

# City of Clearwater

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



## Meeting Minutes

**Wednesday, July 21, 2021**

**4:00 PM**

**Main Library - Council Chambers**

## **Environmental Advisory Board**

**Roll Call**

**Present** 3 - Chair Jared Leone, Board Member Marita Lynch, and Board Member Glenna Wentworth

**Absent** 2 - Vice Chair John Thomas, and Board Member Mark Wright

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

**DRAFT****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 April 21, 2021 meeting minutes

**AND**

2.2 Approve April 28, 2021 meeting minutes

**Member Lynch moved to approve minutes of the April 21, 2021 Environmental Advisory Board meeting and the April 28, 2021 Environmental Advisory Board Special 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 Presentation of Greenprint by Sheridan Boyle, Sustainability Coordinator

*Sustainability Coordinator Sheridan Boyle provided a PowerPoint presentation on proposed Greenprint updates, Sustainability considers how current generations can meet their needs without compromising future generations; resilience researches the ability to prepare for threats, handle impacts, and recover and adapt after disruptive events.*

*Environmental Specialist Sarah Kessler read Member Thomas's email into the record. He expressed kudos to staff and the consultant team who prepared the Greenprint 2.0 draft and suggested edits; 1) Plan addresses solid waste/water conservation aspects of stormwater but not wastewater treatment. Recent Eckerd College research indicated microplastics discharge from sewage treatment plants warrants study to protect marine*

resources. Greenprint should establish nutrient discharge reduction goals and City treatment plant improvements by 2050. Also, Greenprint does not mention work on SSOs or to identify illegal connections to sanitary sewers as flows to treatment plants increase after severe storms; 2) Invasive plants, different than an IPM program, require diligent monitoring and control on City-owned property. Invasives are seaward of the Coastal Construction Control Line; Australian pine, Brazilian pepper, carrotwood and cogon grass have colonized on Sand Key dunes. Volunteer and condo association efforts have provided some control. With FDEP regulation of the CCCL zone, City involvement would help maintain the ecological integrity of these critical resource areas. Invasive trees on north beach also deserve attention. A goal should be for City-owned properties to be free of invasive trees and plants and 3) Creation of community gardens 11.4 should be a strong effort. Multiple benefits include environmental with local food production, new greenspace to social and neighborhood networks, and a wonderful forum for introducing Greenprint educational goals and programs.

Thirteen residents spoke in support of Greenprint 2.0 with comments that the document should: 1) Discourage natural gas, which is polluting; 2) Reduce pesticide and herbicide use, encourage soil aeration; 3) Adopt an Ordinance requiring nontoxic organic pesticides; 4) Encourage local solar production, recycling, and vegan lifestyle to protect the environment and self and reduce factory farming responsible for global warming; 5) Greenprint 2.0 is important to Clearwater youth as its recommended changes are essential for the future of Clearwater and children; 6) Earth care congregations encourage and support scientific research and adoption of the moral imperative to take care of our only home; 7) Education is needed; uninformed residents cannot be involved; 8) Community outreach to residents and schools is essential for residents to adopt Greenprint 2.0 goals and understand ramifications of sea level rise; and 8) City dashboard should track Greenprint progress, reporting all measurables including number of trees added to canopy and acres added to green space.

Public comments said the City should: 1) Install Level 3 charging stations; 2) Hire an energy manager; 3) Require developers to install standard 240v line in home garages for charging stations; 4) Educate permitting staff re solar systems; 5) Reduce time to issue solar installation permits; 6) Foster local activities that help the economy, urban agriculture, and encourage beehives; and 7) Establish citywide programs for residents, businesses, and the government to work together on projects such as eliminating invasive species and replacing them with gardens that help the ecosystem.

Public comments suggested City projects: 1) Construct pond to clean US 19 runoff, which should not flow into gulf, and channel clean water to fish farm in a second pond; 2) Consider information on a simple concept

*parking structure with solar energy, water collection and fleet vehicle charging stations; 3) Assist low-income homeowners challenged by maintenance and utility expenses, especially elderly residents on fixed income, by establishing a program that reduces energy consumption, greenhouse gasses, and electric bills by insulating houses, distributing LED light bulbs and more elaborate actions; and 4) Encourage Pinellas Technical College to train students on solar and alternative energies that reduce energy waste with apprentice positions evaluating houses and installing insulation which would make a huge economic impact for marginalized homeowners and newly trained workers.*

*Public comments said building 20-foot seawalls is not a long term solution for resiliency but the City should address sea level rise by considering a buyout of coastal properties and renting them back until they are unusable. Concern was expressed about gentrification when rising seas force waterfront residents to relocate to higher ground.*

*Discussion ensued. Greenprint 2.0 was complimented for addressing equity, measurable goals, and strategies. Concerns were expressed that goals were too modest considering the “world’s on fire,” if Greenprint 2.0 reflected best practices, and if proposed actions had been verified that they would achieve stated goals.*

