

FEAB MEETING MINUTES

April 9th, 2021

3:00 p.m.

Fairhope Civic Center Delchamps Room, Fairhope, AL

Member Attendees: Gary Gover, Jim Horner, Mike Shelton, Nigel Temple, Michelle Melton, Jennifer Foutch, Ben Frater

Members not in attendance: Jeanine Normand (warranted absence); Amy Paulson (warranted absence)

City of Fairhope: Kim Burmeister, Christina LeJeune -Planning and Zoning Department;

City Council: None

Honored Guests: None

Minutes taken by Kim Burmeister

Gary called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

Summary of meeting:

- *Approval of minutes*
- *Ethics certification*
- *Resiliency Index*
- *Environmental Studies from NOAA*
- *Upcoming meeting with the Mayor / City Leader Engagement / Triangle Property*
- *City of Fairhope Stormwater Management Plan*

FEAB Minutes:

Jim made a motion to approve the March 2021 FEAB minutes, as written. Minutes were approved unanimously.

Ethics Certifications:

Gary gave out Ethics Certificates of Completion to all in attendance, except Jim.

Resiliency Index:

Mike said the official instrument for this is a booklet that is finished but not available in print as of yet. He will acquire once available.

Jim referenced a recent resiliency article in the *Fairhope Courier* which cites the City's application for \$2 million in Hazard Mitigation grant money, which will include funding for water pumps and new generators at lift stations as well as safe rooms for City

employees. Mike said he thinks seven sewer diversion tanks have or will be installed to help with sanitary sewer overflow:



Figure 1 Fairhope Courier, 4/7/21

Environmental Studies from NOAA:

Gary said a recent GOMA newsletter presented recent studies from NOAA on climate change and other environmental issues. He said there seems to be a disconnect on having the community leaders nationwide receive this information. Nigel said scientists are not known for being outstanding communicators. He said FEAB is a perfect conduit for disseminating this information to municipal leaders. Gary said Fairhope also could benefit from better communication of scientific studies to our municipal leaders.

Michelle encouraged everyone to watch the “Kiss the Ground” documentary.

https://kisstheground.com/?gclid=EA1aIQobChM1vIWOGY357wIVXTizAB3IHQKnEAYASAAEgJ_4PD_BwE

Michelle suggested FEAB present some empirical data to the Mayor when she attends an upcoming FEAB meeting.

FEAB Meeting with Mayor / Engagement with City Leaders / Triangle property discussions:

Gary presented a draft letter from FEAB (drafted by Amy) inviting the Mayor to the May 14th meeting. Jennifer said FEAB should draft an agenda for the meeting.

Michelle said agenda should be sent beforehand. Memo needs to be shortened; it is daunting. Michelle needs to get with Hunter to finalize park designation language for the FEAB motion. She is still not sure if it would be the entire Triangle property included in the resolution or not.

Jennifer: Send bios ahead of time to Mayor so she will have time to review.

Nigel: FEAB should check with the Mayor beforehand to see which time and dates might be best for her (if not the May meeting). Make sure we ask Mayor how we can be utilized in the community and with community outreach. He suggested the draft invitation to Mayor be sent to the group to review and revise. Reword the Memo using bullet points.

Jim: Triangle property dedication as park land should be the number one priority and we need to mention this to the Mayor when the meeting happens.

Mike: FEAB should ask Mayor first off what her priorities are and how FEAB can help her achieve her priorities. Triangle bike path project has already been decided on (pending ADECA grant funding), so FEAB should move on to other suggestions. FEAB should concentrate on the preservation of the Triangle property. Ask Mayor if she wants Kim to send the FEAB minutes monthly. Mike suggested Jennifer be nominated to be the unofficial spokesperson for communication with the Mayor.

Ben: FEAB should formulate a plan to pave a path to engage better communications with Council, Mayor and City leaders. Present to mayor.

Jim: land use is a top discussion item for FEAB so engagement with Hunter Simmons, Planning and Zoning Director, should be a priority.

Mike: land use is a priority, but Mayor is over the directors, including Planning and Zoning, so ultimately, she calls the shots. FEAB should focus on one item for the Mayor, do not overwhelm her.

Gary: Recent article in *Coastal Connections* (newsletter put out by the MBNEP) discusses resiliency effort by the City including stormwater studies of Tatumville Gulley and the South Fairhope Community Action Group. He asked Kim if this is still an active group. There is a need for more community engagement like this. He is afraid there is an intentional disconnect between municipal leaders and the community to get things accomplished faster. The former utilities superintendent was active in FEAB participation. He will send Nigel the draft of the invitation so he can revise. He asked Kim to include

“Summary” information at beginning of the minutes and send this to Mayor with link to entire minutes, once approved. He asked Kim if there are still mail boxes for council at City Hall. Kim thinks boxes are still there, see Gayle (Secretary).

Kim did not know if South Fairhope Community Action Group is still meeting but will find out. She said some of the Twin Beech area is not in the City limits. Our stormwater authority does not extend to County properties.

City of Fairhope Stormwater Management Program Plan:

Kim previously sent FEAB link to the current SWMPP (April 1, 2021- March 31, 2022). SWMPP is a component and requirement of the City MS4 stormwater permit, which is signed off on by the Mayor. MS4 SWMPP and Annual Report are compiled by Planning and Zoning. Measurable Goals are responsibility of the Director of department.

Gary asked when public review is for SWMPP.

Kim: December 2021 @ Planning Commission meeting. Most recent review was January 4, 2021. Public comments are welcome any time, but the Measurable Goals stated within the document are not wish list items. Measure Goals must be complete yearly and are tracked through the MS4 Annual Report. Changes suggested for measurable goals should be addressed to director of department that would be responsible for that goal.

