

**FEAB MEETING MINUTES**

**Thursday, November 10, 2022**

**3:00 p.m. in the Public Utilities Conference Room, 555 South Section Street**

**Member Attendees:** Gary Gover, Jim Horner, Ben Frater, Amy Paulson, Nigel Temple, Rick Speight, Darrel Williams

**Members not in attendance:**

Jennifer Foutch, Nicole Love

**City of Fairhope:** Kim Burmeister -Planning and Zoning Department

**City Council:** None

**Honored Guests:** Anna Keene Miller, Keen Living; Dr. Steven Scyphers, University of South Alabama; Carole Tebay, resident of Fairhope

**Minutes taken by:** Kim Burmeister

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

**Summary of meeting:**

1. *Dr. Steven Scyphers is a resident of Fairhope, and is a ecology professor at South Alabama. He is interested in partnerships between Fairhope and the University of South Alabama. Internships may be available.*
2. *Carole Tebay is concerned about a new aggressive aquatic invasive species, floating fern, Giant Salvinia (Salvinia molesta)*
3. *Darrel is resigning from FEAB and from SALT; he has accepted a new position in Colorado, moving in December*
4. *Amy created a draft schedule for FEAB representation at upcoming Council Meetings. Non-members may also be included.*
5. *Council representation for FEAB meetings is a continued concern*
6. *Darrel encourages promotion of the Native Habitat program (SALT initiative) and the upcoming Zoom sessions from Dr. Tallamy. These sessions are free of charge. Next one is on November 14<sup>th</sup>. Citizens, city staff and elected officials are encouraged to register:  
[Bringing Nature Home - Zoom Session — Signup Sheet | SignUp.com](#)*
7. *City of Fairhope Planning and Zoning Department is researching gully protection standards, including vegetative buffers and appropriate native plantings.*
8. *Amy and Gary have been working with the Baldwin County Joint Environmental Committee (Baldwin County, Daphne, and Spanish Fort) to create a standardized wetland ordinance template. Goal is also to have standardized buffers across jurisdictional lines.*

9. Darrel and Katie (Bike & Ped Committee) assessed airport property for potential future bike trails and did not feel it was a perfect fit.
10. Jim is in contact with Babcock Ranch, FL staff regarding resilient building codes.
11. Jessica Walker with the City has resigned and will be greatly missed.

**FEAB Minutes:**

October minutes were approved as written. Amy 1<sup>st</sup>: Nigel 2<sup>nd</sup>.

**Agenda provide by Amy:**

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**AGENDA**  
**THE CITY OF FAIRHOPE ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY BOARD MONTHLY MEETING**  
**NOVEMBER 11, 2022 / 3-4 PM, PUBLIC WORKS CONFERENCE ROOM**

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1. Housekeeping (~5 min)
  - a. Last month notes – Kim
  - b. Guest Introductions
    - i. Dr. Steven Scyphers
    - ii. Ran Nisbett
2. Discussion Items (~30)
  - a. Biweekly attendance at Council Meetings and talking points document – Amy
  - b. SALT Native Habitat program – update and specifically pertaining to citizen engagement for protecting and enhancing private property to protect Fairhope's gullies – Darrel
  - c. Baldwin County wetlands protection standardization initiative – Amy
  - d. Priority Setting and Engagement, 2023: new ideas for list? – Amy
3. POC Status Reports on FEAB 2022 Priority Focus Issues and Old Action Items (~10 min)  
**LIMITED DISCUSSION ~ PASS IF NO NEWS TO SHARE**
  - a. City Liaisons
    - i. City Council – Corey, Jennifer
    - ii. Mayor – Amy, Nicole
    - iii. City Departments – Kim, Christina, Jessica
    - iv. Baldwin County Env Advisory Committees – Amy, Kim
      1. Wetlands (red clay, LID, etc.)
    - v. Fairhope Committees' Joint Projects
      1. Bike and Ped, Harbor Board, Recreation Board, Recycling Committee, Historic Preservation
  - b. Greenspace (Comprehensive LUP and COF Boards Joint Subcommittee for Greenspace) – Ben, Darrel
  - c. Eastern Shore Watershed Management Plan - Nicole
  - d. Recycling and Trash – Jennifer
4. New Business / Other Interests (< 5 min)  
**LIMITED DISCUSSION ~ PASS IF NO NEWS TO SHARE**
  - a. Stormwater – Jim / Nigel
5. Involvement Opportunities (< 5 min)
6. Wrap up (< 5 min)
  - a. New action items – review list
  - b. Next Month's meeting topics:?
  - c. Adjourn

