

FEAB October 13, 2023

## **FEAB MEETING MINUTES**

**October 13<sup>th</sup>, 2023**

**Fairhope Public Library, Board Room**

**Member Attendees:** Gary Gover, Anna Miller, Jim Horner, Ben Frater, Carole Tebay, Jennifer Foutch, Amy Paulson, Steven Scyphers

**Members not in attendance:**

Nigel Temple, excused absence.

**City of Fairhope:** Daryl Morefield, Water/Sewer Superintendent; Nicole Love, Grant Writer; Kim Burmeister, Christina LeJeune -Planning and Zoning Department

**City Council:** None

**Honored Guests:** Jessie Patterson (Fairhope Single Tax), Sarah Chandler (corporate sustainability professional), Cynthia Rush (writer), Sara Bogdanovich (compost company), Lisa Smith (Get it Goated)

**Minutes taken by:** Kim Burmeister

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

**FEAB Minutes:**

September minutes were approved as amended. Steven (first); Jim (2<sup>nd</sup>) Unanimous approval.

**November FEAB meeting:**

City offices will be closed on November 10<sup>th</sup> for Veteran's Day. FEAB's meeting for November was therefore changed to Thursday, November 9<sup>th</sup>, pending Library confirmation on availability.

**Summary of meeting:**

1. Amy provided a Water Conservation Strategy draft to Corey, to be given to the Mayor by Corey.
2. FEAB is supportive of a city water reclamation feasibility study.
3. FEAB is excited about the posting of a position for Urban Forester and specifically for his/her role in the implementation of park management plans.
4. Joint Environmental Advisory Board – draft ordinances for wetlands, erosion control and red soil & clay are complete.
5. Nicole announced an upcoming environmental page on Fairhope's website which will round up all environmental information for Fairhope, including links to the FEAB page.
6. Nicole encouraged FEAB to present articles or items of interest to her, for consideration/ inclusion on the Fairhope website, FEAB link and or Fairhope Facebook page.
7. Upcoming Fly Creek AL-DOT culvert project could potentially complete a Fly Creek Watershed Study action plan from 2013 if it includes stream channel restoration.
8. *Get it Goated* is a goat brush clearing service from Robertsdale, for natural brush cutting and removal. Butterfly Garden on S. Mobile Street is one area where this might be beneficial.
9. Nicole is presenting a potential Butterfly Garden grant for invasive plant removal at an upcoming Council Meeting, October 23.

10. Outdoor classrooms – FEAB is offering assistance for any school that would like their help to establish an outdoor classroom.
11. Plastic Bag Reduction Campaign – FEAB is considering how they can help; Jim has already contacted a few grocery store chains to get information from corporate. Jr. Council not interested at this time.

**Agenda from Amy:**

<hr/> <b>AGENDA</b> <hr/> <b>THE CITY OF FAIRHOPE ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY BOARD MONTHLY MEETING</b> <hr/> <b>OCTOBER 13, 2023 / 3-4 PM, LIBRARY</b> <hr/>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. <b>Housekeeping</b> (&lt; 5 min)<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. Last month minutes – Kim</li><li>b. November Meeting (Veteran’s Day): reschedule to 11/9 at 8:30 am or 3:30pm?</li></ol></li><li>2. <b>FYI / Completed Items</b> (&lt; 5 min)<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. <i>Water Conservation Strategy Recommendations</i> submitted to Corey/Mayor - Amy</li><li>b. Scope for <i>Greywater Reuse Feasibility Study</i> submitted to Corey/Mayor - Nigel / Nicole</li><li>c. <i>Baldwin County Draft Ordinances: Red Soil and Clay, Wetlands, Good Neighbor Stormwater, and Construction</i> submitted to Ashley Campbell - Amy</li></ol></li><li>3. <b>Priority Issues / Action Item Follow up</b> (~35 min)<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. COF/FEAB Webpage - Nicole</li><li>b. Fly Creek - US 98 culvert, water quality study - Nicole</li><li>c. Butterfly Garden - Nicole / Ben, Carole</li><li>d. FWES Outdoor classrooms - Carole, Sarah C, Gary, Sarah B</li><li>e. Facebook Posts - Sarah, Nigel</li><li>f. Council Meeting Report - Steven, Carole</li><li>g. Education signs - Steven, Nicole</li><li>h. Single-use plastic bags / partnership with FHS <u>adn</u> Jr City Council - Kim</li></ol></li><li>4. <b>New Items</b><ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. Fairhope Airport - Gary, Ben, Nigel, Amy<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>i. Management of Waterhole Branch wetlands (possibly operated as wetland mitigation bank, but may need <u>new management plan</u>). POCs - Jack Burrell, Atty Josh Myrick)</li><li>ii. Use of adjacent open space.</li><li>iii. Airport master plan/long-range planning</li></ol></li></ol></li><li>5. <b>Wrap up</b> (5 min)<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. Involvement &amp; Education Opportunities:<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>i. <i>AL Water Watch Monitoring Training</i> – Fairhope, 10/20 9-3. FREE, Register by 10/1</li></ol></li><li>b. Nov City Council Working Meeting Representatives:</li><li>c. Nov/Dec Agenda Items: TBD</li><li>d. Nov/Dec FEAB Guest Speakers: Special presentation, WMP presentation(?)</li></ol></li></ol>

