

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE
City of New Port Richey
Meeting Agenda
New Port Richey – Public Library
Thursday – August 1, 2024 – 6:00 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 – August 1, 2024 – 6:00 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; Amber Blais, Secretary; member; Tom O'Neill, member;
Rob Marlowe, member (possibly Margaret Carswell, member)
City Staff Liaison, Colin Eichenmuller
City Library Representative, Tori Ladd
City Marketing Specialist _____
Volunteer Coordinators, Sasha Bartenuk and Connie Jones
Monarch Festival Co-Chair: Deb Morris
TBRPC Representative, Meghan Blancher

Guests: (possibly Samantha Zborek as guest of Margaret Carswell)

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

Approval of Minutes July 18, 2024 (With abundant thanks to Amber!)

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)

Special Report – Sunshine Law and policy (Colin)

- Review of Sunshine Law and responsibilities of committee members.
- See attached section of Florida Statutes
- See

http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&URL=0200-0299/0286/Sections/0286.011.html

Business of Committee I – On-going Projects and Events

Urban Agriculture Program (open for committee facilitator)

Update on inclusion of City Property in Urban Agriculture Ordinance (All)

Wildflower Installation Initiative (All)

Library Seed Lending Program (Amber)

Fruit Tree Peninsula (Rob, Dell, Colin)

- Report on removal of designated trees and installation of 4 new trees: 2 Barbados Cherry, others (?)
- Report on irrigation system or plan

Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council Update, if any.

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

Review of Water Quality Report (from February, 2024) (Colin and Tom)

- See attached Water Quality Assessment from February
- Report and Summary led by Colin with support from Tom
- Follow up on Tom's proposal for increased stormwater treatment (esp. at Madison St. site) (Tom)
- Tom's specific proposal:

"That the City Council authorize an updated Water Quality Assessment of the Cotee River. This project is even more critical at this time in view of the recent developments regarding closure of the scallop season off the coast of Pasco County. I read that it has been that our local scallops have been determined to have higher than normal levels of toxins from an internal plant that grows in the scallop in the presence of certain nutrient levels." And "Ultimately, [that] the City proceed with a program to install treatment facilities on untreated outfalls of stormwater into the Cotee River. Studies have shown that untreated stormwater can be more polluted (oils, greases, and fertilizer nutrients) than raw untreated wastewater."

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
 - First "tree walk" October 12 (10:00 to 2:00)
- ** List of trees recommended for planting in the city – public and private property.
 - See attached list from Colin
 - Discussion: trees to remove, trees to add, addendum of the "never plant" list
 - See these sites:

Camphor Tree (category 1 invasive)

- <https://gardeningolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/care/weeds-and-invasive-plants/camphor-tree/>
- **Golden Rain Tree (category 2 invasive)**
- <https://blogs.ifas.ufl.edu/orangeco/2023/11/06/golden-rain-tree-the-allure-of-the-invasive-intruder/>
- **"Big 8" Trees that should never be planted**
- <https://treevitalize.com/invasive-trees-in-florida/>
- **Lists – category 1 and category 2 invasives**
- http://bugwoodcloud.org/CDN/fleppc/plantlists/2019/2019_Plant_List_ABSOLUTE_FINAL.pdf

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)

- * Update (if any) from Colin or committee members.

Annual Report and Recommendations (All)

- * Brief report from members on meeting with members of the City Council
 - Rob, Tom & Rose, Sasha, Margaret, Dell, Amber

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

September 7, 2024 –Okra Occasion– 9th annual (Presented by FarmNet & Env Com)
(NPR Library, 11:00 to 1:30)

- See attached flyer. Copy and circulate

October 5, 2024 – Drive Electric Week, Tailgate event. (Rob: update on schedule for DEW)

November 23, 2024 – Sweet Potato Round-Up – (United Methodist Church)

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)

April 12, 2025 (based on Chasco Fiesta, Easter, Passover), 2025 – Florida Loquat Festival 12th annual (TB) (Host Ecology Florida, City of New Port Richey – and others) (Sim’s Park/Historical Society). Volunteers needed.

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

Earth Day (April 22, 2025) – 35th annual (1st 1992) - (City event, April 19, 2025, 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. – Library (Dell, Colin, Tori) (Host: Host New Port Richey ENV COM & Library)

Monarch City Day (May 3, 2025) (Host: Host New Port Richey ENV COM & Library) (Deb, Sasha, Dell)

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, September 5, 2024, 6:00 p.m. – Library