

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE
City of New Port Richey
Meeting Agenda
New Port Richey – Public Library
Thursday – March 14, 2024 – 7:00 p.m.





ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE

City of New Port Richey

The Environmental Committee of the City of New Port Richey develops and endorses environmental events in the City, renders annual and special reports as members may deem advisable, and explores new environmental initiatives for the City. The ECCNPR was established in 1989 and recreated in 2011.

Meeting Agenda

New Port Richey Public Library

Thursday – March 14, 2024 – 7:00 p.m.

ANY PERSON DESIRING TO APPEAL ANY DECISION, WITH RESPECT TO ANY MATTER CONSIDERED AT ANY MEETING OR HEARING, WILL NEED A RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS AND MAY NEED TO ENSURE THAT A VERBATIM RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS IS MADE, WHICH INCLUDES THE TESTIMONY AND EVIDENCE UPON WHICH THE APPEAL IS TO BE BASED. THE LAW DOES NOT REQUIRE TRANSCRIBED VERBATIM MINUTES; THEREFORE, THE APPLICANT MUST MAKE THE NECESSARY ARRANGEMENTS WITH A PRIVATE REPORTER (OR PRIVATE REPORTING FIRM) AND BEAR THE RESULTING EXPENSE. (F.S.286.0105)

Welcome

Roll Call:

Dell DeChant, Committee Chair; Rose Mohr, Vice Chair; Linda Blake, Secretary; Amber Blais, member; Tia Rowe, member; Tom O'Neill, member; Rob Marlowe, member
City Staff Liaison, Colin Eichenmuller
City Library Representative, Tomas Monzon
City Marketing Specialist, Alexandra Buckman.
Volunteer Coordinators, Sasha Bartenuk and Connie Jones

Guests:

Overview from Chair: Meeting will be one hour. Focus will be on (1) upcoming events (Loquat, Earth Day, Monarch Day), (2) committee membership, and (3) annual report. Other topics will be noted briefly.

Vox Pop (3 minutes for members of the audience – on items not on the agenda)

Approval of Minutes February 1, 2024

Liaison Officer (A) Advice on EC agenda, and (B) CC items: A) Advice from City Liaison is requested on all items before committee and (B) items on City Council agenda relevant to Environmental Committee (open)

Business of Committee I – On-going Projects and Events

Vox Pop (VP) for items in this section

Urban Agriculture Program (open for committee facilitator)

- * No new registrations received
- * Other updates

Update on inclusion of City Property in Urban Agriculture Ordinance

- * Report on status of project and meeting with City Manager (Tom)

Library Seed Lending Program (Amber)

Fruit Tree Peninsula (Linda, Tom, Colin)

- * Update on Linda's contact with Public Works on use of herbicides at the Fruit Tree Peninsula and posting of signs prohibiting herbicides. (last listing on this unless committee desires to keep in on agenda)
- * Report on status of proposal for signage, irrigation for the fruit trees and Butterfly Garden, and replacing unproductive fruit trees with productive trees (perhaps Mango, Avocado, Barbados cherries, Starfruit, and additional Loquats). (last listing on this unless committee desires to keep in on agenda)
- * Tom's update on status of trees as part of replacement proposal
- * Colin will advise on process for removal and replacement of trees on the site.
- ** Committee is asked to make decision on trees to be replaced and recommended trees to be installed **and** request to install appropriate irrigation system to sustain the trees.

Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council Update, if any.

Business of Committee II - New Projects and Topics (and projects of limited duration, including annual events)

VP for items in this section

Promotion of Sustainability Projects (Amber, Linda)

- * Amber's report on revised date for tour of the waste-water treatment facility.
- * Linda's report on "Outdoor New Port Richey."

Review of City's urban reforestation program (Dell, Sasha, Colin)

- * Update on committee project to mobilize volunteers to inform residents of City's adopt-a-tree program
- * Review of draft version of hangtag approved at last meeting (Colin)
- ** Review of list of trees recommended for planting in the city – public and private property. Chair notes this list was compiled by the committee and at one time available through public works and the development office – also, possibly the library.

Wildflower Installation Initiative (Tom).

Tom updates on review of ordinances and other public policy instruments to allow and encourage planting native Florida wildflowers by property owners and the City. See also attached sample ordinance.

Discussion of City's Acquisition of old Schwettman/Gulf High School Property and Building (status of Council's deliberations on use of the property – 8 acres with river frontage.) (Committee of the Whole)

- * Committee's proposal for use of the property approved at January 4 meeting submitted to CC (see below).
- * Update (if any) from Colin or committee members.
- ** Requested statement for CC candidates from the group advocating for preserving the Schwettman property.
- ** A statement stating a personal commitment as a candidate or councilman to support a comprehensive community vision preserving the entire Schwettman/1922 GHS campus being offered for sale by the Pasco County School Board for public/community use in perpetuity. It should also state that you will not support the sale of any portion of the property if the City of New Port Richey is successful in purchasing the property.
- *** Proposal from Environmental Committee to CC (January 4, 2024):
- *** Environmental Committee recommends City Council pause decision process and any action regarding the future use of the Schwettman/Gulf High Property until convening a professionally facilitated visioning session to determine the best future use of the property. Recommended session to be open to the public and include a professional environmental assessment of all future uses of the property and its structures.

Seasonal Events

Events

Seasonal Events - Note: Events noted here are supported and endorsed by Environmental Committee.

* Volunteer needed to plan, develop/promote, manage events.

Calendar 2024-25

April 1-6, 2024 – Florida Loquat Festival 10th annual (April 6, 2024) (Host Ecology Florida, City of New Port Richey – and others) (Sim's Park/Historical Society). Volunteers needed.

* CC Proclamation at CC meeting March 19 – attend if possible

Earth Day (April 22, 2024) – 34th annual (1st 1992) - (City event, April 20, 2024, 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. – Library (Tia & Dell) (Host: Host New Port Richey ENV COM & Library)

Monarch City Day (May 4, 2024) (Host: Host New Port Richey ENV COM & Library)

<https://www.nationaldaystoday.com/national-start-seeing-monarchs-day/>

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August 24, 2024 –Okra Occasion– 8th annual (Presented by FarmNet & Env Com)

(Host: NPR Library)

September --, 2024 – Drive Electric Week, Tailgate event

Sweet Potato Round-Up – November 23, 2024

January 4, 2025 - Collards Festival at Grand Gardens*, 10th annual (Presented by NPR FarmNet, Host: Grand Gardens)
(Grand Gardens)

January 17, 2025 -Arbor Day, 36th annual (3rd Friday in January) (Host: ENV COM)

Meeting Schedule for 2024 "The environmental committee shall meet once every ninety (90) days unless it determines to meet more frequently." * Committee has determined it is best to meet monthly.

Next Meeting: Thursday April 11 2024 6:00 p.m. – Library. (note: this is the second Thursday – need to confirm with Library on availability)

(major topic: Committee Membership)

(major topic #2: Annual Report and Proposals)