

CITY OF PENSACOLA
ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY BOARD (EAB)

MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, September 6, 2018

Members Present: Neil Richards, Chairman, Kyle Kopytchak, Michael Lynch, Robert Bennett, Blase Butts, Calvin Avant, Dr. Gloria Horning

Members Absent: Steven Elliott

Others Present: Ann Hill, Dottie Dubuisson, Beverly Perry

1. Call to Order/Quorum: The meeting was called to order by Chairman Richards. A quorum was established.
2. Approval of Minutes—August 2, 2018

Motion made by Member Kopytchak to approve the minutes of the August 2, 2018 meeting, seconded by Member Bennett and was unanimously carried.

3. Updates:
 - a) 12th Avenue Tree Replacement and No Parking Enforcement—Member Kopytchak requested update on placing no parking signs on the right-of way of 12th Avenue. Council Executive indicated he was working on the issue and would hopefully have something for Council in October.
 - b) Review of tree and landscaping regulations—Member Lynch reported that Laurie Murphy and City Council Member Sherri Myers were continuing to work on this.
 - c) Criteria for Tree Fund Grant Proposals—Chair Richards indicated that this was tied into the review of the tree and landscaping ordinance.
 - d) Sanders Beach Stormwater Drainage—Member Elliott was not present; however Member Horning reported that there was critical flooding due to Tropical Storm Gordon. There was over a foot and a half of water on South DeVilliers Street, Government Street and Main Street between “E” and “H”. In addition, 55,000 gallons of raw sewage onto South DeVilliers and Zaragoza Streets and an additional 11,000 gallons of raw sewage onto West Government and South DeVilliers. ECUA allowed

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that to run without bringing one pump in. There were eight to eleven sewer breaks yesterday contaminating every one of the waterways and a no swimming or fishing advisory is out today. Further discussion occurred on the gravity and force main design features of the Government Street wastewater project and stormwater project. The pressure test broke the first line. Also mentioned was the interconnection between sanitary sewer and stormwater drain pipes. The State and Governor's office has indicated that is not an excuse for lift stations not being able to move water during hurricane events. The sanitary sewers should be sealed.

Chairman Richards reviewed the concerns with the Sanders Beach Stormwater Drainage issue being a superfund site and the water table coming up to the surface, if the water had ever been tested for possible contaminants. Member Elliott is working on that. Chairman Richards indicated that he has talked to several long term residents of Sanders Beach and they are not that concerned about that from what they are being told from the mitigation of the superfund site.

- e) Environmental Justice/injustice—Member Avant reported that he would be attending and speaking at the Rise for Justice event being held at Plaza DeLuna this Saturday from 5 – 7 p.m. with the Sierra Club. He will also be attending a HBCU Climate Change conference in New Orleans September 19-23.
- f) Water Quality of Bay/Gulf—Member Butts updated the Board on the water bottle filling stations survey to locate where they are and he hopes to develop a brochure to place at visitors centers showing locations in Pensacola, Gulf Breeze and Pensacola Beach so that people will know where the stations are to refill water bottles and help reduce the use of plastic bottles.
- g) Flooding/Toxin Issues in Tanyard—Member Horning reported on this under item d).
- h) Environmental Impacts on Disenfranchised Communities—No update given.
- i) Renewable Energy Sources—No update given.

4. Old Business: Nothing to report.

5. New Business

- a) Review—August 2, 2018 Draft Report—Climate Mitigation and Adaptation Task Force

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Council Executive indicated that the Climate Mitigation and Adaptation Task Force would be submitting their report, including stakeholder comments to the City Council. The Task Force will then basically be done; they may meet semi-annually or annually to see if there is anything to update, but their work will be done.

The Task Force will review the comments submitted from the various stakeholders and they may or may not choose to amend their report. However, all stakeholders comments will be submitted as part of the report.

Members of the Environmental Advisory Board discussed the report regarding the recommendations, the focus of the report, the impact on the increase in water level to change building codes, flooding mitigation, the practicality of putting solar panels on all the city's buildings, will it produce enough energy, the goal of going to 2040 of 100% renewable energy, the need to have the Task Force prioritize their recommendations.

Laurie Murphy, Vice Chair of the Climate Mitigation and Adaptation Task Force indicated they would do a presentation to the City Council, giving them a copy of the Report and then it would be up to the EAB to keep in contact about all of the things in the document. All of the items are equally important, and can't really be prioritized. Some things may need to be scheduled prior to other things. The overall collective impact to seek grants and work with other communities to look at what they are doing to give additional ideas and suggestions to what has worked. We are always going to be dealing with climate change and need to continually modify the document. One document is not going to be the law or the word of what is going to work. Collectively working with other people, cities and areas to what they have already tried is very important.

