

FEAB November 9, 2023

## **FEAB MEETING MINUTES**

**November 9<sup>th</sup>, 2023**

**Fairhope Public Library, Board Room**

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

**Members not in attendance:**

Nigel Temple, Anna Miller, Jennifer Foutch; excused absences.

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

**City Council:** None

**Honored Guests:** Cynthia Rush (local writer)

**Minutes taken by:** Kim Burmeister

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

**FEAB Minutes:**

October minutes were approved with no changes. Jim (first); Gary (2<sup>nd</sup>) Unanimous approval.

**December FEAB meeting:**

City offices will be closing early on December 8<sup>th</sup>, so FEAB meeting will be 9:30 a.m. on Friday December 8<sup>th</sup>, instead of 3 p.m.

**Summary of meeting:**

1. Motion approved for Letter of Support from FEAB for Triangle Property FY24 LWCF.
2. FEAB will consider officer positions to help organize meetings.
3. George Ladd is the new Public Works Director.
4. ADEM performs real time air quality monitoring in Fairhope for ozone and particulates.
5. City is hosting the 2023 BMP workshop for city staff on November 15<sup>th</sup>, for erosion and sediment control education for construction and right of way city workers.
6. Butterfly Garden grant was approved by council, for submission.
7. Osprey Initiative grant for 2024 will include litter trap installation of 12 litter traps in Stack Gully, Big Mouth Gully and Cowpen Creek Watershed.
8. FEAB is researching corporate and other cities incentives for plastic bag reduction.
9. Eagle Reefs will soon be installed at Fairhope piers and one display at the Welcome Center, pending Council approval. Educational signage will be included.
10. FEAB is concerned about potential new shoreline structures near the American Legion at the southern extent of Magnolia Beach.
11. FEAB suggests Fairhope conduct a shoreline inventory to include piers and bulkhead type structures.
12. FEAB will be considering the recommended actions written in the approved ESWMP, including prioritizing suggestions on how Fairhope should implement these, where applicable.

**Agenda from Amy:**

<hr/> <p><b>AGENDA</b></p> <p><b>THE CITY OF FAIRHOPE ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY BOARD MONTHLY MEETING</b></p> <p><b>NOVEMBER 9, 2023 / 3-4 PM, LIBRARY</b></p> <hr/>
<p><b>1. Housekeeping (&lt; 5 min)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. Last month minutes - Kim</li><li>b. December meeting date: rescheduled to 12/7</li></ul>
<p><b>2. New Items</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. FEAB Support Letter for ADECA Land and Water Conservation Fund - Triangle Park master plan elements not covered by GOMESA</li></ul>
<p><b>3. Priority Issues / Action Item Follow up (~35 min)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. City News - Nicole<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>i. Water Conservation Strategy Recommendations &amp; Purple Pipe Reuse Feasibility Study</li><li>ii. COF/FEAB Webpage - Nicole (Sarah/Nigel)</li></ul></li><li>b. Native Habitat<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>i. Butterfly Garden - Nicole / Ben, Carole</li><li>ii. FWES Outdoor classrooms - Carole, Sarah C, Gary, Sarah B</li></ul></li><li>c. Plastic Bags - Jim</li><li>d. Facebook Posts - Sarah, Nigel</li><li>e. Council Meeting Report - Carole (OctB), Carl (NovA)</li><li>f. Education signs - Steven, Nicole</li></ul>
<p><b>4. Postponed to 2024 (?)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. Fairhope Airport - Gary, Ben, Nigel, Amy<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>i. Management of Waterhole Branch wetlands (possibly operated as wetland mitigation bank, but may need new management plan). POCs - Jack Burrell, Atty Josh Myrick</li><li>ii. Use of adjacent open space.</li><li>iii. Airport master plan/long-range planning</li></ul></li></ul>
<p><b>5. Wrap up (5 min)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. Involvement &amp; Education Opportunities:</li><li>b. Dec City Council Working Meeting Representatives: Amy (NovB), Gary (DecA), Jim (DecB)</li><li>c. Dec Agenda Items: TBD</li><li>d. Dec FEAB Guest Speakers:</li></ul>

## 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/H Gary 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 Connection (Carole)
  - c. Baldwin County: Env Advisory Committee (Kim), BC EAB Coalition (Amy/Gary)

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

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4- FYI - Eastern Shore WMP is final:

<https://www.mobilebaynep.com/news/mta-watershed-management-plan-completed-2>

5- FYI - AL Trash Law.

