

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE
City of New Port Richey
Meeting Minutes
New Port Richey City Hall
Monday - April 12, 2021 - 6:00 p.m.





**ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE
City of New Port Richey**

The Environmental Committee of the City of New Port Richey develops and endorses environmental events in the City, renders annual and special reports as members may deem advisable, and explores new environmental initiatives for the City. The ECCNPR was established in 1989 and recreated in 2011.

**Meeting Agenda
New Port Richey City Hall
Monday – April 12, 2021 – 6:00 p.m.**

ANY PERSON DESIRING TO APPEAL ANY DECISION, WITH RESPECT TO ANY MATTER CONSIDERED AT ANY MEETING OR HEARING, WILL NEED A RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS AND MAY NEED TO ENSURE THAT A VERBATIM RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS IS MADE, WHICH INCLUDES THE TESTIMONY AND EVIDENCE UPON WHICH THE APPEAL IS TO BE BASED. THE LAW DOES NOT REQUIRE TRANSCRIBED VERBATIM MINUTES; THEREFORE, THE APPLICANT MUST MAKE THE NECESSARY ARRANGEMENTS WITH A PRIVATE REPORTER (OR PRIVATE REPORTING FIRM) AND BEAR THE RESULTING EXPENSE. (F.S.286.0105)

Required text from City Clerk: Due to the Novel Coronavirus, the Environmental Committee will be conducting its meetings through the use of Communications Media Technology (CMT) until further notice. The City Council chamber will NOT be open to the public for these meetings. During the meeting, comments may be emailed to doeb@cityofnewportrichey.org or you may call (408) 650-3123, access code: 206-817-797. Please keep in mind that access to the meeting by phone may be limited and email access may be delayed. By waiting until the meeting to make a comment, you may not be able to participate in the meeting. The Environmental Committee reserves the right to proceed on any item whether public communications are delayed or otherwise obstructed.

Required text from City Clerk: For those of you attending in person, you will be required to follow social distancing guidelines. Currently, the Chamber is set up in a work session format for Council so there are a limited number of chairs available at the tables. If you have more people show up than chairs available, you may use the gallery seating but maintain a 6ft. distance between seats. For example, we have been putting Department Heads at the ends of each row and then alternating every other row. Barret will need to coordinate with Chris Fitch to have someone in the lobby to take everyone's temperatures before proceeding to the Council Chamber.

Note from Chair: As of composition of the agenda, the Chair does not have additional information on accessing the meeting via electronic technology. Original information is as follows:

Please join my meeting from your computer, tablet or smartphone.

<https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/206817797>

You can also dial in using your phone.

United States: **+1 (408) 650-3123**

Access Code: 206-817-797

Join from a video-conferencing room or system.

Dial in or type: 67.217.95.2 or inroomlink.goto.com

Meeting ID: 206 817 797

Or dial directly: 206817797@67.217.95.2 or 67.217.95.2##206817797

New to GoToMeeting? Get the app now and be ready when your first meeting starts:

<https://global.gotomeeting.com/install/206817797>

Welcome

Roll Call: Dell deChant, Committee Chair; Rose Mohr, Vice-Chair; Linda Blake, Secretary; Patty Jackson, Member; Amber Blais, member; Barrett Doe, City Liaison; Lexi Lombardi, “*member*” Member (pending approval) Lauren Haymann, “*member*” Member (pending approval) John Kane, guest Robert Rivera, guest and presenter Don Blake, guest

Vox Pop (3 minutes for members of the audience – on items not on the agenda)

Approval of Summary of Action – March 8, 2021

Approval of Agenda and request for additional items

Liaison Officer Report: Barret Doe, City Liaison -

Barret is asked to brief committee on meeting protocols and policies going forward

Note: Advice from City Liaison is requested on all items before the committee

*** Special Report and Departure from Regular Agenda**

*** Report from Public Works Director, Robert Rivera**

* Robert will share with the committee the report on the City’s Mulch Program that he has previously shared with the City Council at a Work Session on March 23, 2021.

* After Robert’s report we will have a brief Q & A session

* City Council has agreed to take no action on the Mulch Program until Committee submits an assessment of and recommendation on the program

* City Council requests that the committee view the Work Session in the context of its development of its assessment of and recommendation on the program

* Here is the link to the work session. Just click on the appropriate date.

<http://newportricheyfl.swagit.com/work-session>

Two out of five City Council members communicated to Dell that they want to keep the Yard Debris to Mulch program with just a few changes. The program has operated for over 30 years with very few changes.

Problems and possible solutions were presented in the power point noted above.

Amber asked about the possibility of expanding the existing program, hiring more people, picking up more frequently. She also asked about signs.

Rivera talked about picking up more frequently in areas that don’t have alleys or on the river walk.

The cost of the program didn’t seem to concern the City Councilmen at the Work Session.

Linda Blake asked for a more detailed description of the trash hauler picking up yard debris. Residents would have to put their yard debris in a separate trash can. Linda expressed concern about how few residents recycle. How many residents will separate their yard debris?

