

CITY OF PALM BAY, FLORIDA
SUSTAINABILITY ADVISORY BOARD
REGULAR MEETING 2025-09

Held on Thursday, the 25th day of September 2025, in the City Hall Council Chambers, 120 Malabar Road, SE, Palm Bay, Florida.

This meeting was properly noticed pursuant to law; the minutes are on file in the Public Works Department located at 1050 Malabar Road, SW, Palm Bay, Florida. The minutes are not a verbatim transcript, but a summary of the discussions and actions taken at the meeting.

CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order by Vice Chairperson Rebecca Zeigler at 6:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

CHAIRPERSON:	Jessica Lovell	Absent
VICE CHAIRPERSON:	Rebecca Ziegler	Present
MEMBER:	Jane Higgins	Present
MEMBER:	Susan B. Connolly	Absent
MEMBER:	Doug Hook	Present
MEMBER:	Eileen Sepp	Present
MEMBER:	Vacant	

CITY STAFF:

Nadeca Gonzalez, Public Works Assistant Director; Derek Bunt, NPDES Stormwater Outreach Coordinator; Jose Sanabria, Public Works Operations; Dennis Bunt, Public Works Customer Service Manager; Eric Blount, Public Works Operations Superintendent.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: (Non-agenda items only)

There were no public comments.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Future Project Ideas

Ms. Ziegler introduced the newest board member, Doug Hook, who provided an overview of his background and expressed his commitment to the protection of Florida's natural environment.

Ms. Higgins underscored the need for specific action items stemming from the last meeting, particularly regarding feedback from city officials. She proposed that each board member focus on distinct aspects of sustainability and present their ideas for discussion during board meetings. Ms. Sepp concurred with Ms. Higgins, accentuating the significance of each member's passion and expertise in advancing the board's objectives.

Mr. Hook shared his vision for the board, which included strategies for enhancing public awareness and engagement. He recommended leveraging City Council meetings, local chapters, and clubs to stimulate public interest. Furthermore, Mr. Hook proposed the establishment of sustainability-specific social media platforms and the implementation of low-cost, easily executable public projects. He emphasized the need to strengthen the board's capacity before undertaking larger initiatives.

Mr. Hook discussed additional methods for increasing public awareness. He suggested fostering relationships with local organizations to encourage their involvement in board meetings.

Motion by Ms. Sepp, seconded by Mr. Hook, to allocate tasks to each member present at the meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Higgins suggested following up with the City Manager regarding the Florida Institute of Technology (FIT) project and developing a comparative analysis of sustainability plans within Brevard County. Mr. Hook agreed to take on these tasks and proposed collaborating with local developers to test sustainable retention management practices.

Ms. Ziegler recommended investigating the feasibility of continuous social media platforms and exploring opportunities for volunteers to contribute content related to Turkey Creek. Ms. Higgins selected the topic of native plants in Palm Bay for her focus and mentioned reaching out to Mike Sands, Construction Project Manager with the Parks and Facilities Department, regarding landscape plans. Ms. Sepp highlighted the importance of clean air and water, including the concept of phytoremediation. Mr. Hook also volunteered to act as the liaison between the board, the public, and city management.

Mr. Blount introduced a small-scale project where the board would participate in the cleanup and planting of native species in a monolith located at a major roadway intersection. Ms. Higgins proposed merging Mr. Blount's project with her focus on native plants and bringing the integrated plan back to the board for further discussion. Mr. Dennis Bunt moved to assign future tasks to each board member present, with Ms. Lovell and Ms. Conley to contemplate their respective assignments by the next meeting. Additionally,

Mr. Hook suggested incorporating a report section into future agendas to allow board members to provide updates on their individual projects.

OTHER BUSINESS:

1. Upcoming Meetings/Events of Interest (INFORMATIONAL).

Ms. Higgins announced the upcoming low-impact development conference and encouraged participation. She also highlighted the landscaping tour taking place on November 9th and proposed that Palm Bay consider sponsoring or endorsing the event. Mr. Hook announced a short notice event by the Surfrider Foundation focused on ocean-friendly gardens and a bioswales cleanup. Ms. Ziegler requested online information about the event, which Ms. Sepp provided, encouraging everyone to get involved.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:48 P.M.

Doug Hook, Chairperson

ATTEST:

Jesinie Fieffe, Recorder