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1H6htvpxRI-rf2PZmcCzDPQf\\_RxeOKUxY/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1H6htvpxRI-rf2PZmcCzDPQf_RxeOKUxY/view?usp=sharing)

6- FYI - Osprey Initiative 2024 Bid for additional work.

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1mHZPFEC3JsnfyXMzhgomb1an9GDQ4FW3/view?usp=sharing>

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**FEAB Officers:**

Amy suggested FEAB member consider officer positions for 2024 to help with meeting and information coordination. Suggested officer positions are 1. Secretary, 2. Communications and 2. Data Base Mgmt. TBD in December.

**Triangle property grant opportunity, Letter of Support**

Amy provided a copy of the letter of support with revisions from Ben:

{Please print on your Organization's Letterhead}	<b>Ben Frater</b> Formatted: Left
<a href="#">November 10, 2023</a> {Insert Date}	<b>Ben Frater</b> Formatted: Left
Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA) Community and Economic Development Programs Division Attn: Recreation and Conservation Programs Specialist P.O. Box 5690 Montgomery, AL 36103-5690	<b>Ben Frater</b> Formatted: Left
Re: FY 2024 Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Grant Application	
To Whom It May Concern:	
Please accept this as a Letter of Support for the City of Fairhope's FY24 Land and Water Conservation Fund Grant Application requesting funds to construct recreation and education facilities at the North Triangle Nature Park. These improvements will include the construction of 1.5 miles of new multi-use trails, an outdoor classroom and outdoor pavilion, observational decks and bird watching facilities.	<b>Ben Frater</b> Tuesday Formatted: Font: 12 pt
<u>As the advising body to the City of Fairhope on environmental matters, we continually evaluate a broad spectrum of local outdoor based needs and priorities. We agree with the findings of the 2021 Alabama Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) that the greatest barriers to community participation in outdoor recreation in our region (Region 8) is the lack of local facilities for people to enjoy the outdoors; and for those facilities that do exist, they are increasingly overcrowded by the rapid population growth we are currently experiencing. The proposed project at the North Triangle Nature Park would directly address those barriers. Additionally, the project would improve the identified unmet demand for local facilities by providing parking for the adjacent, existing paved Eastern Shore Trail, which is a 22-mile walking and jogging path that extends through our neighboring communities. Of course, the Nature Park itself would provide hiking and interpretive nature trails through forested hills and along Fly Creek, which are also highly ranked unmet demands by the SCORP.</u>	
<u>In short, the rapidly developing Eastern Shore of Mobile Bay is losing its open space and opportunities for outdoor recreation. The North Triangle Nature Park is centrally located to many of these communities. The City of Fairhope is seeking to maximize the public's use of the property for which it has already made significant financial commitments. We believe this proposal reflects the goals of the LWCF and the City of Fairhope is a reliable steward of any available funds. _____ (Insert any benefits that the park will provide for your organization.)</u>	<b>Ben Frater</b> Formatted: Left
We appreciate your consideration of the City's funding request for this worthy project.	
Sincerely,	

**Jim made a motion to approve the letter of support, with revisions. Ben 2<sup>nd</sup>. Motion approved.**

**City of Fairhope news:**

Kim:

1. Richard Johnson is taking a new management position with the City of Fairhope and George Ladd will be the new Public Works Director.
2. City now has three right of way inspectors for erosion and sediment control enforcement (2 with public works and one with Water and Sewer).
3. Planning, Building and Public Works Dept. host a city employee BMP (Best Management Practice) workshop annually as part of the MS4 stormwater program for internal training. Utility, right of way, construction and parks management staff are targeted to attend. Industry information and regulation review (state, federal and local) are offered to crews who conduct land disturbance activity. This is for city staff only; local contractors are not included. We want our crews to set the example for contractors, and to do as we are asking other contractors to do in regard to stabilization and erosion and sediment control practices. The 2023 workshop will be held on Wednesday November 15<sup>th</sup> at the Nix Center at 730 a.m. FEAB is encouraged to add content of meeting presentation to Christina based on what we are seeing around town from city construction and maintenance activity. Any good or bad insight is appreciated.
4. ADEM conducts real time ambient air quality monitoring in Fairhope via a gauge installed near Founders Park. Information on this program can be found at: [2007 Annual Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Plan \(alabama.gov\)](https://www.alabamawildlife.org/oc-planning-guide/).