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**2022 Successes (CLOSED-ISH PRIORITIES)**

1. Clean Marina Project – Nicole, Rick, Jim, Gary
  2. Community Resiliency Index – Nicole (January)
  3. Greenspace: Triangle Property – Ben
  4. Engagement / Introduction to Fairhope Committees
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**Tabled Until Further Notice:**

1. Ben to arrange onsite field trip with FEAB, Mayor, City Council, other committees, and Auburn Univ Extension at Dyas to discuss use of property – to occur in October.
2. Organize special discussion with Eric Cortinas re: wetland charette details and planning (To occur after products are available from special wetlands collaboration project from Baldwin County Coalition of EABs. Note that LID, Red Clay will follow as priorities after wetlands and streams.)
3. City Website: review for adequacy/update for wetlands and other outreach materials – Nicole and Darrel
4. Future Topics / Sustainable Community Initiatives
  - a. Microplastics – Kim
  - b. Native Planting – Darrel
  - c. School Buses: \$500 million in Federal funding to replace diesel school buses with electric and low-emission. Recommended to Baldwin County Public Schools Superintendent and our district member of the School Board. - Gary
  - d. Energy Conservation Initiatives (climate change action) – Anna, Gary
    - i. Green building codes, incentives, and stretch goals
    - ii. Solar panel roadblocks
    - iii. Fairhope Green Neighborhood designation – stretch goals incentive?
  - e. Alternative pavements (streets, sidewalks, bike paths)
  - f. Living Shorelines – Gary, Nigel
  - g. Engage partnerships - Gary
    - i. Master Gardeners
    - ii. ACF Green Coast Council
    - iii. Fairhope Public Utilities
  - h. Habitat enhancements for Winn Dixie pond (Nigel)

***FEAB Vision:** 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 sustainment of Fairhope as a small, yet world-class, city.*

***FEAB Role:** the FEAB is dedicated to increasing awareness of environmental issues, offering recommendations to City administrators, and providing state-of-the-science consultation in the implementation of sustainable solutions.*

**Guest Introductions:**

**Dr. Steven B. Scyphers** is an Associate Professor in the School of Marine & Environmental Sciences and Director of the Center for Socio-Environmental Resiliency at the University of South Alabama, and he is a Senior Marine Scientist II at the Dauphin Island Sea Lab. Steven's research integrates ecology and sociology to understand and overcome major challenges facing coastal communities. His work focuses on sustainable coastal fisheries, shoreline development, ecosystem restoration, and climate adaptation. He lives in Fairhope with his wife Mallory and daughters Hadley and Maren.

Dr. Steven Scyphers has recently moved to Fairhope. He is interested in partnership opportunities between the City of Fairhope and USA, including internships (paid or unpaid). He has students seeking internships and projects.

Amy said FEAB could utilize his expertise and may include him on the Council session attendance roster in the future, if he is interested in doing that. She encouraged him to attend FEAB meetings.

Carole Tebay is a Fairhope resident who would like to raise awareness regarding a new invasive aquatic species fern, *Silvinia molesta*. She advised that this plant should be removed immediately to prevent smothering out other aquatic plants and causing oxygen depletion. Kim will share with Fairhope's Landscaping and Quail Creek Golf Course staff, so they will recognize it as a potential threat if seen in the bay, ponds and streams.

[| Center for Aquatic and Invasive Plants | University of Florida, IFAS \(ufl.edu\)](#)

**Council / Planning Commission Attendance:**

Amy presented a draft schedule, with talking points, for FEAB representation at Council Meetings. She also has Anna Miller, an attending non-member, on the roster. Amy suggested that non-members, such as Anna, might be used for tasks such as this, depending on the area of authority. Non-members, as well as anyone (public) is invited and encouraged to attend FEAB meetings. However, non-members attendance does not count towards FEAB meeting quorum per Kim. Ben is in favor of utilizing non-members with specific areas of expertise. Amy encouraged anyone who is interested in participating with FEAB as an active non-member, please submit bio to her.

