

City of Clearwater

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



Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, January 15, 2020

4:00 PM

Main Library - Council Chambers

Environmental Advisory Board

Roll Call

Present 5 - Chair Jared Leone, Board Member Mark Wright, Board Member Ashley Wilson Pimley, Vice Chair John Thomas, and Board Member Candace Gardner

Also Present - Sarah Kessler – Environmental Specialist III, 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.

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 October 16, 2019 Environmental Advisory Board Meeting Minutes.

Member Wright moved to approve minutes of the October 16, 2019 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: None.

4. New Business Items

4.1 Discuss progress on limiting single use plastics at special events - Kris Koch, Special Events Senior Manager and Sheridan Boyle, Sustainability Coordinator

Special Events Senior Manager Kris Koch said City special events were planned years ahead. With input from Sustainability Coordinator Sheridan Boyle, vendor agreements for the sale of food, beverages and merchandise at City sponsored events had new guidelines requiring only biodegradable plates, straws, utensils, etc. be distributed on City property and prohibiting many single-use plastic items, including balloons. Vendors were provided source information and advised re City recycling efforts. Recycling bins were located at City events; education, awareness, and oversight efforts were underway to eliminate contamination by non-recyclable trash.

Mr. Koch said to reduce waste, all City events will permit attendees to carry unopened containers of water and will mandate all organizers to provide water refill stations. Efforts will be made to patrol parking lots and enforce prohibition of organizers papering vehicles with advertisements. Event signage will educate attendees re sustainability efforts and direct them to

recycling bins and water stations. Work was underway to expand sustainability efforts for tournaments. He discussed application requirements, noting review committee approval was necessary before permits were issued.

Ms. Boyle said information re prohibited items and ocean friendly products and resources was provided in handouts and available online. Ocean Allies was a great resource for acceptable products. Staff also worked with Keep Pinellas Beautiful which provided signage for recycling centers, information on ocean friendly products and trash disposal, and educational obstacle courses for children. This year's Neighborhood Day will be low waste; the City will provide composting and ocean friendly resource information.

In response to a recommendation, Mr. Koch said staff would work with Solid Waste to see if recycling bins could be provided at events with less than 150 participants. Staff will provide board members a link for ocean friendly products. Keep Pinellas Beautiful was working with vendors re recycling for the Sea Blues Festival, which will be mostly ocean friendly. The Pier 60 Sugar Sand Festival, Clearwater Beach Chalk Art Festival and Jazz Festival were taking steps toward hosting waste free events.

Ms. Boyle said the Chamber of Commerce had partnered with Ocean Allies for this year's Clearwater Beach Taste Fest, which will be officially certified waste free; every booth will have an educator. Guides will help people to properly dispose of trash; Suncoast Compost will attend. City departments were motivated to adopt sustainability practices. It did not make sense to separate recycling items at events as single stream trucks picked up the recycled trash.

It was recommended the City educate residents to separate recyclables from trash. The difficulty of controlling disposal of single use plastics on the beach was noted. The City was encouraged to adopt Keep Pinellas Beautiful's practice of distributing paper bags for people to voluntarily collect and return their waste to foster recognition of recycling opportunities.

5. Old Business Items

In response to a question re Cooper's Bayou, Environmental Specialist Sarah Kessler said FDOT (Florida Department of Transportation) had funded 50% of the design plan and permitting costs. The design plan was 50% completed. The channel along Courtney Campbell Causeway will be approximately 400 feet wide. The project required permits from the Army Corps of Engineers, NOAA (National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration), US Fish & Wildlife, FDEP (Florida Department of Environmental Protection), and SWFWMD (Southwest Florida Water Management District). After the project is permitted, the City will pay the costs to modify the plan and obtain permits for recreational elements such as an observation tower and kayak launch. The City will release an RFP (Request for Proposals) once design

plans are ready for construction. Staff will apply for additional grants. The City Manager will present the project to City Council in April.

Support was expressed for a bridge for direct public access to Cooper Point without having to traverse the educational facility. It was noted a long bridge in Bradenton provided access to public land.

Ms. Kessler said a bridge remained on the table but 24-hour security had not been resolved. Boating rights for property owners to the south needed verification. A bridge span would need to be high enough to permit boat traffic underneath.

In response to a concern re City efforts to reduce nutrient runoff, Ms. Kessler said dredging Coopers Bayou would improve water quality and circulation and help reduce red tide in Upper Tampa Bay.

6. Director's Report

Ms. Kessler said many officials and industry leaders had participated in training and round table discussions at TBRPC's (Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council's) resiliency summit. The City's parking manager was interested in St. Pete Beach's installation of a sealant on Corey Avenue that cools pavement and reduces the heat island effect. She will provide the board with the most popular round table recommendation for a regional sustainability focus.

Recommendations for topics for April's agenda:

1) trash cleanup throughout Clearwater, including trash blown into school perimeter fencing;

It was reported the Clearwater Marine Aquarium had expressed interest in sponsoring a trash cleanup program by providing admission tickets to participants. It was suggested the sustainability or volunteer coordinator could organize trash cleanup events and approach organizations for sponsorships such as Spectrum Field, Ruth Eckerd Hall, the Capitol Theater, etc.

2) solar energy;

Ms. Kessler said after installation of new pay stations, the parking manager would look into a pilot project for a solar canopy over beach parking.

3) City efforts to reduce nutrients that cause red tide.

Ms. Kessler planned to attend a meeting re Old Tampa Bay water quality with the cities of Oldsmar and Clearwater and Hillsborough and Pinellas counties.

7. Board Members to be Heard

Member Thomas complimented the stormwater wetlands creation project at the Long Center.

8. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 4:45 p.m.

Attest:

Chair
Environmental Advisory Board

Board Reporter