Chair Richards expressed his concern about GHG emissions, the carbon dioxide emissions contribution to climate change and the solutions to eliminate the carbon dioxide emissions. It is primarily because carbon is used as a major source of energy. The only other choices that are not being developed is nuclear, whether it be fission or fusion or using hydrogen as a primary fuel source rather than carbon. The document should say that in 2018 Pensacola realized that we should be using hydrogen and encouraging the use of electric cars and fuel cells.

Member Kopytchak indicated that he did not think it was the responsibility of the EAB to pick apart the document. The Task Force has done what they have done and it is up to the City Council to give a task to the EAB to study and bring back a recommendation. He pointed out one of the bullets on page 10 of the report "to cooperatively develop model codes and policies to encourage post hazard redevelopment in areas with less

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vulnerability to storm surge...” that he didn’t see how that could be done, since as a society, we build on the waterfront, we develop on the water.

Member Lynch expressed his appreciation for all the work the Task Force put in to developing their report.

Task Force Vice Chair Murphy indicated that the Report was kept more general because they knew it would be going back to the EAB and she would be more than willing to come before the EAB to help address the issues in more detail. There are some cities that are changing their codes and finding ways to address flooding issues along with waterfront development. When you are looking at public safety and health, the number one problem is whenever there is flooding. Look at what the FEMA Flood maps are, what the current land development code is; where can those be integrated to keep people safe and protect the neighbors who are already there and not continue to add to it.

Further discussion was held on availability of utilizing the expertise from the Climate Mitigation Task Force when items of the report are considered by the EAB.

Member Avant brought up the need to prioritize. You need to know which are the most important things to look at especially if you are talking about bringing in professionals.

b) EAB Member Bob Bennett’s Comments on Draft Report

Chair Richards indicated that he would be interested in receiving the City Attorney’s comment to Member Bennett’s suggestions on the use of “shalls”, “wills”, “musts” “shoulds”.

Member Bennett referenced the caution he received from his professional liability insurance company that you are not allowed to use those words because of future, potential litigation. He feels strongly that legal implications should be addressed. His comments will be submitted to the Task Force as an individual.

Task Force Vice Chair Murphy stated that could be a recommendation from the EAB, to take out the “shalls”.

Member Lynch moved that the EAB formalize comments to the Climate Change Task Force to include further legal review of the document, as well as prioritization. Member Horning seconded the motion. Discussion occurred on the motion with regard to legal review. Member Kopytchak indicated that he thought it was over the EAB’s authority to talk about legal terminology. **Vote on the motion carried 6 – 1, with Member Kopytchak dissenting.**

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6. Reports and Announcements

Chair Richards mentioned Science Thursday next Thursday at 5:30 p.m.. Topic is snakes in the area.

Member Horning reported that the NAACP has kicked off its adopt a drain educational program where individuals, organizations or companies can adopt a drain. They will illustrate how to keep it clean and agree to commit to keep it clean of debris. It is a program with Flood Forum and the Public out of New Orleans. They are supplying all of the paint and supplies needed, including public relations.

Member Butts reported that on September 15 Intercoastal is going to be having a debris pick up at a number of area beaches.

Member Lynch reported a Carpenter's Creek clean up for September 15, from 9 – 12 Noon.

7. Board Member Comments

Member Bennett and also Chair Richards mentioned that the County is moving forward with solicitations for a management plan for Carpenter's Creek, to spend RESTORE funds, the deadline is September 26. Further discussion occurred on the importance of this project as it addresses flooding and stormwater that comes from all of the density and farm land north of Kingsfield Road. There is a 100 year flood requirement for retention and on site retention for all the new subdivisions that are going in.

8. Public Comments—Open Forum

Ms. Dottie Dubuisson thanked the EAB for their efforts. There is now an awareness that climate change is happening and that there is now an awareness of how code and incentives impact development. She mentioned the proposed overlay district that will have houses in the Belmont/Devilliers area be 16 – 18 inches above the ground. With regard to prioritizing, there will probably come a time when there is some emergency and hopes that some sort of means for regularly reviewing and having a triage of the problems in the community. Look at the important things that can stop any further damage, rather than what is the easiest. It is important for the EAB to communicate directly back to City Council. Further comments were made concerning making the community aware of various environmental injustice meetings and programs that are occurring to encourage more citizen participation.

Member Horning indicated that she will be taking a delegation from Ukraine, as part of the Citizens Diplomacy Council International Visitor Leadership Program, to visit the Wedgewood community.

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9. Adjourn

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 3:27 p.m.