## MEETING REFERENCE

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***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.*

### FEAB 2023 Priority Initiatives & Action Item List

6. Natural/Native Habitat Solutions
  - a. Native Planting / Invasives Outreach – Carole, Ben, Carl
    - i. Review / suggest revisions to COF approved planting list
  - b. Shorelines, Streambanks, Gullies – Nigel, Stephen
    - i. Interns - Stephen
  - c. Greenspace Establishment and Management – Ben, Carl
7. Resilient and Efficient Buildings / Stretch Goals – Anna, Jennifer
8. Trash and Recycling – Jennifer, County MERF liaison
9. City Planning Efforts
  - a. Eastern Shore Watershed Management Plan – Amy / Kim
  - b. COF Land Use Plan Steering Committee – Ben
  - c. Dyas Triangle Park Steering Committee – Nigel
  - d. Community Resiliency Index – [Nicole]
  - e. Clean Marina – Amy / Steven
10. Outreach: Facebook Posts / COF Website development – Nigel, Sarah, Gary, Nicole
11. City Liaisons
  - a. Mayor – COF staff
  - b. City Council – [biweekly report highlights] / Corey
  - c. City Departments – Kim, Christina, Nicole, Anna
12. Other Boards Liaisons
  - a. Fairhope Committees: Bike and Ped (Carl/Carole/Gary), Harbor Board (Amy/Steven), Parks and Recreation Board (Ben), Recycling Committee (Jennifer), Historic Preservation (Ben), Tree Committee (Carole & Gary)
    - i. Attend monthly meetings to discuss priorities / liaison
  - b. Local Nonprofits: SALT (Carole), ACF (Gary?), Baldwin County Master Gardeners (Carole), Nature Connect (Carole)
  - c. Baldwin County: Env Advisory Committee (Kim), BC EAB Coalition (Amy/Gary)

## MEETING IN-PROCESS NOTES / DRAFTS / READ-AHEADS

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Single use plastics references:

<https://plasticmartcities.org/public-awareness/>

<https://www.sei.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/210216-caldwell-ale-plastics-report-with-annex-210211.pdf>

<https://seagrant.psu.edu/sites/default/files/Lesson:%20for%20NIE%20and%203%205Gyres:ALLACTIVITIESPlasticPolluti onCurriculum.pdf>

Goats for Kudzu Control:

[Goat pics \(getitposted.com\)](#)

**Water Conservation Strategy:**

Amy sent Corey a compilation of FEABs recommended water conservation strategy/resolution:

**FEAB Water Conservation Recommendations**

Whereas...

- the City of Fairhope has experienced extreme summer temperatures (>95 degrees F) for multiple consecutive days in 2023, and
- the City's water supply (groundwater wells and storage) reached emergency minimum levels triggering mandatory water restrictions, and
- the City's water demand is primarily due to excessive draw for residential irrigation, and
- despite upcoming additional groundwater well and storage projects, the City's water supply is projected to remain vulnerable to the compounding effects of climate variability and rapidly increasing regional development, and
- clean water is a limited resource

the FEAB recommends the following actions...

- 1) **The Fairhope Mayor and City Council pass a Resolution to become a water smart city, focused on the identification and implementation of common-sense water conservation methods.** This official acknowledgement would have the effect of unifying the Council on a common goal before the People of Fairhope, who would identify that money spent toward this goal was purposeful and intentional for long-term resource planning. Furthermore, this Resolution may improve the City's ability to obtain water-conservation-focused grant money.
- 2) **In the scope of services for the next round of analysis pertaining to City water infrastructure, particularly at the WWTP, the Fairhope Mayor and City Council include a high-level engineering feasibility analysis for the reuse of treated WWTP effluent.** The scope should include the possibility and ROM cost for a City-wide greywater irrigation system, the identification of pilot projects, scaled infrastructure, or other options that would help reuse or conserve City water resources.

In addition to these end-of-pipe methods and to affect more immediate change in the interim between this study and implementation of its findings:

- 3) **The Fairhope Mayor and City Council explore and implement a spectrum of voluntary and mandatory water demand-reducing tools.** Examples of voluntary tools include but are not limited to incentivizing best management practices and stretch goals for developers to choose water conserving practices and fixtures or the development of reuse technology in individual construction projects. Incentives can be relief from a portion of fees or tax burdens, but can also take the form of relaxed footprint requirements or expedited permitting response. Examples of mandatory tools include but are not limited to required building construction practices and persistent community irrigation schedules. There is no one single fix that will suffice to ensure long-term reliability of our local water resources, but a combination of several has a good chance of making a difference.