**Native Habitat:**

Carole: the grant submittal for the Butterfly Garden was accepted by Council recently. Nicole will have to offer information on the next step.

**Outdoor Classrooms:**

Carole added an AL Outdoors Classroom checklist to the FEAB google drive.

<https://www.alabamawildlife.org/oc-planning-guide/>

Amy asked Carole to check with J. Larry Newton to see what their plans are for an outdoor classroom.

**Plastic Bags:**

Jim gave a report on his findings of local and corporate initiatives. He suggests an incentive program:

Plastic bags and Styrofoam do not appear to be recyclable.

CA and NY have implemented complete bans on plastic bags, or there is a program in place to charge for plastic bags (5 cents per bag for example).

Voluntary is another option: Create a BYOB (bring your own bag) program.

Publix sells reusable grocery bags for 99 cents. Many grocery stores offer paper as an alternative to plastic bags.

ABC store uses paper bags exclusively, as do some pharmacies (CVS).

Paper is easier and more effective to recycle than plastic (containers).

County is building a MURF which may help with plastics reduction program.

Discussions with Dale Linder, Public Works, indicate the city is considering hiring a marketing firm to educate citizens on recycling, once MURF is built. This could also be used to create the plastics reduction (incentive?) program.

Jim will contact Walmart to find out what they are doing; a new manager is coming.

Cathy will call Washington Walmart for information on their program. She said they have a good plastics reduction program in place.

Steven provided information on Medford, MA's plastic reduction program:

<https://medfordenergy.org/gogreen/medford-plastic-bag-ordinance/>

<https://medfordenergy.org/gogreen/go-green-business/>

Kim said city could improve internally to reduce plastics (eliminate styrofoam coffee cups, for example). Amy suggested a pilot program between a corporate store and Fairhope, CVS for example. Her idea is for Fairhope to supply the bags and work with the company to eliminate or reduce plastic bag use. Kim suggested giving incentives to citizens who bring their own bags to shop. Pictures on Facebook, etc. Kudos for good behavior.

#### **Council updates:**

Ben: City is looking to purchase 114 acres north of the airport property.

Carole: Sidewalks are planned for Parker Road. There is a mixed-use building coming to Magnolia Avenue, downtown. Osprey Initiative litter boom project has been extended through the end of the year to complete the contract.

#### **Osprey Initiative:**

Kim: City has been awarded a GOMESA grant for \$160K specific to litter trap installation and monitoring. There are twelve litter traps proposed, which will be installed in 2024. Watersheds impacted include the Big Mouth Gully, Stack Gully and Cowpen Creek watershed. These locations were reviewed and suggested by Planning Dept. and Public Works Dept. staff. Contractors installing the litter traps in storm drains will be responsible for maintenance and litter removal/recycling for 3 years. The city will own the litter traps. The contractor will also provide reports on litter profiling, like the Winn Dixie litter boom project. FEAB is encouraged to provide input on litter trap locations. These are projected locations, including downtown areas which will catch Mardi Gras litter:

