Regional Council (Florida-Alabama Transportation Planning Organization) transportation plans as they affect the City.**
7. **To be kept informed of the City's actions regarding the sustainability plan** (Mark Jackson did a very nice update to the EAB and also at a recent City Council meeting)

8. **If the EAB is asked to review or comment or is otherwise involved in a topic (the tree ordinance for example), that the EAB be informed of and provided with the same information that other city entities may be receiving/reviewing.**

9. **Dark Sky Lighting** - Because Pensacola is beginning to invest in lighting upgrades throughout the city, now is the time to act on encouraging the Mayor and City Council to begin to make the shift toward becoming a Dark Sky City.

- Invite Tim Day, the Deputy Director of the Natural Resources Department for Escambia County, to come speak to the EAB at our next meeting to discuss the implementation of Dark Sky Lighting, how to set goals for the city, and how to eventually establish a Dark Skies Ordinance.

- Propose a Public Education Campaign in order to bring awareness not only to the environmental benefits of Dark Sky Lighting, but also to the health and safety benefits it provides for humans as well. Getting the public comfortable enough with this idea through education will be the best way to move forward with eventually establishing a Dark Skies Ordinance for the city.

10. **Solar Initiatives for The City and Community Level Encouragement through Education** - If the goal for the City of Pensacola is to reach 100% renewable energy by 2040, then need to start establishing some goals, and one of the easiest and most sensible places to start to move toward that goal is to encourage the shift to solar power.

- Invite one of the Climate Action Task Force Members, Dr. Haris Alibašić, from the University of West Florida, to come and speak to the EAB about renewable energy projects, goals and the aggressive actions needed in order to achieve 100% renewable by 2040. The EAB has given the Mayor and City Council our recommendation to aim to achieve 30% renewable by 2030, and 100% renewable by 2040, now give them a plan of how to meet these goals by establishing action items and deadlines. We must get them moving forward on this, and we must hold them accountable.

- The second part of this initiative involves community participation. Propose to the Mayor and City Council to sponsor a Public Education Campaign on Solar. As a citizen who is not greatly educated on the cost of solar installation or the reputation/credibility of the many companies advertising this service, but as someone who is extremely interested in how to do my part to help curb our environmental impact on the planet, I know I would definitely benefit from an education campaign, coming not from one of the many solar installation companies, but from a non affiliate third party. Whenever you see companies advertising solar installation with zero money down, it piques your interest, but

also sounds suspect and makes you think, if it sounds too good to be true, it probably is. Hear from an educated professional on the cost and benefit comparisons of purchasing and installing solar panels yourself, vs. entering a contract with a solar company who will install them for you and ultimately profit off of your energy surplus in the future. Educating the public on their options pertaining to solar would greatly encourage a greater community shift to opt for solar power in their homes. Propose inviting Christian Wagley, along with other environmental professionals, who are versed on the subject to speak to the public about their options, and teach them how best to choose a company to go with for solar installation, or on how best to plan and budget for purchasing solar panels yourself, discussing possible rebates, tax credits, assistance with funding, special loan rates, etc., that may help to make doing solar yourself a possibility for some folks.

11. **Recycling Education Campaign** - Because we have such a transient population here in Escambia County and the surrounding area with our heavy military, snowbird, and tourist population, and because recycling practices are so varied around the country due to the different capacities of each recycling treatment plant, it is extremely important to educate the public on our local recycling facility.

- Invite Jim Roberts to our next meeting to give a presentation on the ECUA Materials Recycling Facility (MRF).

- Propose to the Mayor and City Council to help sponsor a Public Education Campaign around recycling practices specific to the MRF so that we can maximize participation and limit bad recycling practice that can potentially hinder the process through contamination and decrease the profitability of recycling. Let that open up the conversation on how we can make better choices regarding the products encased in plastic that we spend money on as consumers, how we can reduce our own single use plastic usage, and how we can emphasize reducing and reusing since we know that the majority of products with the recycle symbol on them do not actually get recycled. Reduce, Reuse, Refuse.

12. **Encourage Regulation Banning the Usage of Plastic Bags, Plastic Straws, and Styrofoam** - Because of our proximity to the Gulf of Mexico, as well as many other intercostal waterways, our most prized assets, our beautiful Emerald Coast, as well as the bountiful marine life that inhabit our waters, coastal wetlands and estuaries, would greatly benefit from a reduction of plastic, especially lightweight plastic that is easily airborne, which ultimately ends up in our waters and along our coastline.

- Have members from Ocean Hour and Keep Pensacola Beautiful come speak to the EAB about how much trash they collect each year from our beaches and coastlines, and discuss the biggest offenders, or the kinds of trash that they most commonly collect from these sites.

- The EAB make a recommendation to the Mayor and City Council to completely ban businesses within the City of Pensacola from using plastic bags, plastic straws and Styrofoam by 2023, and to switch to alternatives that are not detrimental to our environment.

13. **Tree Ordinance Overhaul** - Although we were able to get a few strong protections added into the most recent update to the Tree Ordinance, the original purpose of updating the ordinance itself was simply to streamline the process and protocol for the City Staff, not to actually strengthen the ordinance or add protections. The next phase of improving our tree ordinance for the City will be to set out to make changes that not only strengthen protections, but increase means of gaining revenue coming into the tree fund, and also define a process that allows and encourages the City, as well as individual neighborhoods to spend this money to plant trees and ultimately increase our tree canopy within the city limits.

-Propose that the Mayor and City Council sponsor a series of workshops, open to the public, which would include a panel of experts, academics and professionals to guide the conversation, and a third party facilitator to ensure that all opinions and voices are heard.

14. **Recommend a Sustainability Action Plan** - a comprehensive approach to fulfilling many recommendations from the 2018 Task Force report and expanding the city's commitment to addressing the pressing issues within the social, economic and environmental realms. (Planning for an April 2021 agenda item.)
15. **Recommend to collaborate with the Parks and Recreation Board and Public Works to identify, inventory and properly remove and dispose of invasive plants from city properties.**
16. **Recommend the development/implementation of or undertake the development and implementation of a public education campaign aimed at preserving private-land habitat using the city's park stewardship as an example for the public to refer to or be inspired by.**
17. **Reduce/eliminate pollution from stormwater runoff including Escambia County Watershed.**
18. **Maximize use of Tree Fund assets by grant application matching.**

19. Increase impervious stormwater runoff fee to be credited to Tree Fund

20. Educate and promote the installation of “rooftop” solar for both residential and City of Pensacola.

21. Long Term Goals—

- a) Transition from carbon based energy source to renewable energy and/or wind with a goal of \$100 effective by 2040.
- b) Adopt policy that decreases overhead utility lines through existing tree canopy preserving existing tree inventory and increasing storm resilience.