

CHARLOTTE COUNTY
MARINE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Charlotte County Administration Center, Room 119

Minutes
May 14, 2009

MEMBERS PRESENT

Capt. Ron Blago, Chair
Gerald Meckenberg, Secretary
William Bergman
Capt. Jay Buckley
Keith Buechel
John Homer Fleming
Tom Hamilton
Robert Leonard
Capt. Tim Lynch
Skip Mansfield
Fred Mesler
Raymond Rose
Maurice Sabourin
Scott Schermerhorn
Mel Staudmyer

MEMBERS EXCUSED

Len Harris, Vice Chair
Richard Anderson
Richard Johnson
William Kumm
Anthony Tonz

STAFF

Commissioner Bob Starr
Tara Musselman, Public Works
William Taylor, Budget
Andy Stevens, Natural Resources
Mike Koenig, Parks and Recreation
Elizabeth Staugler, Sea Grant Agent
Matthew Cohen, Assistant County Attorney
Jane Starr, Recording Secretary

GUESTS

Grace Amodeo, Manchester Adv. Committee
Randy Brodersen, City of Punta Gorda

- I. **CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL/DETERMINATION OF QUORUM**
Chair Blago called the May 14, 2009, **Marine Advisory Committee** meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. noting there was a quorum present.
- II. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
Chair Blago offered opening remarks and led the members and audience in reciting The Pledge of Allegiance.
- III. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
A motion was presented by **Capt. Jay Buckley** and seconded by **Maurice Sabourin** to accept the April 9, 2009, Marine Advisory Committee minutes as written. A vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

A short discussion took place regarding the procedures needed to view documents online. Several members stated they were unable to open the material and requested the Recording Secretary provide documents by email in addition to online postings.

IV. REGULAR BUSINESS

MSBU Update

Tara Musselman provided updates regarding the following projects: Alligator Creek, Buena Vista Area Waterways, Gulf Cove Waterways, Harbour Heights, Hayward Canals, Manchester Waterway, Northwest Port Charlotte, Pirate Harbor, South Gulf Cove, and Stump Pass. Discussion followed.

V. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Starr advised he is the assigned liaison for the East Lock Advisory Committee, Beaches and Shores Advisory Committee, and Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee. Although he will not be the official liaison for MAC, he will attend meetings as time permits and hopes to be able to facilitate a dialog between the Committees.

Commissioner Starr provided additional information on his background and stated he is very familiar with local waters. He is presently working with the individuals who manage MSBU's to see if the paving and maintenance aspect can't be done more efficiently and his next endeavor will be to focus on water problems and more effective dredging. He also spoke on his visit to Thornton Key and other areas in the county that could be established as primitive camping. He reiterated that he is available to members as needed.

Chair Blago asked if a new Parks and Recreation Director had been hired. **Andy Stevens** confirmed Kelly Shoemaker is the Acting Director at this time. **Commissioner Starr** stated the Parks and Recreation budget will be reviewed by the Commission soon to determine the level of positions and services needed.

Chair Blago commented on vessel registrations and an increase to the Boater Improvement Funds. **Attorney Cohen** confirmed the fees are imposed by the state and not local government. Additional observations were noted by **Keith Buechel** and **Commissioner Starr**.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

Budget Discussion and Funding Requests

Andy Stevens provided an update on the supplemental applications recently heard before the Board and presented members with additional information regarding the FY 09-10 budget, advising he will be assisting Fiscal Staff with this process in the future. **Chair Blago** inquired about funding for the Sea Grant position and it was confirmed that although funding would be available, the Commission voted 3-2 at a recent workshop to remove this allocation from the

budget. **Chair Blago** stressed the importance of this position and his hope that the Commission would reconsider their decision.

Gerry Meckenberg pointed out that amended spreadsheets are not appropriately marked and requested they be identified with the actual publishing date to avoid confusion when identifying the most current version. **Andy Stevens** confirmed future spreadsheets will be identified with a numerical system.

Bill Bergman inquired about the mitigation for Manchester Locks. **Tara Musselman** responded and stated it is presently listed as an annual allocation. Discussion continued regarding funding and the Committee's ability to subsidize MSBU's.