**SCHEDULE AND TALKING POINTS**  
**THE CITY OF FAIRHOPE ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY BOARD**  
**ATTENDANCE AT BI-MONTHLY CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS: 2022 – 2023**

**Attendance Schedule**

Date – Second and Fourth Monday of Every Month		FEAB Assigned Representative
Second	December	Jennifer Foutch
Fourth	December	Gary Gover
Second	January	Jim Horner
Fourth	January	Amy Paulson
Second	February	Nicole Love
Fourth	February	Darrell Williams
Second	March	Nigel Temple
Fourth	March	Ben Frater
Second	April	Rick Speight
Fourth	April	Anna Miller*
Second	May	Jennifer Foutch
Fourth	May	Gary Gover
Second	June	Jim Horner
Fourth	June	Amy Paulson
Second	July	Nicole Love
Fourth	July	Darrell Williams
Second	August	Nigel Temple
Fourth	August	Ben Frater
Second	September	Rick Speight
Fourth	September	Anna Miller*
Second	October	Jennifer Foutch
Fourth	October	Gary Gover
Second	November	Jim Horner
Fourth	November	Ben Frater
Second	December	Nicole Love
Fourth	December	Darrell Williams

\*Anna is not an official voting member of FEAB and therefore cannot speak directly for the Board. However, she is a subject matter expert for green building and should be engaged as relevant.

**Procedure / Purpose:**

- Before Council meeting:
  - **PREPARE**
    - Get on City email list to receive agenda before meeting (contact the City Clerk's office at 251-928-2136 or [lisa.hanks@fairhopeal.gov](mailto:lisa.hanks@fairhopeal.gov)). Otherwise, check agenda at COF website as soon as it is available: <https://www.fairhopeal.gov/government/agendas-minutes/city-council-4032>
    - *If agenda includes any discussion on FEAB 2022 priority focal issues, contact FEAB issue POC to assess relevance of swapping attendance (see talking points below)*
    - Assigned FEAB representative attends on their day OR swaps with another *in advance*. It is assigned representative's responsibility to find a replacement.
    - Bring most recent version of messaging sheet / talking points to meeting.
- At Council meeting:
  - **OBSERVE** discussion, including:
    - Any topics identified as 2022 FEAB Priority Focal issues
    - New environmental issues faced by City
    - Any other issues that may have indirect impacts on the environment but were not identified as such or otherwise highlighted during Council discussion.
  - **PARTICIPATE**. The purposes of FEAB regular attendance are:
    - *to support Councilman Martin with environmental expertise*
    - *to speak on 2022 FEAB priority issues as needed (see talking points below)*
    - *to alert Council and City where environmental issues may be relevant and FEAB could further assist*
    - *to thank / acknowledge / support Councilmembers when appropriate environmental action is taken or decision is made*
    - *to inform FEAB of relevant meeting details*
  - **REPORT**. Communicate back to FEAB:
    - Be prepared to present short discussion of relevant items at next FEAB monthly meeting.
    - If immediate response was requested on a given issue, email group directly or contact Amy to help identify POC and communicate issue / next steps.

**Talking Points / Messages:**

**Greenspace Establishment and Management**

- **POC:** Ben Frater
- **INTENT:** City of Fairhope establishes a network of protected greenspace by 1) selecting natural areas to maintain, restore, or enhance AND 2) planning and maintaining areas for compatible designated natural outcomes and recreational uses.
  - Many natural area goals are compatible with multi-use recreation goals IF the area is well planned and appropriately maintained.
  - Mixed use is vulnerable to failure without proper planning – resource will degrade, upkeep will be costly or ineffective (i.e., erosion, weeds, growth inhibition).
  - FEAB has a joint subcommittee with the bike and ped board to help identify new parcels to recommend.
  - There are a variety of means to acquire, control, or otherwise use private property for public use (i.e., purchase and City-maintenance is not always required). FEAB can provide further detail as needed.
  - World-class cities all have intentionally interconnected green spaces – increases quality of life and property values.
- **PRIOR FEAB INVOLVEMENT:**
  - *Dyas Triangle* – we assisted the Council and Mayor by providing deed research, recommended deed restrictions, and provided several Resolutions regarding possible ways forward for planning and design.
  - *Colony Park* – we have provided Council and Mayor with previous Management Plan (Single Tax 2010) and Resolutions regarding recommended ways forward for planning and design.
  - *Land Use Plan* – we provided an extensive, detailed recommendation letter to the City and the LUP consultant planning team. We have several members serve on the LUP Steering Committee, and most of the FEAB attended at least one planning workshop, charette, or presentation.

