

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

Thursday, October 3, 2019 ~ 2:00 p.m.

**Members Present:** Neil Richards, Chair, Michael Lynch, Dr. Gloria Horning, Calvin Avant, Kyle Kopytchak, Blase Butts

**Members Absent:** Bob Bennett, Katie Fox

1. Call to Order/Quorum: The meeting was called to order by Chair Richards. A quorum was established.
2. Approval of Meeting Minutes—September 5, 2019

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

3. Presentation: Jim Trifilio, Executive Director Pensacola/Perdido Bays Estuary Program

Jim Trifilio made a verbal presentation on the Pensacola/Perdido Bays Estuary Program, which is currently funded under a \$2 million EPA grant with Escambia County the host for the program. Out of the Clean Water Act in the late 1980's, 28 National Estuary Programs were formed around the country. They were considered estuaries of national significance. The closest one to Pensacola is Mobile Bay. There are four in Florida—Tampa Bay, Indian River, Sarasota and Charlotte Harbor. Tampa Bay's program is one of the most successful. They looked at old pre-development photographs of sea grass coverage in Tampa Bay. If there is good sea grass coverage more than likely there will be good water quality. Their goal was to bring back the sea grass coverage to the pre-development level within 20 years. They met their target 4 years early.

It is important to realize that estuary programs are not regulatory programs. They can't make anybody do anything. They don't pass ordinances, they don't pass laws. They are consensus builders. They will work with the community, not just the environmental, but also the economic community to get everybody on board so that the programs can become successful. They develop a comprehensive conservation and management plan (CCMP). They look at existing data and reports and look at the different critical problems and what the stressors/pollutants are within the watershed. The watersheds that feed into the estuaries are very large. A total of about 8,000 square miles of watershed feeds into the Perdido/Pensacola Bays estuary. Anything that happens in those watersheds can impact the water quality of the estuary and ultimately the Gulf of Mexico.

The CCMP will identify a handful of priorities, major issues that need to be addressed is these estuaries. Most issues are the same in Florida; septic tank

issues, unpaved roads, stormwater issues, agricultural and silviculture impacts and suspended solids in the water. The next step in the plan is how to deal with them. Each year, based on the plan a work plan is developed. These programs work on grant money. The National programs have the luxury of getting Congressional funding every year. The Pensacola/Perdido Bays program doesn't have that. They have \$2 million. If they don't find additional funding, whether it's grants, or local communities and counties, that will be the end of the program.

It is a very cooperative program. The Pensacola/Perdido Bays program has a technical advisory committee and an education outreach committee for K – 12 and are in the process of forming an economic committee. The community needs to address these programs as necessary for quality of life, place and economic development.

Comments were made by Member Horning on the availability of data and the lack of enforcement of existing regulations in the local community.

Mr. Trifilio indicated that the estuary program is not regulatory in nature. That is not their role. They will look at what is available and will determine what gaps there are in the knowledge base. If they know there is a problem and they don't have enough data to resolve that problem, then it will be identified as a gap and they will do more work in those areas.

Member Avant expressed his concerns with the Wedgewood Community, the Rolling Hills landfill and the environmental effects it has on Marcus Bayou and Crescent Lake and ultimately Perdido River. He inquired whether there was a member on the policy board representing environmental justice.

Mr. Trifilio stated that there were environmental justice issues throughout the country. There are aspects of the CCMP plans that will address those types of issues. This is a community and region project. This has to be stakeholder driven, a community and regional driven venture.

The Policy Board of the Pensacola/Perdido Bays Estuary program was put together by an interlocal agreement. They are mainly elected officials. The public is encouraged to attend any one of the committee meetings to voice their concerns and those committees will get the information to the policy board. Participation is encouraged.

Further discussion occurred between Board members and Mr. Trifilio on estuary programs, testing, care of infrastructure and getting cooperation from various entities that may be contributing to the problem as well as developing partnerships with industries to possibly utilize materials they can no longer use in environmental

ways that would be beneficial in the community, i.e. turning unwanted concrete into fishing reefs as an example.