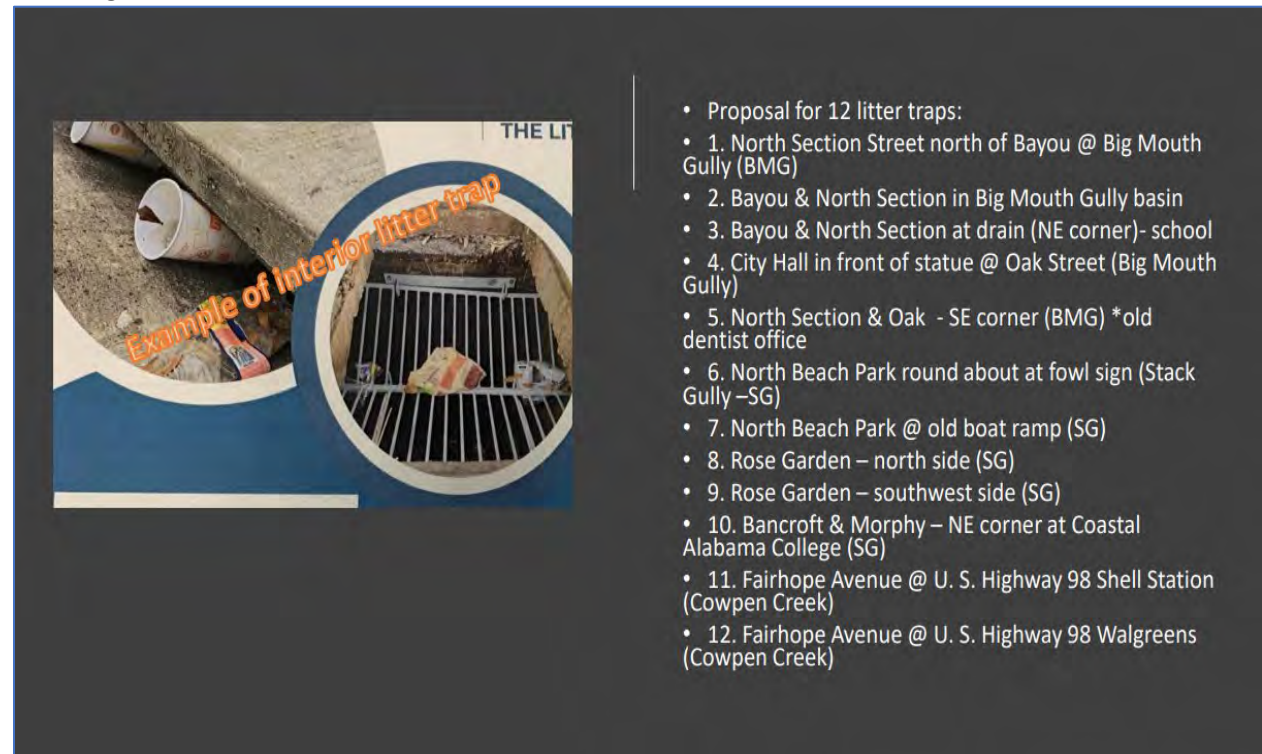


Figure 1 Excerpt from grant proposal for litter traps, 2023

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**Educational signs:**

Steven: Eagle Reefs will be on the next council agenda and will likely go in the water the same week. There will be one Eagle Reef at the Welcome Center on display, with signage. Tentative locations in the water will be at City pier areas, including Municipal Pier, North Beach Piers, Orange Street Pier, White Avenue pier and Fairhope Docks (Fly Creek). Signage for in-the-water locations have not yet been approved. There is a media event planned for the welcome center display, but specifics are not known at this time. Nicole Love can be contacted directly with questions on the Eagle Reef project and events.

**American Legion Bulkheads:**

Steven is concerned about bulkhead structures which were recently installed or were under construction on the American Legion property. \*Note: Kim checked with Building Official after the meeting: City issued a Stop Work Order on the project and referred the American Legion to the USACE and State Lands. Erik / building official said the structures were removed and no longer appear to be under construction\*

**Triangle Property:**

Ben said part of the Triangle property had a controlled burn recently. He hopes more of it is burned to help with management.

**Park Management Plans:**

Ben is interested in the Knoll Park Management Plan recently shared by staff. It includes a management and a landscape plan, including native initiatives. The resolutions for the plan specifically mention FEAB as having guidance over the management of Knoll Park.

**Shoreline Inventory:**

Steven: The ESWMP plan has a shoreline inventory listed as a recommended action plan. Has Fairhope done this or are they planning to do this? How will this be tracked? He hopes it will include structures including illegal structures. Kim will check.

**ESWMP:**

Amy suggests FEAB consider and prioritize for Fairhope the recommended actions listed in the recently approved Eastern Shore Watershed Management Plan.

The meeting was adjourned at 4 p.m.

Next meeting: Friday, December 8<sup>th</sup>, 9:30 a.m. @ Fairhope Public Library

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**FEAB CONTACT INFORMATION:**

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