

CHARLOTTE COUNTY
MARINE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Charlotte County Administration Center #119

Minutes
March 8, 2007

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mel Staudmyer, Chair
William Bergman, Vice Chair
Capt. Ron Blago, Secretary
Len Harris
Tom Hamilton
Robert Leonard
Paul Marcuzzo
William Kumm
Raymond Rose
Richard Johnson
Bob DiMuzio
Gerald Meckenberg
Capt. Tim Lynch
Maurice Sabourin
James Redding
Richard Anderson

MEMBERS EXCUSED

Anthony Tonz
Skip Mansfield

STAFF

Commissioner Tom D'Aprile
Ron Rosiere, Public Works
Bob Hebert, Administration
Betty Staugler, Sea Grant Program
Mike Koenig, Parks and Recreation
Derek Rooney, Asst. County Attorney
Jane Starr, Recording Secretary
Jason Quimet, Public Works

GUESTS

Jay Buckley, City of Punta Gorda
Richard Benson, City of Punta Gorda
Grace Amodeo, Manchester Advisory
Kathleen Fletcher, DEP/CAMA
Chief Chuck Rinehart, PGPD
Al Cheatham, CHEC
Capt. Milton Kaletta, CAP
Al Yeno, USCG
David Rubin, Pt. Charlotte Yacht Club
Ron Rich

I. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL/DETERMINATION OF QUORUM

Chair Mel Staudmyer called the March 8, 2007 *Marine Advisory Committee* to order at 9:30 a.m., noting that there was a quorum present.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Mel Staudmyer led the members and audience in reciting The Pledge of Allegiance.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by **Richard Anderson** to accept the February 8, 2007 Marine Advisory Committee minutes as written, seconded by **Tom Hamilton**. The vote was unanimously accepted.

IV. REGULAR BUSINESS

Ron Rosiere provided updates on the following projects: Pirate Harbor, Little Gasparilla Island, Ackerman W.W./Lewis Creek, Buena Vista/Grassy Point Waterways, Northwest Charlotte Waterways, Alligator Creek S-Curve, Intercoastal Ferry Slow Speed Zone, the Manchester Lock Removal, Harbor Heights Dredge Design, the Suncoast Waterway Dredge Design, and the installation of solar lights at the end of county waterways. **Ron Rich** clarified the city of Punta Gorda has already installed solar panels on their lights. A brief question and answer period followed.

V. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Tom D'Aprile announced the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission is holding a series of workshops regarding anchoring and mooring issues throughout the next several months noting the closest location would be in Ft. Myers on March 14, 2007.

VI. OLD BUSINESS

Port Charlotte Yacht Club Membership

Capt. Ron Blago introduced applicant **David Rubin** who spoke on his background and qualifications. **Mr. Rubin** left the room while members discussed his nomination.

ACTION: A motion was presented by Bob DiMuzio and seconded by Len Harris to recommend David Rubin for membership in the Marine Advisory Committee representing the Port Charlotte Yacht Club. The motion was unanimously carried.

David Rubin returned to the meeting and was welcomed by the Committee.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

Paul Marcuzzo communicated a request by Charlotte County EMS to dock a fire boat at Laishley Park. **Chief Chuck Rinehart** said it is his understanding three boat slips have been reserved: one for police, one for County Fire, and one for State Patrol. **Mr. Marcuzzo** went on to say a Poker Run from Sarasota to Fisherman's Village has been scheduled for March 31, 2007, with 100 large boats expected to participate. He stated although the Coast Guard will be present with a 41 foot vessel to patrol the area, local law enforcement are not able to supply extra manpower for the event and there are safety concerns with the intensified boat traffic in the Harbor. He inquired about the availability of a Sheriff's boat and was told by **Officer Rinehart** the fire dept. has already been assigned detail and his office is looking into it as well. He agreed this could be a potentially dangerous situation. A discussion ensued.

Tom Hamilton inquired about meetings being held during the summer months and was advised the Committee will need to vote on this.

Bob Hebert presented general information regarding the Charlotte County Marine Advisory Committee Funding Requests for FY07/08. He stated applications are now closed but acknowledged several adjustments will be needed due to changes in the 2006 Legislature. **William Bergman** inquired about the time factor involved and was advised the final adoption of the budget would take place in September or early October. The amount of income available this year with WCIND is an estimation and the actual figure may vary. Boater improvement money is anticipated to remain the same. **William Bergman** asked about additional funds set aside in reserve and was informed \$45,000.00 is available however a request from Parks and Recreation could modify this amount. A more accurate figure will be provided next month. Item #7, a request from Charlotte County Public Works for maintenance of aids to navigation, is an automatic program and Item #9, a request from Public Works for the Maintenance of Stump Pass, should be listed at the top of the spreadsheet under carry over. Following deductions, \$310,000.00 is available under WCIND and \$320,000.00 under Boater Improvement money. **Chair Staudmyer** stated he would like to hear from Jason Quimet regarding Item #7. **Derek Rooney** introduced himself as the new Assistant County Attorney and announced he will be sitting in for Tom Rapp today. The next portion of the meeting was spent reviewing and discussing the individual FY2007/2008 Funding requests: *(copy of the spreadsheet is attached as part of original minutes.)*

