

**City of New Port Richey Environmental Committee
Minutes for July 8, 2019**

Meeting called to order at 6:12 pm.

1. **Vox Pop** - None.
2. **In attendance:** Present were Committee Chair Dell deChant, Vice Chair Rose Mohr, Secretary Jon Tietz, alternate John Kane and City Liaison Barret Doe. Rex Phelps, Penelope Anderson, Barbara Sullo and MJ Fagouseh were absent. Guests present were Lisa Conca and David Sillman with the Solar United Neighbors of Florida. Jon made a motion to approve a statement of support for the Solar United Neighbors of Florida as proposed by David Sillman and to recommend that the City of New Port Richey formally endorse the project and provide support as needed. Rose seconded the motion. It was approved unanimously.
3. **Vox Pop.** Lisa Conca was present. She is a city resident who lives on the river and she and her children fish. She said she would like to see recycling of monofilament fishing line. She brought pamphlets from Fish and Wildlife on "Reel in and Recycle". She also brought an example fishing line collection bin and talked about larger ones. John Kane suggested that the doggy bag collectors could be refilled and collected at the same time that these devices could be collected. Lisa noted that one is already at the boat launch. Jon said that the City had not put them at each of the parks as the Committee had recommended previously. Barret said that there are currently these recycling devices at each of the four city parks. Barret said he would look to see how many devices were actually in place and look at current plans for maintenance or further installations.
4. **Approval of the minutes from June.** John Kane made a motion to approve the minutes and Rose seconded. Without objection, the minutes were approved.

Business of the Committee - Ongoing

5. **Vox Pop.** None.
6. **Liaison Officer Report.** Barret said that the City won a \$100,000 grant from EBSCO for putting solar panels on the library. Jon said that it is only one of two libraries receiving this grant within the US. Barret said that public works has again looked at arborists and that a resident had contacted with questions about an arborist. Barret said that Robert Rivera had called the US Forest Service about possible help for residents. Barret said that they were told that residents can call 352-797-4100 to contact that County's Forest officer--that number is a dispatch service. Someone will come out and evaluate the trees and tell you what should be done with each of those trees. Calls must be made after 9 AM.
7. **Vox Pop.** None.
8. **Discussion of Committee Membership.** Dell said that a letter will be sent to MJ Fagouseh requesting information as to whether he would like to continue his membership with the Committee.
9. **Single Use Plastics Ban.** John Kane said he had spoken with the city attorney about Noah Denny's proposal to ban single use plastics and polystyrene. John said that he

was told that it might be unenforceable because of legal standing within the State. Jon Tietz suggested that John ask the Attorney about taxation or restriction versus a complete ban on the products.

10. Vox Pop. None.

11. Florida Solar Proposal. A representative from Solar United Neighbors of Florida was present to discuss this with the committee. David discussed how the program worked as a co-op and how the bidding process works where neighbors get together to see. David said that a co-op for Pasco County would be established. David said that a committee would take RFP bids on each project and would decide who the installers would be. The homeowners involved could then decide whether they want to have the installation completed or not. John Kane asked about the organization of the groups that are formed, which David said would be all of Pasco County. David said that he is present to seek support from the City and/or other reputable organizations within the community that would back the project in order to support the mission in this area. David provided brochures and a number of information sheets. John also asked about whether this group would help with financing and David said that is something they handle but that homeowners make their own decisions, just like with the rest of the program. David said this industry is growing very, very quickly and one of the differences in Florida is that Florida has no incentives for solar in residential applications.

12. Planters on City Poles. No action has been taken.

13. Concrete Planters on Walkways. No action has been taken.

14. Vox Pop. None.

15. Brochure for the City's Urban Agriculture Program. Jon said that he needs additional content to complete the brochure with what the Committee would like to highlight and what that should say.

16. Vox Pop. None.

17. Seed Library Update. No action taken.

18. Vox Pop. None.

19. Senate Bill 82. This bill was signed by the Governor. Dell said he went over with some others about how it might affect the Committee's efforts and that the bill essentially rids any regulation on gardens. However, it does not affect gardens included on public property as the committee has requested.

20. Vox Pop. None.

21. Fruit Tree Peninsula. Barret said that he asked the crews to go out and trim the trees and he looked at it last week and it looked like they did a good job.

22. Adopt-A-Trail Program. Barret said no action has been taken but that he has heard previously from some interested parties. He said work is ongoing. Jon suggested speaking with the County about the adopt-a-road program and see if a template could work.

23. Butterfly City Proposal. Dell said that we had previously had a phone call with a representative from the Monarch Butterfly City Project that provides signs and other support. Dell said he would like to see a motion from the Committee as a voluntary commitment without any financial or legal restrictions. Rose made a motion to endorse

the project and John Kane seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Action item for Dell to forward the proposal to the City Council.

24. Follow Up on Proposals. No action.

25. Pasco County Food Council. No action.

26. Vox Pope. None.

27. Green City Initiative. Barret said that his colleague has returned from maternity leave and that there should be movement on this project to report soon.

28. Inclusion of City Property in Urban Agriculture Ordinance. Barret said that he had discussed this with city staff simply about that locations that might be most appropriate. Chief among the considerations was access to potable water. The location being considered is at Frances Avenue park near the boat ramp on the south side of the property.

Additional Items Discussed.

29. Additional Items. John Kane suggested that he feels that the Committee should be more involved in planning around projects in the City that have an environmental impact. John mentioned a potentially upcoming project to repave alleyways that he thinks the Committee should also be consulted on. John said he also had seen a City contractor improperly using fertilizer against state laws and brought it up with the Public Works director. John also said he had an issue with the Building Department saying that permits were required for simple, minor repairs. Jon Tietz said he had also had a similar experience in the City requesting a permit for a repair that was not a modification under the City and State code.

30. Adjournment. Without objection the committee stands adjourned at 7:54 PM. The next meeting is September 9th, 2019 at 6 PM at the New Port Richey Public Library. There is also the scheduled Okra Occasion on August 12 at 6:00 PM at the New Port Richey Public Library.