

CITY OF ROCKPORT

MEETING MINUTES

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE FOR WATER ISSUES

9:30 a.m., Thursday, July 17, 2014

Rockport City Hall, 622 E. Market Street

On this the 17th day of July 2014, the Environmental Committee For Water Issues of the City of Rockport, Aransas County, Texas convened at 9:30 a.m. at the regular meeting place in City Hall, and notice of meeting giving time, place, date and subject having been posted as described in V.T.C.A., Government Code § 551.041.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Chairman Tom Callan
Committee Member Ron Helmke
Committee Member Larry Hellums
Committee Member Virginia Hallinan
Committee Member Shawn Johnston

STAFF MEMBER(S) PRESENT

COMMITTEE MEMBER(S) ABSENT

ELECTED OFFICIALS

Council Member Patrick Rios

Opening Agenda

1. Call to order.

With a quorum of the Committee Members present, the Regular Meeting of the Environmental Committee For Water Issues was called to order by Tom Callan at 9:30 a.m. on Thursday, July 17, 2014, in the Council Chambers of the Rockport City Hall, 622 E. Market Street, Rockport, Texas.

2. Citizens to be Heard.

At this time, comments will be taken from the audience on any subject matter that is not on the agenda. In accordance with the Open Meetings Act, the Environmental Committee For Water Issues may not discuss or take action on any item which has not been posted on the agenda.

There were no citizens to be heard.

3. Deliberate and act on the June 19, 2014, meeting minutes.

MOTION: Committee Member Ron Helmke moved to approve the June 19, 2014 meeting minutes with the following addition to item #5, paragraph #2, "Mr. Barrett reported that silt at

the outflow of Tule Creek will not be removed prior to installation of the oyster shell. No dredging of the basin is planned at this time.” Committee Member Larry Hellums seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

4. Introduction of the Mission Aransas National Estuarine Research Reserve Coastal Training Coordinator.

A new training coordinator has not yet been hired. Hiring is now expected to be completed by September.

5. Hear and deliberate on a report regarding ongoing activities of the Aransas County Navigation District.

Committee member Larry Hellums attended the most recent Nav District meeting and reported that there was nothing new to report.

6. Deliberate on public outreach possibilities obtained from the “Guidance for Sustainable Development on the Texas Coast.”

Tom Callan suggested we seek permission to reprint some of the topics covered in the ‘Guidance for Sustainable Development’ manual as a series of articles in successive issues of the Rockport Pilot. The Rockport city website and the Wonderful Women’s Network were mentioned as potential additional avenues for dissemination of the information. Committee member Virginia Hallinan was tasked with contacting the authors of the manual to seek the required permission, and if granted, establish how the authors wish to be cited.

7. Deliberate on the registration process for lawn care providers.

Tom Callan reported that there have been 2 recent letters in the Rockport Pilot from homeowners concerned with trash entering the storm drains through improper lawn care practices. Mr. Callan thought it would be beneficial for homeowners to address concerns directly with the lawn care providers when an issue arises. He volunteered to write a letter to the editor of the Rockport Pilot to that effect. In the ensuing discussion it was suggested that the letter contain some suggestions for managing yard care issues in varying seasons of the year.

MOTION: Committee member Larry Hellums made a motion that Tom Callan proceed with the letter to the editor of the Rockport Pilot. Ron Helmke seconded the motion which then passed unanimously.

8. Hear, deliberate and act on a recommendation to citizens regarding their part in managing lawn care providers.

This topic was covered in the discussion surrounding item #7.

9. Hear and deliberate on a presentation by Ginger Smith and Phil Wildfang regarding the “Skip the Plastic” initiative.

Phil Wildfang with the assistance of Ginger Smith and Theresa Finch spoke about the deleterious impact of improperly disposed of plastics on the environment. They discussed the aims of the “Skip the Plastics” initiative, the various agencies supporting the local movement, and mentioned other Texas cities which were either restricting the availability of single use, ultralight plastic shopping bags or considering restrictions on them. In the discussion that followed, several concerns were raised, including:

- a.) a previous survey, originating with the city of Rockport, indicated that the majority of responders were opposed to the concept of banning single use shopping bags
- b.) some people re-use the bags for various purposes, potentially decreasing their need for other larger, thicker plastic bags, reducing, rather than increasing, their env. Footprint
- c.) many of the entities supporting the initiative aren’t themselves engaged in recycling efforts on their own properties or at their own events, undertakings with potentially far greater impacts on the environment
- d.) negative connotations associated with the concept of ‘banning’ things, especially in the perceived absence of a countering positive initiative.

Committee members were tasked with contemplating what specific actions designed to protect/improve the environment they might endorse as well as the pros and cons of a repeat survey on the issue of an ordinance banning single use plastic shopping bags.

10. Deliberate and act regarding a recommendation to the Rockport City Council in reference to implementation of the “Skip the Plastics” program and possible details associated with a City ordinance.

This issue was discussed under item #9. Further discussion was planned prior to formalizing any recommendations to be sent forward.

11. Hear a progress report on the development of a stormwater management plan and stormwater design manual.

Jim Urban of Urban Engineering did not attend the meeting. He informed the committee by e-mail that his firm was not under contract with the City to develop the stormwater management plan or the stormwater design manual. It was surmised that the design manual has never been completed.

City Council member, Patrick Rios briefly tackled the issue of stormwater management which he described as extremely complicated. He indicated that at present, the city is attempting to determine the status of the present infrastructure in terms of location and functionality of stormwater pipes.

Tom Callan said he would contact Jim Urban to further clarify standing concerns.

12.) Deliberate lab results from the Texas beach Watch program.

Lab results were reviewed. No bacterial counts of concern were noted.

13. Adjournment.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the Regular Meeting was adjourned at 11:00a.m.

**ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE
FOR WATER ISSUES**



Tom Callan, Chairman

ATTEST:



Kendra Baird, Environmental Specialist
Public Works Department