

FEAB April 14th , 2023

FEAB MEETING MINUTES

April 14th, 2023

3:00 p.m. in the Fairhope Public Library, Board Room

Member Attendees: Gary Gover, Amy Paulson, Nigel Temple, Jennifer Foutch, Nicole Love, Steven Scyphers, Anna Miller, Jim Horner, Ben Frater

Members not in attendance:

None

City of Fairhope: Nicole Love- *New* Grant Coordinator; Kim Burmeister -Planning and Zoning Department; Jamie Rollins, Public Works Department Horticulturist

City Council: None

Honored Guests: Carole Tebay & Carl Couret (Active participants); Sarah Bogdanovich; Cynthia Rush

Minutes taken by: Kim Burmeister

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

FEAB Minutes:

March minutes were approved as written. Jim 1st , Nigel 2nd, unanimous.

Membership:

Nicole has resigned from FEAB , as she now works for the City of Fairhope.

Motion: Carole was nominated for membership by Amy; 2nd by Nigel>. Unanimous

Butterfly Garden and Pollinator Habitats / Native Plantings

Amy introduced Jamie, who attended to answer questions about the city landscape practices, specifically regarding pollinator habitats.

Kim: The City has a natural butterfly habitat area on South Mobile Street, including a kiosk with butterfly identification and plant information. She said this area has typically been left unmaintained by the City except for possible invasive removal. About 15 years ago, Fred Nations identified pollinators present at this site, including non-native but naturalized lantana. This is when the butterfly garden area was created.

Jamie said city landscape staff recently mowed this bluff area, prompting complaints on city mowing of pollinator plants.

Kim said Mayor would like FEAB to work with Jamie/ Landscape dept. with education of pollinator plants, for preservation of the butterfly garden and then other park areas.

Kim said the recent pollinator plant project which was spearheaded by USFW and ACF was not awarded to Baldwin County, but it's her understanding there may be other opportunities for pollinator plantings in Fairhope. Park management might also accomplish this (preserving what's already there and removing invasives).

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Jamie said he and his landscape crew work for Public Works and maintain right of way beds, most city properties (including beach front parks) but he does not maintain landscape in other parks. Other parks (sports parks) are maintained by Pat White's recreation dept. crew.

Jamie asked FEAB to consider maintenance (who will maintain) when proposing invasive removals and plantings of pollinator beds. City landscape dept. does not typically remove kudzu. There was a fruit and sensory garden at the library which failed because it was not maintained. Consider involving volunteer groups for maintenance needs.

Ben said there is a species of milkweed growing in Knoll Park.

Nigel suggested church group or other group be approached to assist with maintenance (of butterfly garden, kudzu removal in parks, etc.).

Steven suggested combining Coastal Clean Up with invasive removal or having a separate event just for invasive (mainly kudzu) removal along the park bluffs.

Nigel is concerned about liability of having volunteers working on city bluffs.

Jamie mentioned stabilization; if we remove kudzu and other invasives, is there a plan to stabilize so that there will be no sediment loss?

Jennifer suggested the Mike Ford Tennis Center at the corner of Young and Morphy as a potential site for pollinator garden.

Gary asked Jamie if public works landscape dept. could clean up around the community garden on S. Summit near St. James.

Sarah will get in touch with Jamie with ideas on city composting.

Action Plan: FEAB's subcommittee Native Planting team (Ben, Carl, Carole) plus Steven will work with Fairhope landscape crew (Jamie) to develop an education plan and identify local pollinators to be protected, and invasives to be removed (if feasible), specifically in the butterfly garden area to start with. Carole has Jamie's email address and will follow up with him. First goal is to have everyone meet on site (South Mobile Street north of Orange Street – Butterfly Garden) to discuss further action.

Carole recommends city remove "*Ulmus parvifolia*, Chinese Elm" from the list of "Required Understory Trees", Tree and Landscape Ordinance, Section 20.5-14. Chinese elm is now on the Alabama Invasive Tree inventory. Ginko is another non-native on the list, however it is not invasive.

<https://www.aces.edu/blog/topics/forestry-wildlife/invasive-plants-exotic-beauties-can-have-devastating-results/>

Jim introduced a motion to remove Chinese Elm from the list. Nigel 2nd the motion. Unanimous.

Motion: FEAB recommends city of Fairhope remove "Chinese Elm" from the list of "Required Understory Trees", Section 20.5-14.

https://library.municode.com/al/fairhope/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=COOR_CH20.5TRLA_S20.5-4GELARE

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Giant Salvinia

Carole previously submitted a PSA for FEAB to consider recommending for Fairhope social media. It is an invasive aquatic nuisance plant.

Steven suggested FEAB discuss with Weeks Bay to get their opinion. He said Ben Rains is aware of it but does not think it's a freshwater threat at this time.

Amy will recirculate.

Fairhope Outdoor Classrooms

Amy suggested Brinkley Hutchinson and Rebecca Bryant as key contacts for outdoor classrooms. Fairhope West is currently moving forward with the concept but would like assistance from FEAB.

FHS Environmental Club Project, Beach Garbage lids

Jennifer is in contact with the student overseeing this project, painting wooden lids for the open garbage barrels at the beach. The art will be marine themed, with plans for the students to paint this weekend.

Jennifer said nothing is needed from FEAB. Christina has requested pictures of the team painting and also would like to get pictures afterwards of the team or a student with garbage can with lid installed. Lids will prevent trash from blowing.

FEAB Priorities

Amy thinks outreach with other boards (Park and Recreation, Bike & Ped and Harbor Board) has been successful and suggested members keep this up.

Carole suggested Tree Committee be on the list for outreach from FEAB.

City Budget

Gary reminded everyone now is a good time to make recommendations for City budget, which is due in October.

Stretch Building Codes

Anna asked if there was anything Mayor would specifically like FEAB to draft regarding stretch codes. She asked Kim if she would ask Mayor for clarification on comment from March's meeting. Kim will check with Mayor and see if there is any specific items Mayor may want to see other than a general draft of stretch code suggestions FEAB would like City to encourage. **Action Plan: Kim will check with Mayor**

Meeting adjourned at 4 p.m. Next meeting: May 12th, 3 p.m. @ Fairhope Library

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FEAB CONTACT INFORMATION:

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