Chair Blago announced an addition to the agenda and introduced **Betty Staugler**. **Ms. Staugler** presented an update and a request for volunteers on the Regional Waterway Management System. She stated Sea Grant will be providing maps and she is requesting several qualified volunteers with local knowledge of the canal system to review the maps for completeness. **Ms. Staugler** also provided members with an update on the Artificial Reef Program. She stated bids are in on the newest reef and it is anticipated to be complete by June 30, 2009. In addition, mention was made of an email received from Growth Management advising a draft version of the Natural Resources and Coastal Element of the updated Comprehensive Plan is available for review on the County website. The County is seeking input and will holding public workshops later in the month. This will include items of interest to this Committee and all are encouraged to participate. **Chair Blago** inquired about the use of building material in the Englewood area for use in the Artificial Reef Program. **Ms. Staugler** advised the building in question would be suitable if it were brought down in the correct fashion and a grant would be available if the timing was right. **Ms. Staugler** responded to a question from **Bill Bergman** regarding the Regional Waterway Management System and her current endeavors.

(Commissioner Starr left the meeting at 10:23am)

An additional inquiry was made with regard to the markers on the Cape Haze Reef. **Ms. Staugler** confirmed this would be the responsibility of Lee County.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

Update – Day Docks

Randy Brodersen brought the Committee up-to-date on the current status of the Day Docks and actions that have taken place thus far. **Tom Hamilton** asked about the time frame for completion of the project and was given an estimate of July, 2009.

Update – Parks and Recreation Joint Meeting

Chair Blago spoke on the issue of kayak improvements and stated his view that kayakers might need to take control of their own funding in the future. **Gerald**

Meckenberg asked if a copy of the minutes from the Joint Meeting have been received and was advised they will be forthcoming.

Supplemental Budget Update
Nothing further was reported.

VIII. OTHER BUSINESS

Committee Vacancy

Gerald Meckenberg confirmed documentation has been sent to the Auxillary requesting a recommendation. **Chair Blago** suggested they be contacted again for participation. **Keith Buechel** inquired about procedures if they do not respond. **Chair Blago** advised of the rules and regulations of Committee Bi-Laws, adding that he is not aware of an organization voluntarily resigning from the Committee since he has been a member.

Informational Packet Mailing

Chair Blago asked members to be patient while this process works itself out and requested any members without a computer let him know within the next month.

Gerald Meckenberg advised members of a free download available to view the documents online and advised the possibility of having meeting documents displayed on the overhead screen was being looked into.

Maurice Sabourin advised he would like to make a motion with regard to National Boater Safety Week, stating this should have been discussed under New Business.

ACTION: A motion was presented by Maurice Sabourin to send a letter to the Board of County Commissioners to adopt and declare May 16, 2009 – May 22, 2009 as Boater Safety Week. A discussion followed. It was established there was not enough time to get this on their agenda and the motion was withdrawn.

Chair Blago suggested future requests be made at least two months ahead of schedule to allow time for the drafting of letters and distribution turn around time.

IX. GOOD OF THE ORDER

Capt. Jay Buckley provided information on the Charlotte Harbor Regatta that is being planned for 2010. Although this is the first year for the event, there is hope that it will become a major attraction for the Harbor.

(Andy Stevens left the meeting at 10:41am)

Chair Blago advised that ten (10) years worth of water quality data in the Lemon Bay area is now available for review on the CHEC website. The information has been compiled and the conclusions will be presented next month by a representative of the DEP. **Chair Blago** recommended members look at the data online and come prepared to ask questions and make comparisons at the next

meeting. **Bob Leonard** remarked on comments he heard regarding the abundance of sea grass in Charlotte County. **Skip Mansfield** commented that CHEC has had a division for the past three (3) years studying water in this area and suggested inviting Al Cheatham to the next meeting.

X. NEXT MEETING

The next Pre-Agenda Meeting will be held on Thursday, June 4, 2009, at 9:30a.m., Room B207. The next regular meeting will be held on Thursday, June 11, 2009, at 9:30a.m., in Room 119.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting **ADJOURNED** at 10:47a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jane Starr

Jane Starr, Recording Secretary

/jms