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

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September 3, 2020

2:00 pm

Microsoft Teams/Council Chambers

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**Members Present:** Neil Richards, Chair, Blase Butts, Participating remotely, Members Alex Kozmon, Michael Lynch, Katie Fox

**Members Absent:** Kyle Kopytchak, Calvin Avant

**Others Present:** Council Executive Don Kraher, Sustainability Coordinator Mark Jackson

1. Call to Order/Quorum

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

2. Approval of Meeting Minutes—August 6, 2020

**Motion made by Member Butts, seconded by Member Fox to approve the minutes of the August 6, 2020 meeting and was unanimously carried.**

3. Board Member Comments/Updates

a) Update on Stormwater Collection and Removal—Blase Butts

Member Butts gave an update on debris that was collected at the stormwater outfall at Florida Blanca and other issues pertaining to what is caught by stormwater vaults and what goes back into the bay. He volunteered his time to review the contract and help evaluate what is removed and to find the source of where it comes from.

Mark Jackson indicated that Chris Mauldin handles the engineering aspects of stormwater while Roger Williams is in charge of maintenance. He was unsure if arrangements could be made to view what is collected by the contractors who clean out the vaults; however suggested it might be possible to have a field day to open up the vaults and review the materials collected.

4. Updates from Sustainability Coordinator Mark Jackson

a) Carbon Baseline Report

Mark Jackson provided an update on the work he's been doing with representatives from Energy Services in developing a baseline for 2020, capturing the buildings and fleets. They are still evaluating employee commute to work.

He also reported that the staff has reviewed and made changes to the tree ordinance and the ordinance is currently being reviewed by the legal department. Hopefully, it will go to the Planning Board in October.

Member Butts relayed a plight of his neighbors that have four large trees that are near their house. They had them trimmed; however their insurance company sent a notice to them that they want the trees cut down since they overhang their house. With the City trying to increase the tree canopy, are the insurance companies now going to control the trees?

Mark Jackson indicated that the ordinance considers a heritage tree as 30" in diameter and to get a permit to have them removed, they would have to pay a mitigation fee to have them removed. The City cannot take over control of insurance companies. That would be handled through the state through consumer protection.

He also provided a brief update on the Gulf Power solar project recently approved by the City Council.

Council Executive indicated there were only two sites approved in the master lease with Gulf Power and the details would be contained in that lease. The authority to oversee the lease rests in the Mayor's Office. The City is open to other solar companies coming forward with their proposals.

5. Old Business:  
a) Tree Fund Activity

Mark Jackson inquired what the process is for neighborhoods to follow to receive grants approved by the EAB from the Tree Trust Fund that is mentioned in the proposed tree ordinance. If the ordinance is approved, need to be able to tell the public how to apply for the grant.

Council Executive indicated that the EAB started discussing the process about two years ago; however, has been unable to come to an agreement on what the process would be, the dollar amount, etc.

Chair Richards stated that the thoughts were that it would mirror through the Neighborhood Challenge Grant system through the Neighborhood Department, then would loop through the Environmental Advisory Board as a recommendation and then to the City Council for approval to release those funds. Several years ago, he provided information to the Board that talked about the right trees, in the right place, the right time, the right soil. They were documents provided by IFES and were not intended to be included in the ordinance, but to be used as guidelines. As the documents are updated or changed, they would be used to give to the neighborhoods to pick their trees and know how to take care of them for survival.

Mark Jackson indicated that the ordinance does spell out what tree, how it should be maintained and irrigated. There will be a list of trees that could be planted and the list is included in the Ordinance. It would not be left up to the Board to dictate what type of tree to plant.

Chair Richards stated that he would like to see the list of trees, that he would not want to restrict them to native trees only, but certainly would not want invasive species included.

Member Kozmon suggested involving the Extension Services in the review process.

Mark Jackson stated that he has reached out to them as well as the County forester and the State forestry service in working on some of these issues as well as the urban forest inventory and tree canopy survey that will give a baseline for where we are currently and also where we are deficient in the tree canopy as well as the species and the health of the species. They are also looking at streamlining the departmental process.

Member Kozmon inquired as to whether there would be any consideration or guidelines in the grant process to support the tree canopy, or backyard habitats rather than a front yard beautification project.

Mark Jackson indicated that currently, the project would have to be on the City right of way or some type of public property. Backyards would not be qualified. You are talking about public funds and they can only be spent on public property in a way that serves the entire public.

Chair Richards asked if the Environmental Advisory Board would have an opportunity to review the proposed ordinance.

Council Executive indicated that once it is on the Planning Board agenda, the Environmental Advisory Board will be able to review and make comments to the Planning Board.

Chair Richards also reviewed the tree trust fund activity update handout. (attached)

Council Executive also updated the Board on the City Council discretionary tree trust fund disbursements. There have been seven projects approved. Also discussed whether funds not utilized would be rolled over and also if funds could be used in other districts for designated projects. It has not been determined if funds will be carried over in the new fiscal year.

b) Solar Power in the City

Chair Richards indicated he placed this on the agenda to see if there was anything the Environmental Advisory Board needed to provide staff. Perhaps they could provide public input on the design and prioritize the additional 38 sites

6. New Business

a) Green Building Ordinance

Chair Richards stated the intent of placing this on the agenda was to bring awareness and concern of the ordinance and that buildings that are built on city property or with city cooperation need to comply with this ordinance. The Mayor has the latitude to relieve the requirements of this ordinance and to put that in the record for the building permit.

Christian Wagley gave some background information on the development of the Green Building Ordinance. It's been in existence for over 8 years and has been basically ignored by the previous administration. He encouraged the Board to push forward their oversight role to encourage the Mayor and Council to consider this ordinance when building new projects.

Council Executive stated that he did forward this ordinance to the current Assistant City Administrator as well as the Public Works Director.

7. Reports and Announcements

Member Lynch reported that the Pensacola Perdido Bay Estuary Program has interviewed two candidates for the Executive Director position and made a selection; however he doesn't know who they selected.

Member Fox did not have a further update on the Chemical/Pesticide use best practice plan. She thought it would be good if the Council Executive could request a copy and forward to the Board for their information.

Member Kozmon indicated that he has an idea to present and will work on it for the next meeting.

Member Butts expressed concern over how the City looks and especially the extremely white ramp leading up to the new bridge and did not want it to become another graffiti bridge.

Council Executive indicated that there might be something in the design to limit access to that area.

8. Public Comments—Open Forum

Christian Wagley made brief comments on the concerns he expressed about the Gulf Power solar program and how they continue to put up road blocks for individuals to place solar power on their homes and businesses. In order to meet the 2040 goal of the Climate Task Force, the City needs to have the ability to place and use solar power sources on their buildings. He also suggested the Board get an update on the fertilizer ordinance recently passed by the City Council.

He announced "The State of Rooftop Solar In Florida" a webinar on Solar energy that would be held tomorrow; the Public Service Commission hearing on September 17, and the Pensacola Perdido Bay Estuary Program selected Donald Killorn from Canada and he will be starting in January.

Chair Richards inquired about the possibility of the City re-opening to the public.

Council Executive provided an update. If the numbers indicate, there is a possibility that the City may reopen the end of September first part of October.

Chair Richards also mentioned the possibility of having a presentation from Dave Robau on the PACE program. It has been in existence for about five years; however it has not been used very frequently. The information has not gotten out to the public.

9. Adjourn

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