Ms. Mary Gutierrez encouraged participation in the meetings with new blood and new perspectives.

Chair Richards mentioned the attendance at a recent City Council meeting of participants in the 350 youth organization expressing their concerns about climate change and urging the Council to support the Climate Change Task Force's recommendations. It would be beneficial to have them attend the estuary program meetings to voice their concerns.

Mr. Trifilio indicated that was one of the goals of the outreach committee to get their involvement. That is where it starts. As far as the meetings are concerned, there is always a call in number. If you are unable to get to the meetings, you can call in.

4. Board Member Comments/Updates:

a) 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue Tree Replacement and No Parking Enforcement—Kyle Kopytchak  
Member Kopytchak voiced his frustration in no action being taken on the recommendation to place signs in the tree tunnel.

b) Perdido Pensacola Bay Estuary Program—Michael Lynch

Chair Richards announced that Jim Trifilio submitted his letter of resignation at the October 2 meeting. They will be searching for another Executive Director. Member Lynch indicated that a lot of things were discussed; however they did not decide on anything

c) Criteria for Tree Fund Grant Proposals

Chair Richards deferred this item to discuss under Old Business item 5 a).

d) Environmental Justice/Injustice—Calvin Avant

Member Avant indicated he is setting up individual meetings with Council Member Cannada-Wynn and Council Member Myers to talk to them about Marcus Bayou and some of the things that are going on. He will be attending the University of Florida's stormwater solutions workshop this evening. He spoke to Rodney Jones, President of the NAACP about bringing 10 members of his Youth Council to the Climate Change Conference in New Orleans on November 14-16 sponsored by the Deep South Center for Environmental Justice and Texas Southern University.

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

Member Butts reported 4900 pounds of garbage has been picked up at the beaches. With the ones that Ocean Hour does, they are up to 16,000 pounds. Member Kopytchak made comments about information provided to the Board from the Parks and Recreation department.

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

Member Butts reported that on September 24, Bayou Texar, Bayou Grande and Bayou Chico had health advisories posted. Member Horning reported the lack of rain has helped with the stormwater issues at Sanders Beach and the Tanyard.

- g) Environmental Impacts on Disenfranchised Communities—Gloria Horning

No update given

- h) Renewable Energy Sources—Neil Richards, Robert Bennett

No update given

- i) Stormwater Management—Katie Fox

No update given

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

Chair Richards announced that the Planning Board would be holding a public workshop on October 24 in the Hagler/Mason Conference Room. Member Bennett submitted a proposed recommendation and will be carried over to next month when he will be able to be present. He asked if the Board had any further comments about how the grant request process could be smoothed out since the grant requests would come before the Board. He envisioned having recommendations on the tree species that would be guidance for the Board, that there would be a fairly short list of species that the Board could recommend to the City Council for that grant money as well as how the neighborhood or association applying for the grant would take care of irrigation and watering for the first year.

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

Chair Richards reviewed some information obtained from the Material Safety Data Sheets and other information provided by the City Parks and Recreation department concerning the various insecticides and herbicides used by the City. Per the charge from the Council, the Board needs to determine where these are being used, in what quantities, at what times, and what they are actually trying to kill.

Member Kopytchak noted that there was a schedule included in the packet and it looked like there were only three or four parks that they displayed the dates and the times, month after month, that they were being sprayed. The issue for the Board was kids playing. Most of the chemicals that he read about had a twelve hour avoidance. He was hoping that Member Fox would have been present to provide the Board with further in depth information, since it was her issue.