**Fairhope Wetlands Protection**

- **POC:** Amy Paulson
- **INTENT:** City of Fairhope is empowered and equipped to protect local watershed resources.
  - FEAB is working with Daphne and the County to standardize minimum wetlands protection and best management practice language across the County (draft language expected by the end-2022).
  - FEAB is available to assist the review and adoption of revised COF wetlands ordinance and subdivision ordinance.

**Community Resiliency Index**

- **POC:** Nicole Love
- **INTENT:** The City of Fairhope rescors the 2017 Community Resilience Index (CRI) in light of 2020 hurricane season and other upgrades and improvements.
  - The CRI is a tool to showcase improvements made and identify remaining challenges that could be corrected in advance of the next major storm.
  - The CRI is a Mississippi Sea Grant-facilitated event where City employees and other knowledgeable officials evaluate **XXXXX**.

Action plan: Amy asked everyone to read through the schedule and talking points. Offer comments and suggests directly to Amy within 10 days.

**Comprehensive Land Use Plan:**

Ben is on the Steering Committee for the comp plan as the FEAB representative. He said there has been no update or information to share.

**SALT Native Habitat Program**

Darrel discussed the Native Habitat program and is encouraging everyone to promote this. He also mentioned Dr. Tallamy's Zoom session on this subject, with another Zoom session coming up November 14<sup>th</sup>. Registration is free.

Amy said the use of native vegetation and having a list of recommended plantings would be an important part of gully protection. Kim confirmed that the City of Fairhope is researching gully protection standards and this program will greatly benefit that initiative.



# SALT Native Habitat Certification Checklist

Transform your yard, patio or balcony into a habitat to encourage biodiversity in our neighborhood landscapes.

**Receive your Native Habitat Certification from the South Alabama Land Trust.**

Score your landscape using the chart below. If your space meets the minimum required sustainable habitat practices in every category, send your results to [salt@southalabamalandtrust.org](mailto:salt@southalabamalandtrust.org), or mail your checklist to 11401 US HWY 98, Fairhope, AL 36532 to receive your certification.



Name \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

What is the size of your yard/patio/balcony?     ≤ ¼ acre     ¼ - 1 acres     ≥ 1 acre

# SALT Native Habitat Program

## Guidelines and Resources

### Step 1: Assess your yard

**Score your landscape using the checklist.**  
Start by identifying the native plants that are currently in your yard. Do they provide Food, Cover, or Breeding Places? **Only Native Plants can contribute to the checklist.** Do you have a source of Water in your landscape? Are you currently using any Sustainable Practices on the checklist?

Once you have completed the checklist for your yard or landscape, **make a list of what checks are missing.** This will tell you how to begin transforming your yard into a habitat. For help identifying plants, you can use apps like [PictureThis](#) or [iNaturalist](#), call your local [Master Gardener helpline](#), or contact SALT at 251-990-5004.

### Step 2: Add native plants

Now that you know a little bit more about what is in your yard, you may have noticed that many common landscape plants are not native to our area, or worse, invasive. **Work towards a goal of at least 70% native plants in your habitat and the elimination of invasive species that displace native plants and provide no benefit to wildlife.** For most people, that will be a big transition, but the most important thing is to get started! As you add native plants, the birds, butterflies, and other life that will be drawn to your yard will provide plenty of encouragement to keep going. The following native plants are available at local nurseries. Scan the QR code or [visit our website](#) for a more extensive list.

