

City of Clearwater

*City Hall
112 S. Osceola Avenue
Clearwater, FL 33756*



Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, July 19, 2017

4:00 PM

Council Chambers

Environmental Advisory Board

Roll Call

Present 5 - Chair Leann DuPont, Vice Chair Jared Leone, Board Member Michael Engelmann, Board Member Mark Wright, and Board Member Ashley Wilson Pimley

Also Present: Laura Mahony – Assistant City Attorney, Sarah Kessler – 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 City Hall.

To provide continuity for research, items are in agenda order although not necessarily discussed in that order.

2. Approval of Minutes

2.1 Approve the minutes of the April 19, 2017 Environmental Advisory Board Meeting

Member Engelmann moved to approve minutes of the April 19, 2017 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

Lisa Lanza expressed concern the Clearwater Marine Aquarium's endangered sea turtle program was in disarray after an expert staff member left and the Board should investigate it. She recommended the Board agenda a presentation re November's referendum.

4. New Business Items

4.1 Groundwater Replenishment Presentation - David Porter, Public Utilities Director

David Porter, Public Utilities Director provided a PowerPoint presentation on the City's groundwater replenishment program and marketing efforts. The program should be fully operational in 2020. The plant's onsite outreach facility will offer an educational component.

In response to questions and comments, Mr. Porter said the City's water management strategy was to be water independent. Online sensors that measure water quality will be monitored closely. Following a robust, multi-barrier process, injected water will be cleaner than aquifer water. Within the first year, monitor wells will provide information on the water's interaction with the aquifer. SWFWMD (Southwest Florida Water Management District) is paying a portion of costs. Benefits outweigh costs; nearby municipalities will have access to the injected water. High

costs covered consultants and expensive technology, including the structure, membrane, reverse osmosis, other equipment, etc.

While the City will retain its water discharge permit, it no longer will have to discharge water into Tampa Bay or Stevenson Creek. During the wet season, residents use minimal reclaimed water and the City could not construct sufficient storage for the unused millions of gallons generated daily. The process to supplement water supplies with purified water existed nationwide; Los Angeles' system has been active for more than 15 years. The City will fulfill contractual obligations re its 20-year commitment before considering expansion. Staff responsible for operating the pilot program were sufficiently skilled to operate the replenishment program. Fluoride will be added to the City's drinking water supply within 12 months.

A resident expressed concerns that water bills were too high, people could not afford to live in Clearwater, the expensive groundwater replenishment program will increase resident costs, and City reclaimed water should have been piped to the County.

Mr. Porter said the City sent up to 3 million gallons a day of reclaimed water to Pinellas County's storage plant.

Concerns were expressed injected water could not be recovered if monitors later detected problems in the aquifer and the system will not test for impurities that are currently unknown. It was stated SWFWMD was funded by area taxpayers and the County runs out of reclaimed water because customer use is not metered.

4.2 Formalize Single Use Plastic Campaign

It was stated the Clearwater Beach Chamber of Commerce and beach businesses seemed receptive to a single use plastic campaign; a point person or organization other than the EAB (Environmental Advisory Board) would need to lead the effort. Concern was expressed interest will wane over time without ongoing efforts. It was stated that City involvement and long term commitment to keeping plastic out of the ocean were important

Surfrider Foundation efforts in Madeira Beach and Treasure Island were discussed. It was stated those program successes were based on 3rd party promotion. It was noted the foundation was working with St. Petersburg to create a resolution.

Attorney Mahoney said a resolution would encourage City Council support and outline how the EAB wanted to move forward, what it wanted to accomplish, how it aspired to work with a 3rd party, and its planned interaction with the Clearwater Beach Chamber of Commerce and other groups.

Discussion ensued re initiatives throughout Florida on this topic. It was commented that a City of St. Petersburg committee's resolution and ordinance to restrict plastic bags were scheduled for adoption in July.

Attorney Mahoney reviewed Coral Gables' lawsuit against FDEP (Florida Department of Environment) re enacting local environmental protections. A ruling was anticipated in September.

Recommendations were made for the EAB to move forward with a resolution that the City Council may support, approach the City Council and request it to adopt a resolution articulating City support of a voluntary program to reduce single use plastics. It was stated the resolution needed to identify goals, be nonbinding, and establish standards for voluntary compliance.

It was recommended that members obtain copies of resolutions to reduce single use plastics from St. Petersburg, Coral Gables, Sarasota and other Florida cities for examples of language and forward them by September 13, 2017 to Ms. Kessler for dissemination to board members. It was suggested board members create resolutions for discussion and adoption at the next meeting. It was agreed following a vote on final language, the EAB would determine how and when to present the resolution to the City Council.

Discussion ensued regarding subsequent actions if the City Council supports EAB efforts and adopts the resolution. Recommendations included a positive reinforcement campaign to increase public awareness and interaction/work with the Clearwater Beach Chamber of Commerce and other groups. Suggestions were made that signs and placards feature the City's logo and for the City to promote the campaign on its website. It was stated that restaurants and businesses that voluntarily adopt established standards should be allowed to advertise they are "Ocean Friendly and Green," qualify to hang campaign plaques or signs by front doors and/or place tents or flyers on restaurant tables. It was recommended that efforts concentrate on beach restaurants and businesses before expanding into the community.

5. Old Business Item: None

6. Director's Report

6.1 Agenda for October 18, 2017 Meeting

- 1) Discuss EAB meeting time*
- 2) Coopers Point master plan presentation*
- 3) Plastic campaign resolution*
- 4) Clearwater Vision update*
- 5) Mooring field application update*

In response to a question, Ms. Kessler said Clearwater Beach Marina trees could not survive after the roots were damaged during utility installation. Replacement palm trees would be planted.

7. Board Members to be Heard: None

8. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 5:20 p.m.

Chair
Environmental Advisory Board

Attest:

Board Reporter