

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE
City of New Port Richey
Meeting Agenda
New Port Richey – Public Library
Thursday – September 17, 2026 – 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 – September 17, 2026 – 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; Margaret (Sophia) Carswell, member; Catherine Capello, Secretary.

City Staff Liaison (non-voting), Gary Kroll, Assistant Public Works Director Committee Staff Liaison

Sierra Club Liaison (non-voting), Sasha Bartenuk

FarmNet Liaison (non-voting) Amanda Zborek

Guests: Tom Kuss, potential member, invited to attend

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

Approval of Minutes May 21, 2026. (no official meeting June 18 or July 17, August 20, due to lack of quorum)

Regular Business

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)

Organizational Item: Recruitment of new members. We are at quorum if all members attend.
Committee is asked to consider recruitment strategies.

Business of Committee I – On-going Projects and Events

Library Seed Lending Program (Amanda)

- Note: Seed of the month program. See for September & October
- Note: Seeds of the Season Program – December 10

Urban Agriculture Program (Chair)

- Renewal of Garden Registration
 - Grand Gardens (Gann)
 - EMG Gardens (deChant)
 - Homestead Gardens (deChant)
 - Marcie's Gardens (Lima)
- Forthcoming: Mark Brown Tribute Garden (Julian)

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

- Update from Liaison

Wildflower Installation Initiative & Wildflower Ordinance (Chair & Gary)

Colin reports on administration's plans for Wildflower Ordinance. This will continue to stay on the agenda until implemented.

- Wildflower project update: FarmNet (Amanda)
- List of recommended Wildflowers and list of most common invasive vines, plants and shrubs
 - * Members asked to bring lists
 - * See Chair's list from FDACS. (Vaden Edmonson)

Fruit Tree Peninsula (Liaison, Rose, Catherine)

- Update (Rose and Tom)
- Update from Gary: 2 dwarf mangos still to be planted
- Concern with irrigation and general support of trees, specifically: cherries, one loquat, others
 - * Discussion and proposal for action based on report from Rose and Tom

River Report (Liaison, Catherine, Sophia)

Duck Colony (Liaison)

- As per request by a resident, duck colony report is listed again.
- Gary is asked to report.

Okra Occasion – Brief Report (Amanda and Chair). See also video
<https://www.youtube.com/live/whZwIMiCuLc?is=A8sq2TuyYuQ1SOrQ>

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

Move Meeting to 3rd Thursday. Note to All and Judy for reference and official record.

- Next meeting October 15, 2026

HOA Garden Club Story (Sophia and Catherine)

- Update on HOA communications and ways to facilitate changes in HOA landscaping practices
- Update on presentation for HOAs.
- Update on Linda Blake pesticide and herbicide runoff
- Last listing on agenda unless requested by members

Mangrove Planting Project (Catherine & Liaison)

- Update on funding from Community Development Block Grant to restore mangroves on Green Key.

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

- * Monthly Report on Tree Budget, remaining funds for planting (Colin)
- Next walk (Sasha)

Grey Preserve invasive plant removal project (Sasha, Amanda, Gary, others)

- Committee member asked to coordinate with FDACS Plant Inspection Department for next project.
- Note: Surprising short-notice proposal for invasive removal on Sept 19.
- See message from Chair

Low Mow Spring

- Proposal with City Council. Awaiting Action.

Grey Preserve – topic II -Phase II Expansion (new) (Chair, Liaison) – Resident requests update on Grey Preserve Expansion Project, notes sign informing of project has been removed.

Expansion was in planning stages in 2020. Environmental Committee recommended several changes to reduce ecological disruption

Fertilizer Ban (June 1 to September 30) (new) (Chair, Liaison) –

- Resident requests information on (1) fertilizer ban in City (notes County ban); (2) requests committee recommend City establish a fertilizer ban (if one is not already in place). See video on this topic.

<https://www.fox13news.com/news/fertilizer-bans-effect-beginning-june-across-tampa-bay-area>

Annual Report – Our Annual Report focused on two recommendations: (1) The Wildflower Initiative including Low Mow Spring and (2) River Water Quality and. Will include reference to previous recommendations not taken up, request written response from the City Council.

- As always, report received with little comment and no objections.
- Request work Session regarding the Wildflower Initiative – awaiting action from City Council.
 - * Committee: Discuss and decide on next steps

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

* Volunteers needed for all events.

Calendar 2026 - 2027

November 7, 2026 – **Annual Community Garden Dinner** – Peace Hall (5:30 to 7:30)

November 21, 2026 , 11:00 – 1:00 p.m. **New Port Richey Sweet Potato Roundup** 11th annual
(Presented by New Port Richey FarmNet. Host: Host New Port Richey Public Library,)

January 15, 2027 – **Arbor Day** 38th annual (3rd Friday in January) (Host: ENV COM) 10:00 a.m. Frances Ave.
Colin: Contact Genesis School (?)

January 17, 2027 - **Collards Festival** at Grand Gardens, 12th annual (Presented by NPR FarmNet, Host: Grand Gardens)
(Grand Gardens) 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. +

Florida Loquat Festival April 3 (week of March 29-April 3) 15th annual (Sims Park) (Presented by New Port Richey FarmNet in cooperation with the City of New Port Richey) (Sim's Park/Peace Hall).

Earth Day/Week (April 22, 2027) – 36th annual (1st 1992)
(Tori Ladd, Manager/Director) (Host: Host New Port Richey ENV COM & Library)

Monarch Festival – 6th Annual (May 2, 2027) 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
(Host: New Port Richey ENV COM, New Port Richey Public Library, and New Port Richey FarmNet)

- Short Report
- Event was very successful

September 11, 2027, 11:00 – 1:00 p.m. **The West Pasco Okra Occasion**, 12th annual
(Presented by New Port Richey FarmNet. Host: Host New Port Richey Public Library,)

Plants & Pints, 4th Tuesday, monthly. Next event, August 25, 2026, 5:30 to 7:30 – Florida Room –

Meeting Schedule for 2026 "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, October 15 2026, 6:00 p.m. – Library