



**City of Pensacola**  
**ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY BOARD**

**Agenda**

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July 1, 2021                      2:00 pm                      Hagler/Mason Conference Room,  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor

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**Members of the public may attend the meeting in person. City Council encourages those not fully vaccinated to wear face coverings that cover their nose and mouth.**

1. Call to Order/Quorum
2. Approval of Meeting Minutes:
  - a) June 3, 2021
3. Presentation:
  - a) Green House Gas Emissions - Haris Alibašić, Ph.D., MPA, University of West Florida and former member of the City of Pensacola Climate Mitigation and Adaptation Task Force
4. Update: Sustainability Coordinator
5. Discussion Items:
  - a) EAB Recommendation: Comprehensive Review of Tree Ordinance
6. Board Member Comments/Updates, Reports and Announcements
7. Public Comments—Open Forum
8. Adjourn

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

**To watch the meeting live visit:** [cityofpensacola.com/Video](https://cityofpensacola.com/Video).

**To provide input:**

- For Open Forum, for items not on the agenda: citizens may submit an online form here: [www.cityofpensacola.com/EABInput](http://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](http://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.**

*The City of Pensacola adheres to the Americans with Disabilities Act and will make reasonable accommodations for access to City services, programs and activities. Please call 435-1606 or TDD 435-1666 for further information. Requests must be made at least 48 hours in advance of the event in order to allow the City time to provide the requested services.*



City of Pensacola

ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY BOARD

MINUTES

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June 3, 2021

2:00 pm

Hagler/Mason Conference Room,  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor

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**Members Present:** Kristin Bennett, Chair, Kelly Hagen, Vice Chair, Neil Richards Blase Butts, Michael Lynch, Alex Kozmon, P. Jay Massey

**Members Absent:** Katie Fox, Kyle Kopytchak

**Others Present:** Council Executive Don Kraher, Sustainability Coordinator Mark Jackson, Sonja Gaines, Council Assistant, Christian Wagley

1. Call to Order/Quorum

The meeting was called to order by Chair Bennett. A quorum was established.

2. Approval of Meeting Minutes:

a) May 6, 2021

**Member Kozmon moved for the approval of the May 6, 2021 minutes, seconded by Member Richards. The motion was approved 7 – 0, with two members absent.**

3. Presentation:

a) Update on Invasive Species Management - Rick O'Connor, Florida Sea Grant Agent

Chair Bennett explained at the previous meeting, mention was made to have educational presentations. With the comments made about invasive species, as well as invasive species week just passed, Rick O'Connor with Florida Sea Grant will give a short presentation.

Rick O'Connor with Florida Sea Grant, UF IFAS Extension gave an update on invasive species management in the Pensacola Bay Area. They have created an Invasive Species Council with University of Florida and one of the first things they did was to create terminology for "invasive". To be considered invasive, they have to be non-native, introduced by humans, and cause an environmental and/or

economic problem. There are plenty of examples of non native, ornamental plants that were introduced by humans to the Pensacola Bay area that are not causing any trouble at all. When the term “invasive” is used it is something that we don’t like and don’t want. He reviewed the invasion curve chart. The State of Florida is divided into CISMAS—Cooperative Invasive Species Management Areas. There are 17 areas in the State of Florida, Pensacola is in the Six Rivers CISMA. Each CISMA has created an EDRR list (early detection rapid response). To get on the EDRR list invasive species have to be in the outlying areas either in southern Alabama or somewhere in range of Pensacola. Try to educate the public that if you see this plant or this animal it needs to be removed as soon as possible. That is where you have the best impact at the lowest cost. He reviewed some of the invasive species found locally. The Beach Vitex--there are 82 records of this species in Santa Rosa and Escambia counties. Lionfish—will not be eradicated, will spend lifetime battling them. They have been successful in eliminating them in waters less than 200 feet. He has partnered with Ocean Strike Team to assess how bad the problem is in the Pensacola area. The Giant Salvinia plant is also on the EDRR list, and has been located around Jackson Lakes, north of Bayou Chico. It does not like salt water. The State of Florida has assigned a task force to get rid of it.

He reviewed the new FWC rule on invasive reptiles. The reptile pet industry is huge and making it forbidden to sell in Florida is problematic. The FWC has recently created a banned species list.

Member Massey inquired about contact information.

Rick O’Connor provided contact information for the Escambia County Extension office and also suggested downloading an app, “I’ve Got One”. If you find a species, take a picture. The app will immediately get the GPS, will ask you a couple of questions and will send information to him to review and handle.

#### 4. Review of Goals—2021

Chair Bennett opened discussion on the draft goals. She categorized the goals into five broad headings, with some actions already being done or in the process.

Council Executive thought it would be important for the Board to become familiar with the ordinance that created the Board and what their focus and task is, so that

as the Board is creating their goals, they focus on those things. The Board may review and make recommendations to the City Council and Mayor on environmental policy issues as follows:

- Proposed ordinances and codes of an environmental nature.
- Proposed changes to existing environmental ordinances and codes.
- Other environmental matters affecting the city referred to the Board by the City Council and Mayor.
- Other environmental matters affecting the City that are initiated by the Board and approved by the City Council and/or Mayor.

