

FEAB MEETING MINUTES
August 11, 2017
3:00 p.m.
Delchamps Room, Fairhope, AL

Attendees: Ron Allen, Gary Gover, Terry Hargroder, Nicole Love, Tony Pritchett, Rick Frederick, Jeanine Normand

City of Fairhope: Kim Burmeister, Planning and Zoning Department

Honored Guests: Sarah Fischer, Elizabeth Tonsmeire, Ben Frater

Minutes taken by: Kim Burmeister

FEAB MEETINGS/ MINUTES:

March minutes were approved as presented. June’s minutes were amended and will be presented at the September FEAB meeting for approval.

Discussion Items:

1. Everyone introduced themselves, including the honored guests
2. **“2 minute beach clean”:** Sarah Fischer is a resident/local artist interested in promoting a “2 minute beach clean-up program”. Information is attached. Artwork is licensed so minor licensing fee would apply. This would be a way to engage the community in litter pick up along our beaches, all year long. Kim asked if this is similar to the “All one Ocean” program where the City has recently installed areas along the beach where bags can be obtained for litter pick up (program maintained by Organic School). Sarah was not aware of this program. Gary thought this program might complement the existing beach clean up programs, including the All one Ocean project. Nicole agreed that this was worth looking in to. Gary referred Sarah to Sherry-Lea (City Tourism and Economic Director) who is actively involved in community projects such as this one. Jeanine thought this might be sponsored by a local civic group. Sarah will follow up with Sherry-Lea.
3. Anna Keene Miller – resident who would like to discuss **storm water laws** and regulations in Fairhope (at some point).

4. **Recent Fly Creek Sewer Spill:** Elizabeth Tonsmeire is a resident who lives on Fly Creek and also she manages the 17 Turtles kayak rental operation on Fly Creek at the City marina. She is very concerned about public notification procedures for sewer spills. She did not find out about the spill until Tuesday (8/8) and the spill likely happened Friday or Saturday (8/4 or 8/5). She said there was only one sign placed along the creek for notification. The City did social media and other media out reach but this is not enough. She said she has contacted the Mayor and the Council Chairman but feels we need more of a concern over what happened and a better way to notify the public. She said she has also contacted MAWS (Mobile's sewer board) to see how they handle sewage spills and alarms on lift stations. According to Elizabeth, MAWS has a back up generator on all sensitive area lift stations so that the emergency alarm will activate when a spill happens. Gary presented a Mobile Bay Keeper press release about the spill, attached. 266,250 gallons were reported spilled into Fly Creek on or about on 8/4/2017, and the alarm failed due to faulty blown fuse in the controller box at the lift station (Woodlands subdivision on Fly Creek). Anna said text and email alerts would help; community could sign up for text and email alerts on sewer spills and other water quality issues. Elizabeth also noted the condition of the lift station was in poor shape and the detention pond near by (Woodlands detention pond) is full of sediment. Kim said it is her understanding the City owns the detention pond and she will pass this along to Public Works for clean out consideration. She said it was last cleaned in 2016 (according to Public Works). Gary suggested FEAB draft a motion regarding this incident.

**Motion was voted on and approved (Ron made a motion to approve, Terry seconded, unanimous):*

FEAB recommends the City investigate the Woodlands lift station failure incident on 8/4 which led to sewage spill in Fly Creek, with the aim to investigate the cause of the failure and actions taken since then to prevent future occurrences. Results should be made available to the public within 30 days. Report shall include but not be limited to:

- 1. Causes of system failure*
- 2. Identify internal communications with City staff*
- 3. Identify communication mechanisms to notify the Public*
- 4. List lessons learned and corrective actions needed to prevent future occurrences.*

4. Weeks Bay Watershed Management Plan

Rick said the plan is complete and is in draft form. Link available for review on NEP website. Kim said hard copy is located in the Public Works lobby.

FEAB August 2017

Meeting adjourned at 4 p.m.

FEAB CONTACT INFORMATION:

Chairman: Mike Shelton yaupon3@gmail.com (251) 990-2995

Members:

Rick Frederick rfr frederick@mobilebaynep.com (251) 380-7941

Ron Allen ron.allen1@att.net (251) 210-4226

Shawn Graham ShawnDG12@aol.com (251) 928-5120

Jeanine Normand drjnormand@aol.com (251) 928-2284

Terry Hargroder 2groders@bellsouth.net (251) 279-8242

Tony Pritchett apritchettassoc@aol.com (251) 990-5185

Nicole Love nicolemrobinson@hotmail.com (407) 312-1362

Gary Gover govers@bellsouth.net (251) 990-8662

CITY CONTACTS:

Jimmy Conyers, City Council jimmy.conyers@fairhopeal.gov

Kim Burmeister, Planning and Zoning Department kim.burmeister@cofairhope.com

Nancy Milford, Planning and Zoning Department Nancy.milford@cofairhope.com

(251) 928-8003 City of Fairhope

Fly Creek Sewage Spill

Last weekend, a lift station near U.S. Highway 98 spilled a reported 266,250 gallons of sewage into Fly Creek. According to Fairhope Public Utilities, the cause of the spill was a blown fuse in the controller box that caused the pump to shut down while simultaneously knocking out communications and the backup alarm at the lift station.

After being notified of the spill, Program Director Cade Kistler tested the creek for bacteria associated with raw sewage at four sites along Fly Creek. Test results ranged from 110 MPN of Enterococci/100 ml to **792. This is more than 7X the EPA threshold for swimming of 104.** At the EPA threshold, approximately 3.6% of swimmers will contract a gastrointestinal illness.

Alarmingly, while on the creek we talked to several citizens who were still unaware of the spill. While we understand that this failure was caused by a series of unfortunate events, it is Mobile Baykeeper's **firm** belief that utilities must continually review their systems, determine where deficiencies exist, invest in their systems, and when a spill occurs, ensure that **immediate** and **widespread** notification takes place.

[Click here to learn more about the Fly Creek Sewage Spill in our latest Bay Blog.](#)

Did you know we're working to ensure wastewater facilities drastically improve their public notification process following a sewage spill? [Learn more here.](#)

To track sewage spills in your area, be sure to check out our "Sewage Spill Explorer" web tool. Learn more at mobilebaykeeper.org/sewer. For more information, please contact Program Director Cade Kistler at ckistler@mobilebaykeeper.org or call 251-433-4229.