- #1 - Charlotte County Extension/Florida Sea Grant (\$25,000.00) – **Betty Staugler** stated it is her goal to develop a guide that better describes Navigational and foundational history. Outdated Sea Grant documents were distributed and **Ms. Staugler** stated she hopes to work with the Marine Advisory Committee creating an updated version. An interactive website is also planned. Further discussion ensued.
- #2 - Charlotte County Extension/Florida Sea Grant (\$25,000.00) – **Betty Staugler** gave a brief overview of this second item and described ideas behind the request. **Mel Staudmyer** inquired about the use of concrete from other sources. Further discussion ensued.

- #3 – Charlotte County Extension /Florida Sea Grant (\$8,000.00) – **Bob Hebert** advised only 50 percent of the funds requested are allowed from WCIND. **Betty Staugler** will amend the budget to match an additional 50 percent. This grant request is for ongoing activities which would include identification of new reefs and is primarily for the artificial reef program. Further discussion ensued.
- #4 – City of Punta Gorda (\$72,783.00) – **Chief Chuck Rinehart** explained the reasons this type of boat was chosen and stated only one full time marine vessel is operational at this time. The expected life span of the vessel itself is approximately ten years. **Paul Marcuzzo** inquired about the purchase of an extended warranty and was told they are not offered for Law Enforcement use. In answer to a question regarding the purchase of new vessels not in the retirement system program, **Bob Hebert** stated it was decided only motors would be replaced, however new pontoon boats have been purchased in the past. **Chief Rinehart** confirmed they will also explore other areas for grant money as boat replacement is necessary. Further discussion ensued.
- #5 –USCG Auxiliary Flotilla 92 (\$4,000.00) – **Al Yeno** explained details that would be provided in the guide and stated it would actually be a book of charts to accurately cover the Myakka River and he felt it was more of a navigational classification rather than a safety item. **Bob Hebert** responded he was not convinced this could be justified as a navigational improvement at this time. **Mr. Yeno** confirmed he has applied for a separate grant for areas of the river located in Sarasota County. Further discussion ensued. **William Bergman** stated he felt the guides should be free of charge to Charlotte County taxpayers.
- #6 – USCG Auxiliary Flotilla 92 (\$2,800.00) – **Al Yeno** advised the Coast Guard has requested funding for portable radios and GPS units to qualify two privately owned vessels as Coast Guard Auxiliary facilities. He stated the vessels would be for full-time, year-round use and would be used for both Charlotte and Sarasota counties. **Bob Hebert** asked if this was the full price of the equipment and stated this amount would have to be matched as it could not be classified entirely as Navigational Improvement. **Mr. Yeno** confirmed this would be possible and agreed to rewrite the requests. **Bob DiMuzio** added he felt there was a need for guidance on this portion of the River. A discussion ensued.
- #7 - Charlotte County Public Works (\$60,000.00) – **Bob Hebert** advised this funding would be an automatic program. **Jason Quimet** answered questions regarding pilings, buoys, markers and solar lights around Charlotte County adding Charlotte County markers are north of Harbor Heights Park and markers south are U.S. Coast Guard. **Mr. Quimet** provided contact information to **Ron Blago**.
- #8 – Public Works (\$50,000.00) – **Bob Hebert** stated this is not fundable under WCIND and mentioned he spoke with legal council for the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. More engineering information is needed. **Robert Leonard** stated it is his opinion this request will not be approved by DEP and voiced concerns regarding active dredging permits expiring due to lack of funds. Further discussion ensued. **Bob DiMuzio** questioned whether funding efforts were being duplicated and led a discussion on the Regional Management Program. **Mr. Hebert** confirmed the County has control over what they do within the program and it is still a local initiative and a local decision as to what will be dredged. **Ron Rosiere** stated the residents of Grassy Point were in favor of a feasibility study. **Mr. DiMuzio** advised a previous presentation by Bob Sweat and Michael Poff was available online and **Chair Staudmyer** offered to email a copy to anyone who is

interested. **Betty Staugler** spoke on policies in Lee County. **Robert Leonard** led a discussion on Poll and Troll zones stating it is his opinion that this is something that should be looked into further and cannot be approached lightly. **Chair Staudmyer** advised there will be presentations in May on sea grass and shallow boating.