If there is something that the Board wants to undertake, the correct action would be to make a request/recommendation to the Mayor and or City Council requesting permission to be able to undertake that matter. It is not in the Board's purview to take items and do things on them unilaterally without either direction from the Mayor and or City Council or the request being made to them and they approve it. Fact finding is different than taking affirmative action to make a change without direction on a case by case basis. The more information the Board can present to City Council on an issue, the more positive affect it will have. It will encourage them to have all the information to move forward on something.

Chair Bennett pointed out that the Board does not have the authority to designate a staff person to go to this or go do that.

Member Kozmon stated that this highlights the fact finding mission and putting comprehensive proposals together to establish the Board's credibility as a resource to the City Council.

Council Executive also indicated that one of the things the Board might want to consider doing is to ask for clarification on how things get to the EAB with proposed ordinances and codes of an environmental nature and also proposed changes to existing environmental ordinances and codes and if there needs to be some procedural changes and guidelines. As an example, procedurally, items that affect the Land Development Code have to be referred to the Planning Board for their review. It might be beneficial to have items that are of an environmental nature be referred and reviewed by the Environmental Advisory Board, i.e. tree ordinance and some stormwater items that are not of an administrative nature.

Chair Bennett thought that procedurally, to clarify how items get to the Environmental Advisory Board should be priority one.

Council Executive indicated that he would write something up for the Environmental Advisory Board to review at their July meeting and then submit to the City Council for their July meeting.

He also cautioned the Board when they are talking about increase in fees, to not use the terminology "to generate revenue" as a justification. There is a need to review the entire tree ordinance. The fees charged for mitigation very possibly should be raised. The reason for raising those fees is not to generate revenue. The reason to raise those fees is to act as a deterrent from taking trees down. So the reason for raising those fees is the protection of trees.

Member Richards brought up the discussion at the City Council meeting of the stormwater fees. That is for the reduction of stormwater run off and not for the raising of fees for the maintenance of the existing infrastructure.

Council Executive indicated that is to maintain the existing system. The reason for projecting the raising of fees is for the maintenance. That is not the same concern for the tree trust fund. If, during the discussion the Board feels like there is a need to raise mitigation fees, use the real reason and that is the deterrent of taking out trees.

Chair Bennett indicated the general intent when assessing fees is to incentivize an action. For example, avoid the assessment of a fee for mitigation by avoiding the impact that requires the mitigation or, as in the case of the stormwater fees, to address operation and maintenance costs.

Discussion on the tree ordinance occurred as it relates to the Environmental Advisory Board's desire as a priority, the previous procedural revisions that were made to the ordinance, the status of the proposed Emerald Coastkeepers version of the tree ordinance, the tree planting trust fund, and what the desire of the Board would be on the tree ordinance--to review and comment and make proposed revisions to the tree ordinance.

Member Hagen suggested that it would be a recommendation to the City Council that the tree ordinance be reviewed in its entirety with possible revisions and see what they do with it, what kind of process they do from there. The Board could determine that it is a priority, thinks that it is important and makes the recommendation. Whatever happens with the recommendation is up to the Council to determine.

Chair Bennett asked for comments/discussion on the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions goal recommendation to the Council. She mentioned the Mayor's

policy on electric vehicle infrastructure. Are there other ways to reduce greenhouse gas emissions other than renewable energy?

Member Hagen made a suggestion that Dr. Haris Alibašić, member of the Climate Mitigation and Adaptation Task Force make a presentation to educate the Board and perhaps provide some insight on what types of recommendations the Board could make to help meet the goal.

Sustainability Coordinator indicated there were several areas that he is working on gathering information, taking integral steps, i.e. the electric vehicle infrastructure policy recently implemented. He has no specific recommendations at this time to present to the Board. The Mayor and he both agree that reduction of greenhouse gas emissions is important and they are working on it as a whole for the City.

Further discussion occurred on the listing of priorities. Council Executive suggested that the Board consider as their priorities the main numbered categories, i.e. tree ordinance, reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, sustainability, environment - Integrated Pest Management Plan, and education and send those to City Council and the Mayor. To say these are the priorities, if there is anything else different that you want the Board to focus on, let us know what that might be.

Chair Bennett reviewed the points made during the discussion. It was her intention to have the broad topics. One, ask for clarification on how items get referred to the Board, a process or procedure. Two, a recommendation that the tree ordinance be reviewed and revised as necessary. The remaining priorities are reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, sustainability, the environment and education.

Council Executive indicated that he would find a City Council Member to sponsor an item submitting the Board's priorities to the June City Council meeting. Once it goes to the City Council and they have a chance to see it, then in July, will follow up with the clarification procedurals and the tree ordinance. He suggested a proposed motion that the Environmental Advisory Board Goals/Priorities for 2021-2022 be: the tree ordinance, reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, sustainability, integrated pest management plan, and education.

**Member Hagen moved that the priorities for the Environmental Advisory Board for 2021-2022 be as presented by staff.**

Member Lynch expressed his concern that in changing the category of environment to integrated pest management plan, there would not be a category dealing with stormwater.