The FEAB is providing scope language in a separate document to detail the recommendation outlined in #2, and can likewise provide specific language that has been effective in other states and municipalities pertaining to #3. Please let me know how the FEAB can be of further service to the City on this matter.

Thank You for Your Attention-

Amy Paulson, Chairperson and as Resolved by the Fairhope Environmental Advisory Board

Daryl: Rain bird is one type of irrigation sensor that can be used and promoted for water conservation.

Nicole: Encouraged FEAB to consider water conservation campaign and outreach strategies, such as a "Water Wise Resolution" language. Rain barrel workshop (with MS4 partners) would be one event which could help kick off such a campaign.

Amy: supports water conservation mandates, even when not in a drought.

Jim: asked Daryl if there was a correlation between low water pressure and water conservation. There is not.

### **Greywater Reuse Feasibility Study**

Corey has suggested FEAB provide a guidance document for greywater reuse options. Nigel created a scope of work so that City can consider contracting out for the study. Daryl made some revisions to what Nicole and Nigel drafted. Daryl updated the FEAB that what we are talking about is not actually greywater, but “reclaimed” water. Greywater is household waste that comes from showers, laundry water, etc. This is specific to households. Reclaimed water is the sewer water that is sent to a sewage treatment plant, cleaned and sent back out in the purple pipes.

### **Joint Environmental Advisory Committee**

Draft ordinance revision suggestions have been sent to Ashley Campbell with Baldwin County. Jim: 5’ buffers are not sustainable. Minimum should be 30’. Amy said this is in the revisions. Amy needs help with work on the Joint EAB if anyone is interested. Currently, she and Gary are the FEAB representatives for the Joint EAC.

### **City of Fairhope Job Opening: Urban Forester**

Nicole: City is looking for an Urban Forester to manage Fairhope’s natural parks, including the Triangle Park, Colony Park and Knoll Park.

Amy: Position announcement mentions this position as having the authority to implement park management plans, which has been a priority action item for FEAB.

### **City of Fairhope Environmental Page**

Nicole: She is drafting information for an environmental page for Fairhope. Currently, most of the environmental information is on the Planning and Zoning Department page. The Environmental Page will be a resource to contain all city environmental information, including a link to the FEAB page. If FEAB would like to have any information put on the environmental page or specifically the FEAB page, send draft information to Nicole. She can have IT staff place it on line but it needs to go through her first. Same protocol for the City of Fairhope Facebook page. FEAB can recommend and draft article items: (draft and send to Nicole for review).

Amy said FEAB might be interested in having their own Facebook page. Nicole encouraged FEAB to recommend / draft items for the City of Fairhope page. A separate Facebook page would not be sanctioned by the City of Fairhope.

### **Fly Creek / AL-DOT Culvert project**

Nicole: She is involved in discussions with AL-DOT regarding upcoming culvert and streambank restoration efforts, in conjunction with Fly Creek restoration work pending at the Triangle property on Fly Creek.

Kim: The Fly Creek Watershed Study of 2013 named the Highway 98 @ Fly Creek culvert retrofit to restore the natural creek channel as a priority action item. She hopes this work will include the retrofit.

### **Butterfly Garden on South Mobile Street**

Carol asked Lisa Smith about goats to control invasive species such as kudzu.

Lisa: Goats will eat the kudzu down to the ground but may not remove the roots. The grazing activity is something that would need to be done on a schedule until the kudzu is eradicated. Goats are a very popular and natural method for brush clearing in rural areas.

Nicole is presenting a butterfly garden grant opportunity to council on 10/23. The scope will include removal of invasives. City will then need to purchase natives for replanting at the butterfly garden. Rotary club has agreed to update the existing butterfly garden sign once the area is replanted.

FEAB October 13, 2023

### Outdoor Classrooms

Carol: Meeting with Principal Brazil (FWES) was cancelled. Discussions with Brazil did not indicate support at this time. Gary suggested Carol / FEAB reach out to other schools.

Jessie represents FST and said Cecil Christenberry with the BOE has interest in securing \$150K for outdoor education in Fairhope. Jessie said FST is also looking for shovel ready projects to fund.

Sarah would like to help if any community gardens at schools or otherwise are established. She is a composting resource.

### Plastic Bag Reduction Campaign

Mayor had previously suggested staff approach Jr. Council to see if there is an interest in spearheading the campaign.

Jim: spoke with Publix and CVS locally. Both have corporate interest in plastic reduction but are not yet pushing it.

Kim: *Post-meeting information: According to Paige Crawford, the Jr. Council is not considering the plastic reduction project at this time. Suggestion: FEAB may wish to take the lead on this as an action item project to develop campaign—fact finding for starters—following Jim’s lead. (TBD at November meeting).*

The meeting was adjourned at 4 p.m.

Next meeting: Thursday, November 9<sup>th</sup> @ 3 p.m. @ Fairhope Public Library

### FEAB CONTACT INFORMATION:

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