SWMPP and Annual Report are available online for public review, as required by ADEM:
[Fairhope Planning Publications and Forms | City of Fairhope, AL](#)

Honorable Mayor Sullivan,

On behalf of the Fairhope Environmental Advisory Board (FEAB), we would like to formally invite you to attend our regular monthly Board meeting on May 14, 2021, at 3-4pm in the Delchamps Room. If this time does not fit your schedule, please suggest an alternative and we are happy to convene a separate meeting at your convenience.

The mission of the FEAB is to provide policy advice to the City Council, Mayor, and City Departments regarding environmental matters that concern the City of Fairhope. Our vision is to serve as a trusted, scientific resource providing a local environmental perspective to policy decisions to ensure environmental matters are given full consideration in the City's decision making processes. We strive to positively affect the quality of life for all residents, their connection to our local ecosystems, and the resilience and sustainability of Fairhope as a small, world-class, city.

We would like to introduce ourselves to you, including the diverse professional expertise among our members that is available to the City. We would like to learn about your vision and have an open discussion about the various environmental priorities, initiatives, and issues that face our City. We hope the outcome of this meeting includes paving a process to engage FEAB involvement and defining how we can best serve the City in the coming years. Your FEAB members are volunteer Fairhope citizens, and are passionately and personally connected to the success of our town.

We look forward to meeting you and working with you!

Sincerely,

Gary Gover, Chaiman, FEAB

Figure 2 Draft invitation to Mayor



The City of Fairhope Makes Strides to Improve Stormwater Infrastructure

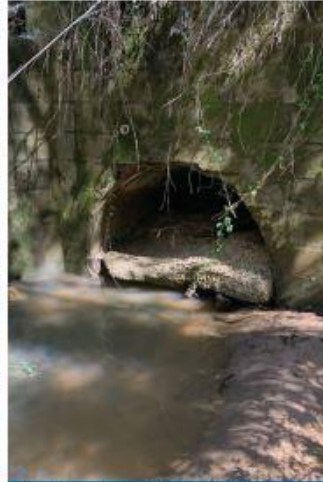
By DR. TRACIE SEMPNER, MISSISSIPPI-ALABAMA SEA GRANT CONSORTIUM

Coastal communities are at risk to natural, economic, and technological disasters. To address individual community needs and vulnerabilities, the Gulf of Mexico Alliance and the Mississippi-Alabama Sea Grant Consortium provided small grants for communities through the NOAA Regional Coastal Resilience Grant.

While significant funding may be available to communities after a disaster, there are not many existing funding opportunities for communities that want to take proactive measures to become more resilient before the next storm. This small grant program filled a real need for eight communities, as well as provided a series of "demonstration projects" at the local level we can learn from and share with communities around the Gulf.

In Alabama, the City of Fairhope received funding to address stormwater needs in a marginalized community in Tatumville Gully Watershed. The City of Fairhope is situated on the eastern shore of Mobile Bay in Baldwin County, in southwest Alabama. Fairhope's rainfall averages more than 69 inches per year. Sustainable development continues to be a priority in preserving Fairhope's natural resources. Fairhope is frequently affected by severe storms, flooding, hurricanes, and tornadoes. All have a high probability of occurring, and the City has been significantly impacted by numerous federally declared disasters.

The 2012 Stormwater Study, Annual MS4 Storm Sewer Inventory, and the City's Community Resilience Index assessments each identified the Tatumville Gully Watershed as a particularly vulnerable area. The Gully is experiencing many threats including erosion, flooding, invasive species, and many older homes on low lying parcels. In addition, it is located



Sediments compromising a Tatumville stormwater conveyance.

in a historic black community, which has the highest concentration of low-income and vulnerable residents in the City.

The City is improving stormwater management infrastructure by using low impact engineering that protects, enhances, and improves the natural coastal resources while increasing its sustainability, resilience, and preparedness. Fairhope secured the services of Mott McDonald Engineers to locate and place the stormwater infrastructure for the Watershed into the City's GIS system, with elevation and size data, and generate hydrologic/hydraulic models necessary to evaluate and predict stormwater flows/levels using current conditions as a baseline. Scenarios were run using the hydrologic and hydraulic models to determine if certain recommendations would increase or decrease stormwater flow. The Stormwater Study made recommendations for offsetting stormwater discharges by

increasing pipe size and installing new ponds to provide greater storage volume and modeled low areas as possible detention for upstream ponds.

Concurrent with the Stormwater Study, the City conducted the South Fairhope Community Action Plan with the assistance of the Gulf Coast Community Design Studio. The City has begun work to improve the Young Street Community Park as well as meet the needs of elderly citizens in the area as identified in the Plan. The Plan also addresses housing conditions and recommends strategies for making retrofits more accessible and affordable for those with limited resources. There are also recommendations for identifying key stormwater holding areas to place into conservation and a call to review current policy and enforcement mechanisms of stormwater management to reduce impacts of future development.

Other small grant awardees tackled projects at the local government level, such as developing business continuity plans, reducing erosion to protect culturally significant artifacts, enhancing habitat, and increasing capacity to respond to future hazards. Collectively, these community small grant projects have taught us that new tools are not always necessary to build resilience, smaller amounts of funding can fill a real need, and networking of communities and practitioners to collectively learn from one another builds resilience at the local level. For a complete listing of resources and deliverables, please visit: <https://gulfofmexicoalliance.org/regional-coastal-resilience/>.

Alabama current connection 13

Figure 3 Article from "Coastal Connections" Spring 2021