Concern was expressed that having the trash hauler pick up the yard debris might be very expensive.

Dell asked how many people actually go to pick up the mulch at the site? Mr. Rivera said it’s busier on the weekends, but there is no solid data on the number of pick ups.

One member of the Environmental Committee suggested that illegal dumping shouldn’t be the reason for changing the program because, in the end, the landscape debris is being composted, and that’s a good thing. Also, illegal dumping may still take place, even if we have a trash hauler picking up from residents. What about picking up food waste?

The fine for illegal dumping is \$500 or 50 days in prison or both. There is also a reward for people who turn in an illegal dumper.

The cost of the current program is very little, considering the population of the city.

Review of the discussion:

More signage to help with illegal dumping and at the Pine Hill site itself

Maybe a more frequent pick-up schedule for the people who live along the river

Better communication about the project

Concerns about the cost

Discussion about fines and rewards

Discussion about residents needing to put yard debris in trash cans.

Environmental Committee will have a special meeting to further discuss this issue: April 26.

We'll produce an assessment and an evaluation.

The cultural perception and public interest.

Recommendation #1

Keep the program the way it is but making minor changes. The current program encourages residents to participate.

Dell will send a draft to us.

Business of Committee I – On-going Projects and Events

Vox Pop (VP) for items in this section

Appointment of Auxiliary Secretary

Agenda Reviewer Report – Request for Agenda Reviewer (see also Work Session reviewer)

Update on Committee Membership, and City Policies (Barret and Dell)

* Status report on Lexi and Lauren

Green City initiative: Update and Note of submission status (Barret) – Update.

Update on inclusion of City Property in Community Garden Ordinance (from annual report/proposals over several years) (Patty & Dell)

Urban Agriculture Program (Dell)

Library Seed Lending Program - Update on the program (Patty)

Fruit Tree Peninsula (Linda) Update if any.

Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council Notes on participation/attendance at TBRPC events.

Business of Committee II - New Projects (and projects of limited duration, including annual events)

VP for items in this section

Earth Day Events: Library has brought in speakers for Earth. No local talent participating. No other local events.

Update: City Work Sessions on Projects of Relevance to Committee Request for volunteer to serve as Agenda Reviewer (see also CC Agenda reviewer)

Monarch Butterfly City (Linda and Rose)

- * Monarch City recognition event: Update? No date or program established.
- * Peace Hall could be used for an event later in the year.
- * Links <http://monarchcityusa.com/> * <http://monarchcityusa.com/members>
- * This will remain on agenda until recognition event occurs.

Promotion of Sustainability Projects (Linda, Lexi, and Dell)

- * Report on consultation with Jacob Friend
- * Actions items

Mulch Issues (Dell as per EC direction)

EC will propose the following:

The Committee recommends the City use locally-generated mulch from the City's Mulch Program on all City plantings, rather than commercial mulch. Reasons: cost, nutritional quality, environmental health (pollution, industrial manufacturing, transportation), ecological health (closed-loop, locally-sourced, native organisms), eco-cultural (financial resources extracted from community, loss of educational opportunity).

Item 2: The EC will develop an assessment of the Mulch Program and offer recommendations on the future of the program. Committee is asked to formulate general response to this topic based on Robert Rivera's report and City Council's work session.

* Chair asks for dates for a special meeting of the committee to review the assessment and recommendation.

Annual Report –presented to CC on March 16, 7:00 p.m. * Discussion of follow up and next steps. Proposals:

- 1) Promote City's Environmental Programs & Initiatives
- 2) Establish Staff Position of "Agriculture Director"
- 3) Promote Food Waste Reduction
- 4) Commit to 100% Renewable Power by 2030
- 5) Commit to Becoming a Nontoxic Community
- 6) Glass recycling initiative
- 7) Bike Trail

Events

Seasonal Events (Information only) - Note: All events supported and endorsed by Environmental Committee.

- Chair has not received formal notification that seasonal events in the city are no longer suspended. It appears, however, that events are being scheduled and occurring.

Calendar 2021-2022 (all items listed subject to reschedule or cancellation)

August 16, 2021 - Okra Occasion, 6th annual (5:00 – 8:00) (Host ENV COM)

October 10, 2021 – Sweet Potato Round-Up, 5th annual (11:00-1:00) (Host Friendship Farms and FarmNet)

January 8, 2022 - Collards Festival at Grand Gardens*, 6th annual (Host Grand Gardens/New Port Richey FarmNet)

January 21, 2022 - Arbor Day, 33rd annual (3rd Friday in January) (Host ENV COM)

March 19-26, 2022 The Florida Loquat Festival, 8th annual (Host Ecology Florida)

Meeting Schedule for 2021

"The environmental committee shall meet once every ninety (90) days unless it determines to meet more frequently." * Committee has determined it is best to meet monthly - 2nd Monday, at 6:00 p.m.

Next Meeting

May 10, 6:00 p.m. – City Council auditorium