### Examples of native plants

Blue-eyed Grass	evergreen perennial wildflower	🌻📍❤️	Wax Myrtle	evergreen shrub	🌻❤️
Muhly Grass	grass	🌻📍❤️	Winterberry	deciduous shrub	🌻📍❤️
River Oats	grass	🌻📍❤️	Florida Anise	fragrant evergreen shrub	🌻📍🏠
Native Milkweed	herbaceous perennial	🌻❤️	Sweet Pepperbush	narrow, deciduous shrub	🌻❤️
Narrow leaf Sunflower	perennial wildflower	🌻❤️	Serviceberry	large shrub, small tree	🌻📍🏠
Sweet Goldenrod	evergreen perennial wildflower	🌻❤️	American Snowbell	deciduous shrub, small tree	🌻📍🏠❤️
Scarlet Rose Mallow	herbaceous perennial	🌻❤️	Witch Hazel	large deciduous shrub	🌻❤️
Purple Coneflower	herbaceous perennial	🌻❤️	Paw Paw	small fruit tree	🌻❤️
Stokes Aster	herbaceous perennial	🌻❤️	Native Persimmon	low, shrubby fruit tree	🌻❤️
Climbing Aster	perennial wildflower	🌻❤️	Pecan	large deciduous tree	🌻❤️
Coral Honeysuckle	evergreen vine	🌻❤️	Live Oak	large, keystone species	🌻📍🏠❤️
Maypop/Passionflower	herbaceous flowering vine	🌻❤️	Eastern Red Cedar	evergreen, coniferous tree	🌻📍🏠❤️
American Wisteria	deciduous vine	🌻❤️	Swamp Chestnut Oak	large deciduous tree	🌻📍🏠❤️
Saw Palmetto	shrub-sized palm	🌻📍🏠	Spruce Pine	large evergreen tree	🌻📍🏠❤️
American Beauty Berry	large shrub	🌻📍🏠			

🌻 Food   📍 Cover   ❤️ Breeding Places



For a more extensive list of native plants, and links to resources, scan the QR code, or visit [southalabamalandtrust.org/native-habitat-program/](https://southalabamalandtrust.org/native-habitat-program/)

### Step 3: Maintain your habitat

Native Plants are adapted to our climate and can thrive without additional irrigation or fertilizers once they are established. While lower maintenance than a traditional yard, your habitat will need some maintenance to look its best. **Adopting sustainable landscape maintenance practices can significantly reduce maintenance costs, conserve resources, and protect our waterways from polluted runoff.**

Learn more about sustainable practices to help your habitat thrive with these resources

- [Alabama Smart Yards](#)
- [Greener by the Yard](#)
- [Homegrown National Park](#)
- [National Wildlife Federation Native Plant Finder](#)

**Wetland Ordinance / Subdivision Regulation updates:**

Amy and Gary are working with the Baldwin County Joint EAC on drafting language for standard wetland regulations across jurisdictional lines. This will hopefully include standard buffer languages. Proposals so far (drafted by Ashely Campbell) include buffers set at 50' for stream, 30' for jurisdictional wetlands and 5' for other stormwater conveyance areas including non-jurisdictional wetlands. Fairhope's current buffers listed in the Subdivision Regulations are listed as 30' for wetlands (jurisdictional and non-jurisdictional) and 50' for stream buffers. Non-subdivision properties in Fairhope must abide by a 20' wetland buffer, according to the current Fairhope wetland ordinance. This also covers jurisdictional as well as non-jurisdictional wetlands.

**FEAB subcommittee on greenspace:**

Darrel and Katie (Bike Ped Committee) walked an undeveloped parcel owned by the airport authority. He did not feel it was suitable for a bike path unless it was heavily restored. Currently the property is covered in invasive privet.

**Council Representation**

Jim is concerned about the lack of council representation with FEAB. He is wondering if Council in general is aware of FEABs agenda items and concerns. Ben stated FEAB should move forward as best as we can with agenda items. Kim sends Mayor and Councilman Corey the meeting "summary", usually on the Monday after FEAB meetings, so that if there is a council meeting, Mayor and Corey will be aware of discussion items.

**Resiliency**

Jim is in contact with staff at Babcock Ranch, which is a very large home development NE of Ft. Myers, FL. It was barely damaged by Hurricane Ian. He is working to obtain building codes from them. Amy asked Jim to share any information with Anna Keen Miller.

**FEAB Upcoming Vacancy**

Darrel is resigning from FEAB. He has taken another position and will be moving to Colorado in December. This will likely be his last FEAB meeting. This will open a vacancy for FEAB.

**Jessica Walker, Special Projects Manager**

Jim announced Jessica's resignation from the City of Fairhope, effective November 30<sup>th</sup>, 2022. She has been an excellent resource for FEAB.

Meeting adjourned at 4 p.m.

Next meeting is Friday, December 9<sup>th</sup> @ 3 p.m. @ Public Utilities Conference room.

**FEAB CONTACT INFORMATION:**

Chairman:

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