

City of Clearwater

*Main Library - Council Chambers
100 N. Osceola Avenue
Clearwater, FL 33755*



Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, April 20, 2022

4:00 PM

Main Library - Council Chambers

Environmental Advisory Board

Roll Call

Present 4 - Chair Jared Leone, Vice Chair John Thomas, Board Member Marita Lynch, and Board Member Glenna Wentworth

Absent 1 - Board Member Sheila Sullivan

Also Present - Sarah Kessler – Lead Environmental Specialist, Patricia O. Sullivan – Board Reporter

Awaiting approval

1. Call To Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. at the Main Library.

2. Approval of Minutes

- 2.1** Approve Environmental Advisory Board Meeting Minutes from Wednesday, January 19, 2022 and Special Environmental Advisory Board Meeting Minutes from Wednesday, January 19, 2022.

Member Thomas moved to approve minutes of the January 19, 2022 Environmental Advisory Board meeting and the January 19, 2022 Special Environmental Advisory Board meeting as submitted in written summation. The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously.

3. Citizens to be Heard Regarding Items Not on the Agenda

Brian Beckman provided an update on solar installations in Clearwater. When contracting for solar panels, he recommended residents verify cost per watt and work with SolarUnitedNeighbors co-op for significant savings. With high costs often buried within financing deals, he encouraged legislation providing truth in lending protections. In response to a question, he said the Governor had not yet signed the bill that eliminates net metering.

4. New Business Items

- 4.1** Presentation about sustainable direction and goals for Clearwater by Jon Jennings, City Manager

Lead Environmental Specialist Sarah Kessler said the City Manager was not available.

- 4.2** Presentation about stormwater improvements on the Cleveland Street, Phase 3 project, by Stormwater Engineering Staff

Ms. Kessler said Engineering Staff was not available.

5. Old Business Items

- 5.1** Sustainability Program Updates by Sheridan Gemuendt, Sustainability Coordinator

Sustainability Coordinator Sheridan Genuendt provided an update on sustainability efforts to reduce City greenhouse gas emissions. Cenergistic is calculating a baseline for City building energy use to calibrate goals for reducing energy use while increasing renewable energy resources. Cenergistic and staff are interviewing an energy specialist to be employed by Cenergistic who only will work on Clearwater energy reduction efforts. City Manager approval is required to implement energy reduction actions. Goals will be disseminated to all departments.

Ms. Genuendt reviewed plans to install new EV (Electric Vehicle) charging stations in the Garden Avenue and Municipal Service Building garages. The City's fleet eventually will need 10 – 12 EV stations; she hoped the City will install 6 EV stations by year's end.

Discussion ensued regarding public EV stations in Pinellas County, including significant public use of EV stations at Dunedin's recreation center and library. Ms. Genuendt said most EV charging occurs overnight at residents' homes. Downtown Clearwater features private EV stations. The City is considering an ordinance requiring EV station installation at new multifamily construction and off-street parking locations. Recommendations were made for the City to encourage residents to install home EV stations by reducing permit fees and to allow electric golf cart use on some City streets. Ms. Genuendt said walking and bicycling creates no pollution.

Ms. Genuendt said staff was partnering with the library system to incorporate Greenprint activities in the 8-week summer youth program. The new Sustainability Specialist has begun work to engage the public and businesses in Greenprint activities. A solar plan is being developed for the new Hercules Avenue fire station. Ms. Kessler said every City development work order incorporates GreenPrint. Ms. Genuendt said quarterly updates posted on the website reporting City's sustainability progress were planned.

6. Director's Report

Ms. Kessler reported the agenda is created a month prior to board meetings. It was requested that she email board members with deadline reminders.

7. Board Members to be Heard

Member Lynch expressed concern re City's ability to accomplish Ready for 100 campaign goals due to its ownership of a natural gas system. Ms. Genuendt said the City's Resolution will only reference electricity. Proposed reductions to electricity use are limited to City facilities not public services such as water treatment and natural gas distribution. The City plans to supplement its energy use with onsite solar. Greenprint and Ready for 100 goals are aligned. Discussion ensued regarding the Resolution. It was stated that ongoing technology improvements will help the City reach its goals.

Member Thomas moved to approve the proposed Ready for 100 Resolution as amended to focus solely on electricity, coordinate with GreenPrint 2.0, and reference the City throughout the document. The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously.

Ms. Kessler said she would forward the amended document to the City Clerk for City Council review. In response to a question, she said none of the City's applications to the Resilient Florida Grant Program was funded.

Member Lynch referenced recent media articles re sustainable shorelines and expressed concern most Clearwater shoreline where sustainability efforts would be beneficial is privately owned. She said Elizabeth Drayer had offered to buy anyone a free tree. She recommended Environmental Advisory Board agendas include the board's objective.

Member Thomas recommended the City Council survey sea grass beds to accurately document current conditions and implement protections. He said the Martin Luther King Center would be good site for a GreenPrint community garden but the center has concerns re administrative responsibilities and liability issues.

Chair Leone reviewed upcoming events. He encouraged residents to contact the Governor to veto solar metering legislation. He supported a no wake zone in Stevenson Creek. He said he had drafted a letter requesting the City to reschedule the Super Boat races outside sea turtle nesting season.

Member Thomas moved to send Chair Leone's letter as drafted to the City Council and City Manager requesting the City to reschedule Super Boat races outside sea turtle nesting season. The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously.

Chair Leone recommended the Board schedule a field trip to Lake Bellevue. He requested a presentation to the Board regarding City pesticide use. He hoped the City Manager will attend the Board's next meeting and address the Board's request to increase the frequency of its meetings.

8. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 5:35 p.m.

Attest:

Chair Environmental Advisory Board

Board Reporter