*Board member recommendations: 1) Identify person responsible for supervising Greenprint implementation; 2) Present quarterly reports that track progress of stated goals; 3) Create an advertising campaign to educate the public and encourage community participation in attaining Greenprint goals; 4) Confirm that the City’s new Comprehensive Plan intersects with Greenprint 2.0; 5) Establish an intermediary goal for the Green Fleet; 6) Add an energy manager position; 7) Commit to a goal of 100% clean renewable energy by 2050 as 4 local communities already have done; 8) Reduce emissions from City buildings by 50% by 2030 and 100% by 2035 as the City needs to show leadership and take control of meeting Greenprint goals; 9) Encourage developer participation in a voluntary Greenprint fund, similar to the public art fee, to achieve Greenprint goals; 10) Add wastewater and water quality as a strategy and report on efforts already underway; 11) Install multiple public charging stations for electric vehicles; 12) Adopt conservation efforts and enforce the sea turtle lighting Ordinance; 13) Replat land to encourage preservation and increase green space; 14) Establish a City program to encourage and educate residents on alternative methods to combat invasive species; 15) Add educational signage in parks and facilities identifying trees, explaining how stormwater works, etc.; 16) Expand e-waste collection by providing pickups or increasing the number of drop off days; 17) Establish a mulch delivery program with a fee to encourage xeriscaping; 18) Reestablish the rain barrel program to encourage water conservation; 19) Establish a Citywide swap program to include*

*neighborhood participation; and 20) Include gas as a component of the interactive website that reports progress toward goals.*

*In response to questions, Ms. Boyle said Greenprint 2050 goals were based on the Paris Agreement that the US recently reentered. Greenprint is a living document that can be updated frequently. The City's Sustainability Coordinator position, created in 2019, is responsible for working with City departments, regional partners and nonprofits and reporting on progress achieving Greenprint goals. A conversation is underway about a City Energy Manager position. Orlando has made positive strides to add solar power to many City buildings and fire stations and to survey City rooftops for solar opportunities. The draft solar feasibility analysis will establish benchmarks.*

*In response to questions, Ms. Boyle said while Greenprint does not include water discharge, a water section could be added in the future. She will discuss this issue with the Utility Department. The City actively looks at discharge; a Greenpoint strategy could report on City actions.*

*Ms. Kessler said the City addresses sanitary sewer overflows in some areas; staff efforts could be added as a Greenprint goal. A group of staff was working on overflow solutions.*

*In response to questions, Ms. Boyle said the City can provide education re invasive plant species identification and guidance re best nontoxic practices for the safe and effective removal of invasive plants. The City cannot remove plants from private property but will use best practices to remove invasive plants from City-owned property.*

*In response to questions, Ms. Boyle said an internal planning committee meets bimonthly to increase resilience planning across the City; the committee eventually will be expanded to include stakeholders. The number of people who now bicycle to work is marginal. The City was considering installing Level 2 charging stations rather than fast charge ones; currently the City's only public charging station is in the Garden Avenue Garage. The green fleet policy was under review and not yet approved; the number of charging stations would increase if the City's green fleet expands.*

*In response to questions, Ms. Boyle said the City has a number of economic development programs and resources available to finance renewable energy. The goal was to target pensioners on a fixed income and reduce utility costs in 1,000 homes..*

*In response to questions, Ms. Boyle said the City was identifying where tree canopy coverage is low and why that had occurred. Staff will engage with homeowners in affected areas to provide education and determine*

*property owners' preferences for planting trees.*

*In response to questions, Ms. Boyle said the County mulches the City's yard waste. Participants in the County's rain barrel program must pay for their barrels. The Neighborhood Coordinator may be able to work on neighborhood swap meets.*

*In response to questions, Ms. Boyle said recommendations and public comments will be presented to the City Council at the August 2 Work Session and August 5 City Council meeting; City Council direction for modifications to Greenprint 2.0 could be made at that time.*

*Appreciation was expressed for the great progress made on Greenprint in recent years and the significant work and expert research that went into developing this new document. Ms. Boyle was complimented for her work and completing this large task. She was thanked for her efforts.*

#### **4.2 Discuss dates for field trip to water plant**

Public Utilities has offered to provide a behind the scenes tour of the water production plant. This is a discussion to determine a few best dates to have a tour of the plant.

*Consensus was to schedule a field trip on August 18, 2021 to the City's Reverse Osmosis Plant #2 at 21133 US Highway N. Members will meet at the facility at 4:00 p.m.*

### **5. Old Business Items**

#### **5.1 Discuss frequency and time of the Environmental Advisory Board meetings**

Board members expressed interest in discussing the meeting frequency and meeting hours. Discussions may be presented at the Council Meeting in November.

*Ms. Kessler said at its January meeting, board consensus was to continue the quarterly meeting schedule plus add field trips. In October, the Board can discuss the schedule and determine if they want to request modifying the schedule during their November report to the City Council.*

### **6. Director's Report**

*Ms. Kessler said an email from Ocean Allies Chair Sheri Heilman invited the board to the next general meeting on August 11, 2021 at the Beachcomber Restaurant. Ocean Allies is working to eliminate beach traffic. The relationship between traffic and Greenprint may be discussed.*

*It was stated the board was required to comply with the Sunshine Law.*

*Future agenda topics: South Florida Ordinance re nontoxic pesticides and herbicides and update on Lake Bellevue management plans.*

*Ms. Kessler said Tampa's recycling center tours were on hiatus.*

## **7. Board Members to be Heard**

*Member Lynch complimented Imagine Clearwater for including playgrounds and expressed concern that Greenprint 2.0 goals were not aggressive enough.*

*Chair Leone reviewed upcoming events. He suggested inviting an Ocean Allies representative to address the board.*

*Discussion ensued regarding the historically large bloom of red tide in Tampa Bay and Gulf of Mexico that is overwhelming the water and polluting surrounding areas with harmful toxins.*

**Member Lynch moved for the Environmental Advisory Board to send a letter to the Mayor and City Council requesting they pass a resolution and forward it to the governor, encouraging him to declare a state of emergency re red tide. The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously.**

## **8. Adjourn**

*The meeting adjourned at 6:10 p.m.*

Attest:

---

Chair  
Environmental Advisory Board

---

Board Reporter