- #10 – The Charlotte Harbor Environmental Center, Inc. (\$15,000.00) – **Al Cheatham** thanked the Committee for the special round of funding previously made available and stated the request presented today is a continuing request. **Mr. Cheatham** discussed the Boater Safety and Education Program saying he realizes this request needs to be amended to reflect documentation for another \$15,000.00 in match. Mention was made that the CHEC website is in the process of being modified and spatial mapping will be available when this is complete and will provide an update on harbor conditions. **Capt. Ron Blago** complimented Mr. Cheatham on the format of his request stating it was well written and suggested it be used as a template for other organizations presenting information. **Paul Marcuzzo** asked for and received information on educational programs for home school groups.
- #11 – Parks, Recreation & Cultural Resources Department (\$50,000.00) – **Mike Koenig** presented information and stated this funding request is for improvements to make the boat ramp available for public use. A discussion ensued. **Mr. Koenig** confirmed no permit is required for this project as it is a park facility.
- #12 – Parks, Recreation & Cultural Resources Department (\$75,000.00) – **Mike Koenig** stated an area has been identified at Port Charlotte Beach that could be made available for use as a sailing center for non-motorized boats such as small sail boats, kayaks and windsurfers. The idea of this project is to create a floating dock type system and to provide a small storage area separate from the motorized vessel area. **Bob Leonard** commented the tennis courts in this area were to be moved and additional trailer parking was to be provided for boats to launch. **Mike Koenig** confirmed that project is still moving forward and went on to say they wanted to be able to accommodate the Sailing Club as part of this project and make the ramp handicap accessible. **Paul Marcuzzo** confirmed this was originally allocated to the Coast Guard Auxiliary, however it is very shallow and they did not feel it a feasible site for their use. Further discussion ensued.
- #13 – Parks, Recreation & Cultural Resources Department (\$100,000.00) – It was questioned whether this request was previously approved. **Mike Koenig** stated he was not aware of actual funding. **Bob Hebert** will verify and remove if necessary.
- #14 – Parks, Recreation & Cultural Resources Department (\$150,000.00) – **Mike Koenig** stated Cattedock Boat Ramp is one of the issues effected by the change in Legislative funding and the agreement will go before the BCC in approximately one month as well as the Governor's office. **Bob Hebert advised** that funding must be specifically for the development of the boat ramp as WCIND will not fund design and permitting work. **Bill Bergman** inquired about the distance between the Cattedock and El Jobean boat ramps and was told they are only 2-3 miles apart but El Jobean is a very small area. It was confirmed to **Tom Hamilton** that additional funds have been donated by a developer to support the design of the parking area. **Ron Hebert** stated the time for completion of a two lane boat ramp if all funding and permitting goes through would be approximately three years. **Bob DiMuzio** wondered about the possibility of the El Jobean Boat Ramp being used as a non-motorized vessel ramp in the future pointing out the limited space for parking. **Chair**

Staudmyer inquired about the steps necessary to amend this request and was told it needs to be demonstrated the money is for the engineering and launch facilities.

- #15 – Parks, Recreation & Cultural Resources Department (\$100,000.00) – **Bob Leonard** asked if the facility would be accessible to the public while under construction and was told by **Mike Koenig** that it will be kept open as much as possible and that parking conditions will not be reduced after construction.
- #16 – Civil Air Patrol, Charlotte County Composite Squadron (\$7,500.00) – **Bob Hebert** stated this will be acceptable for funding under the Boater Registration fund provided that flights are done for the purpose of identifying distress boats and/or individuals only and findings are reported. This is a cost reimbursement program and the purpose of each flight must be demonstrated for County invoicing. **Capt. Milton Kaletta** gave an overview of the program and said he felt one reason for a lack of public awareness concerning their endeavors was because they report directly to the Coast Guard They have now been given permission to take people with them on flights and several articles have been written referring to them as Boater’s Guardian Angels. He stated a new Digital Imaging Systems will be available in June of this year to help with rescue efforts. **Capt. Ron Blago** expressed the importance of keeping records to demonstrate benefits to the boating public.

Bob Hebert thanked the Committee for their time and consideration and stated the spreadsheet will be updated by next week. Decisions will be tabled for the next meeting. A discussion ensued over the anticipated changes.

If was the opinion of audience member, **Park Paliceon**, that money would never be wasted when invested in waterways and canals as this is important to the future of our community. He also voiced concerns residents are having about the Apollo Waterway area and requested the Committee look into the quality of a recent dredging and the future use of this canal. **Chair Staudmyer** gave contact information and suggested he attend an MSBU meeting.

VIII. OTHER BUSINESS

Richard Benson gave an update on Laishley Park stating the building is 97% complete. They are hoping for a Grand Opening on April 14, 2007. **Bob DiMuzio** inquired about an upcoming Mooring Workshop.

Len Harris stated he was not able to attend the February 23rd WCIND meeting due to a scheduling conflict. The next meeting will be on April 6, 2007.

Len Harris asked if the County collected a marine fuel tax from marinas other than what is collected from the State. **Bob Hebert** will respond to this at the next meeting.

Bob DiMuzio encouraged everyone to stay updated on Legislative issues regarding taxes and proposals as this could have an impact on the County

IX. LIAISON REPORTS - None

X. GOOD OF THE ORDER - None

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XI. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, a motion was made, seconded and voted unanimous for the meeting to **ADJOURN** at 12:03p.m.

XI. NEXT MEETING

Thursday, April 12, 2007 @ 9:30 A.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Jane Starr

Jane Starr
Recording Secretary