Chair Richards reviewed the Pesticide Recordkeeping Form that is submitted to the Florida Department of Agriculture that lists Exchange Park, Roger Scott, Bill Gregory, Legion Field, Magee Field and Lion's Park and the specific pesticide that is being used. He also reviewed the Ensec service invoices for Sanders Beach, Plaza Ferdinand, Palafox Park(Plaza DeLuna). He asked what is the Board's recommendation as far as chemicals and fertilizers to recommend to the Council and or the Mayor's staff? The Board's recommendation that there be a moratorium put on the application of those chemicals is an item on the consent agenda for the City Council Agenda Conference meeting on Monday and then will go to the City Council on Thursday, October 10. Chair Richards asked that the recommendation on the City Council's agenda be read into the record:

**Recommendation: That City Council forward to the Mayor's Office the Following recommendation from the Environmental Advisory Board (EAB):**

**To propose a moratorium on the spraying of 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 Kopytchak stated that there was no moratorium needed per that motion anymore, since they provided the list and the scheduling. The reason the Board requested it that way was because the Board had previously requested it and had gotten incomplete information. The way that is worded, this response is to a public records response, then they have fulfilled the request.

Staff indicated that the next action would need to come from the Mayor's office.

Chair Richards indicated they would see what happens next week with the Council action. A recommendation is still going to come out of this Board as to increased record keeping. Be thinking about other things to recommend to the Mayor and/or the Council for the use of chemicals and fertilizers.

Member Butts stated if you know the times that whatever chemical was sprayed, how difficult would it be to find out what sporting activities were done that day, practices, etc.

Member Avant pointed out there are two separate activities—the Parks activity does the spraying, the Recreation activity does the scheduling and they don't always communicate.

Chair Richards stated that could be part of the Board's recommendation that those lines of communication or oversight be established.



Member Lynch indicated that the Parks and Recreation Department or the individual leagues could provide schedules for the individual fields. It is apparent that right now they have soccer, baseball, and football going on.

Member Kopytchak stated that the ultimate goal would be to whittle it down and then go organic wherever the kids are playing. That would solve all of it.

The Board further discussed obtaining more information about formulating a recommendation to the City. What parks are populated by youth sports, and what dates and times, whether it be practice or games, so that the Board will have that information for the next meeting.

Chair Richards stated that he would make that request.

6. New Business

There was no new business.

7. Reports and Announcements

Chair Richards announced the University of Florida IFAS Extension and Research facility community workshops on Flooding and Water Quality offered on October 3 at 6 p.m. at Sanders Beach Corrine Jones Resource Center and on October 10 at the UF at Pensacola State College Milton Campus.

Member Butts inquired about the City's stormwater vaults and who would know if they are cleaned out and if there were any projects to measure and characterize what is coming out. He reported that over on Dog River in Santa Rosa County, there is a stormwater collection project going on and wondered if the City was looking at doing something similar to characterize what makes it through. He volunteered to obtain the data from the City.

Chris Mauldin with Public Works provided the name of Roger Williams in the Public Works Department to contact for information.

Member Horning volunteered to take him on a tour to see all the trash that comes out of one neighborhood that goes into a river and into the bay.

Chair Richards stated that this issue will be put on as an additional action item. Basically, to focus on the vaults as to what the clean out schedule is and what is documented, whatever log books are required to be kept.

8. Public Comments—Open Forum

Mary Gutierrez made comments on previous stormwater collection methods, the Climate Mitigation and Adaptation Task Force report and the importance of not putting the report on the shelf. She was able to provide comments and information to the Mayor and City Council Members with regard to issuing a declaration of climate emergency. They need to create an actual adaptation and mitigation plan, since that wasn't created and stressed the importance of allowing representation from the community as a whole.

9. Adjourn

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 3:35 p.m.

**City of Pensacola Environmental Advisory Board Meeting**  
**Thursday, October 3, 2019**  
**Whibbs Conference Room, 1st Floor**  
**City Hall, 222 West Main Street**  
**2 P.M.**

**PLEASE SIGN IN**

NAME (Please Print)	Agenda Item	Telephone Number	Address
Kristin Bennett			Tetra Tech, Inc
Betty Wilson		850-380-2950	2249 Seenic Hwy T-2 Pensacola, 32503
Chris Mauldi		850 436 5696	202 W. Main St Pensacola FL
Mary Gutierrez	NA	850 549 7472	1241 Seenic Highway Pensacola, FL 32503
Dave Hemphill	-	850 430 1762	BPI