

**CITY GREEN TASK FORCE
MEETING May 21, 2009
Approved Minutes**

Members Present:

John DeCarion
Harvey Hathaway
Lisa-Marie Lerner
Ira J. Raab
Louise Reed
Arnold Rimm
Joy Rudy
Myles Schack
Steven Scherer
Janet Schreiber
Al Vazquez

Others Present:

Neil Melick
Commissioner Muoio
Pat Painter
Peter Robbins
Suzanne Schluter

Call to Order/Sign In/Changes to Agenda

Meeting was called to order at 4:02 pm.

Minutes

- ***Ira Raab moved to approve April 30, 2009 minutes, Steve Scherer seconded, minutes were approved unanimously.***

Remarks by Chairperson Al Vazquez

- **Task Force needs to be careful not to include opinions in emails, just give the facts.**

Unfinished Business

- **Water Conservation Measures**
 - Denise Malone, City Comprehensive Planner, gave an overview of the parts of the City's Comprehensive Plan that discussed water conservation. The main points discussed were:
 - The entire plan was recently redone, in part due to State of Florida mandates.
 - Once the new plan was put together it needed to be adopted by the City Commission.
 - It is like a long range plan, or like a strategic plan for a business, it governs our actions.
 - It includes goals, objectives and policies, and is set up by element.
 - In the Public Utilities section, water source and how to conserve water are discussed, including protecting GWP, Lake Mangonia, and Clear Lake. Population projections and inspection and replacement of delivery system are also included.

- SFWMD decides how much water we can extract.
 - We implement water conservation programs to educate citizens.
 - A new requirement developed last year was a 10 year water supply work plan.
 - The plan includes conservation items which are already in place and some which are proposed. Different items may be done by different parts of the City.
 - A main objective of the plan is to become more green and sustainable. Continuing the City Green Task Force is in the plan.
 - Perhaps the Task Force will give its recommendation on action items.
- Robert Kussner, Planner in the Zoning Division of Planning and Zoning Department explained that he is working on rewriting the landscape ordinance to include many items that would improve water conservation. Items he hopes to include are:
 - Irrigation systems should be able to water different planting areas on completely different schedules according to plants' water needs.
 - More drought tolerant plants should be used more and planted together.
 - Limit the lawn area to no more than 80% are total landscaping.
 - Use native plants and redevelop natural areas. 50% of trees and 25% of plants should be native.
 - Drip and low projection irrigation should be used more. Rain sensing devices should be obligatory.
 - These code changes, if approved, will mostly affect new developments. New minimum standards could be set up that citizens would be required to comply with given an appropriate amount of time. This was done in Delray Beach.
 - Robert is getting input for a variety of places, including other municipalities. He would welcome Task Force's ideas.
 - Once plan is ready, in about 6-8 weeks, Task Force will review. Plan will also need to be reviewed by staff, people will be brought in from the community and City Commission will have to approve.
 - Many new irrigation technologies are available which could reduce irrigation use significantly. These will be important to look at since irrigation is about 50% of water use.
 - Incentives to reduce water consumption could be given through water rates.

- Pat Painter – Current Drought Situation
 - We are in the worst drought in recorded history, (at least since 1932).
 - Clear Lake and Lake Mangonia are the most critical with water levels currently at 10.35' (after some recent rain). 8.35' is the lowest the lake can go; at that point we would not be able to take any more water.
 - Grassy Waters Preserve is at 16.3', this is good for certain species, but things cannot continue at this level.
 - South Florida Water Management District gave an emergency order to allow us to take water from additional sources last Thursday. This order is helping us to think out of the box. In fact, we had begun a pilot test about 5 weeks ago, pulling water back from the C51 canal using gravity into the Renaissance area. Usually the C51 dumps into Lake Worth Lagoon. We started this test to establish a base line and test for water quality. It takes 35 million gallons of raw water to make 30 million gallons of potable water.
 - Luckily recent rain has been West of West Palm Beach, much of it over the J. W. Corbett Wildlife Management Area. We are able to pump from the pump station at the L8 basin about 15 miles west of here, where much of the runoff from Corbett is going.
 - Palm Beach County has an incredible amount of preservation lands. Water is going to be a deciding factor in further land development.
 - Drought is not over; meteorological estimates are predicting a dry June and July.
 - Question: Should we continue with mostly surface water?
Answer: Yes! Well fields may be cut off because the cone of influence is much greater than first thought. When it becomes definitive that they're affecting wetlands, they will lose their permit.
 - Additionally Lake Okeechobee is being kept low due to concerns about the dike after the problem in New Orleans with Lake Pontchartrain.
 - GWP is 20 square miles, that's about 30 billion gallons of water. Marshes also sequester CO2 when they are kept wet.
- Further discussion points:
 - In some places people are being paid to optimize their land for endangered species.
 - Currently City does not permit residential cisterns which could be used for irrigation. City is looking into getting a cistern and researching first.

- Long range plan needs to be made to reduce irrigation by a certain percentage over the next 2 years for example, then we can work on how to make those reductions.
 - Let's hear from David Hanks, Public Utilities Director next meeting before making a recommendation.
 - It takes water to make energy; it takes energy to make water. 60% of energy in the City is water related.
 - What will Water Advisory Committee be doing and what should Task Force be doing? It is thought that Task Force should concentrate on demand side of water issue: conservation, diminishing demand. Advisory Committee will be working on supply side.
 - It's cheaper to conserve, look into incentives, rate policy.
- **Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant** – Mayor Frankel
 - The Federal Government is very strict on the application procedures, but they have also been changing parameters.
 - June 25th is the absolute deadline to get the application in.
 - The two projects that we are going to apply for grant money for are, the City Center solar energy project and bringing the Waterfront Pavilion to carbon neutral by installing solar panels and using LEED strategies.
 - We are still exploring the green home and green jobs projects, but will probably apply for other monies for these projects and partner with other cities and possibly the housing authority.
- **Electric Capacitor Devise – Everett Fennell** – tabled until next meeting.

New Business

- **Green for Good, June 3, 2009, 5-10PM.** This event will be put on by the West Palm Beach Downtown Development Authority and Friends of the Library at the City Library. There will be eco-friendly vendors, live music, children's story time, and Al Gore's lecture via satellite at 7:45PM.
- **Organization of future meetings** – tabled until next meeting.

Future Meetings

- Next meeting will be June 4, 2009, 4-6pm.

Adjourn

Ira Raab moved to adjourn, Al Vazquez seconded, all were in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 6:08 pm.