Council Executive suggested just adding it to the priorities. He indicated that stormwater is very important to City Council both in terms of water quality and water quantity. It would be important for the Board to weigh in on it and would be good to include in the priorities.

**Member Hagen moved to present to City Council the goals of the Environmental Advisory Board for 2021-22 as being the tree ordinance revisions, reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, sustainability, environment – including Integrated Pest Management Plan, stormwater, and education. Member Lynch seconded the motion.**

Christian Wagley expressed his concern with the process for the review of the tree ordinance. When the process occurs, it needs to be a facilitated, participatory process. It is very emotional, multi-faceted with developers and environmentalists and should be facilitated to allow for exchanges of ideas and not just be a 3 minute comment period at a Planning Board meeting.

Member Hagen asked if the language recommended by Christian Wagley should be included with the goals.

Council Executive indicated it could be included in the item making the recommendation that goes to City Council.

**Vote on the motion was approved 7 – 0, with two members absent.**

5. Update: Sustainability Coordinator

Sustainability Coordinator mentioned the new electric vehicle infrastructure policy recently initiated by Mayor Robinson and also mentioned the new “recycle coach” app that Sanitation Director John Pitman worked on to answer questions about what can and can’t be recycled. Also, the transportation planner has just recently resigned and he will be taking over some of his responsibilities as far as the micromobility tasks, i.e. the scooter pilot program.

6. Board Member Comments/Updates, Reports and Announcements

Member Kozmon made brief comments on the supplemental information he provided on the invasive plant removal at properties located within the city.



a) Discussion Item – Watershed Garbage Collection—Member Alex Kozmon

Member Kozmon presented his thoughts and ideas on addressing this issue and whether it is something that warrants developing further anti-littering and community awareness and public education campaigns.

Chair Bennett reported that the Pensacola/Perdido Bays Estuary Program received a trash free waters grant from EPA and will be collecting litter and garbage that has gone into Jones Creek. There are three creeks they have identified. Information is available on their website.

After further comments by various board members, Chair Bennett requested clarification on what to quantify as an action item.

Member Kozmon said to recognize that there is a pollution problem, so what is the City doing with respect to anti littering and pollution problems first and then once the Board knows that, what strategies can be developed from other municipalities and governments for a robust anti littering, community education campaign.

The Board could make a recommendation that City Council form a committee to work with these groups to identify and quantify the garbage, identify the watersheds where collected and then work with the groups in developing a campaign.

Member Lynch suggested keeping the item open for further discussion and review.

Chair Bennett stated it might be beneficial to have someone come from the Pensacola/Perdido Bay Estuary Program to provide an update on their clean-up of Jones Creek, or from someone with Ocean Hour.

Member Massey indicated that it could fall under stormwater or environment categories.

Chair Bennett also mentioned the naming contest for the litter capture booms that will be deployed in Jones Creek, Carpenters Creek and Pond Creek. Information is available on the Pensacola/Perdido Bay Estuary Program's website.

Council Executive made a clarification to comments he previously made with regard to EAB members attending meetings. He wasn't indicating Board members shouldn't go seeking input, his point was that you can't represent the Board. You can go to neighborhood meetings and seek information from people and then bring back to the Board. Cautioned representing the Board as a body.

Member Hagen suggested for future meetings that a topic for discussion be made in advance, so that research could be done on the topic to be discussed and be prepared for.

Chair Bennett agreed and stated she felt it would be beneficial to use the talents and time of Board members so that informed recommendations could be made. There are research items that the Board talked about that would be useful.

Member Kozmon agreed. Member Butts made a suggestion that Member Hagen invite Dr. Alibašić to the next meeting to talk about reducing greenhouse gas emissions and also look at what other cities are doing to reduce garbage, etc. like Orlando and Sarasota, with a possible educational presentation from Mr. Castro, Sustainability Coordinator with the City of Orlando. In addition, continue working on the tree trust fund application process.

Member Massey suggested that Board members might say what they are personally researching and bring that back if there is interest. He is currently researching other cities pedestrian and bike plans.

7. Public Comments—Open Forum  
No public comments.

8. Adjourn

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 4:28 p.m.

## ITEM 5 (a)

EAB Recommendation: Comprehensive Review of Tree Ordinance

That City Council begin the process of a comprehensive review of the Tree Ordinance with subsequent revisions, as necessary.

There has been a great deal of discussion about the need for a comprehensive review of the Tree Ordinance. Some minor and specific changes have been made; however, there has not been a comprehensive review of the tree ordinance.

This item would begin that process by City Council tasking the appropriate bodies with this endeavor.

Ultimately, this item will have to go to the Planning Board, since it would be a revision of the Land Development Code. Knowing how much the Planning Board has on their agendas at each of their meetings, the logical beginning point would be for Council to direct the EAB to begin this comprehensive review process during their monthly meetings, by reviewing each section of the tree ordinance. Working with staff to seek their input on proposed revisions or recommendations, as well as allowing the public to participate throughout the review of the tree ordinance process would be beneficial. The Environmental Advisory Board would submit any proposed recommendations or revisions to the City Council for referral to the Planning Board.

Again, a determination of process would be up to the City Council.