

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

**Minutes
June 11, 2009**

MEMBERS PRESENT

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

MEMBERS EXCUSED

Richard Anderson
Richard Johnson
William Kumm
Capt. Tim Lynch
Maurice Sabourin
Anthony Tonz

STAFF

Tara Musselman, Public Works
William Taylor, Budget
Andy Stevens, Natural Resources
Mike Koenig, Parks and Recreation
Matthew Cohen, Assistant County Attorney
Jane Starr, Recording Secretary

GUESTS

Grace Amodeo, Manchester Adv. Committee
Randy Brodersen, City of Punta Gorda
Ray Leary, FDEP/CHAP
Mary McMurray, FDEP/CHAP
Douglas Donovan – USCG Auxiliary
Roger Fenneman, PGPD
Kevyn Schweim, BSAC
Howard Shaw

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

Chair Blago called the June 11, 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.

Gerald Meckenberg advised the online meeting documentation will be displayed on the overhead television screens during the course of the meeting.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was presented by **Skip Mansfield** and seconded by **Capt. Jay Buckley**

to accept the May 14, 2009, Marine Advisory Committee minutes as written. A vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

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 - None

VI. NEW BUSINESS

Water Quality Speaker – Ray Leary

Chair Blago introduced **Ray Leary** who presented members with a handout (copy attached to original minutes) showing the results of a ten (10) year study using volunteer data on the water quality and trends around the Charlotte Harbor Estuary, including Lemon Bay, Upper Charlotte Harbor, Gasparilla/Cape Haze, Lower Charlotte Harbor, Pine Island Sound, Matlacha Pass, San Carlos Bay, and Estero Bay.

(Bob Leonard arrived at 9:49am.)

The next part of the meeting was spent discussing the data displayed in the handout and addressing members' questions and concerns. **Mr. Leary** advised of studies planned for the future as well as those conducted in the past and stated his view that this area has one of the better protected estuaries within the state and within the Gulf of Mexico. Additional questions continued regarding water quality in Charlotte County as well as surrounding areas and the definition of terms and numbers used in the report. **Mr. Leary** provided contact information and web addresses where additional documentation can be viewed and further questions answered. He confirmed the Water Quality Testing Program will continue and he will continually be evaluating data as it comes in. **Chair Blago** thanked **Mr. Leary** on behalf of the Committee for his presentation and invited him to return should information of interest become available.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

Update – Day Docks

Randy Brodersen provided an update on the day docks and their progression to date. He reported the application was submitted to the Fish and Wildlife Commission, the FDEP, and to the Army Corp of Engineers. A request for additional information was received from FDEP and was re-submitted. A meeting has been scheduled with the Army Corp of Engineers on site at Laishley Park to address additional questions. At this time, there has been no response from the Fish and Wildlife Commission. **Chair Blago** advised this topic will be taken off the regular agenda but asked **Mr. Brodersen** to report when the project has been completed.

Update – Parks and Recreation Joint Meeting

Chair Blago stated the minutes of the April 1, 2009, Joint meeting was provided in this month's packet and is available online. He stated the County has hired a new Director of Parks and Recreation and he looks forward to working with him in the future. **Bob Leonard** inquired about a pre-agenda meeting for future Joint Meetings with Parks and Recreation. **Chair Blago** advised he talked to Ann Dever and suggested alternate hosting of future joint meetings to allow more input on the agendas by each committee. He added that at this time, no future meetings have been scheduled. **Keith Buechel** suggested asking Parks and Recreation to send a copy of the Pre-agenda for each Committee to review before the meeting. **Chair Blago** stated there has been a problem in the past with getting the agenda in a timely manner to prepare for the meeting and they hope to speak with the new Director and improve on this situation in the future.

Supplemental Budget Update

Andy Stevens attended the WCIND meeting on the supplemental budget and advised it was approved. He stated he will need to speak with the Parks and Recreation Project Manager about questions that were raised regarding the Bay Heights Boat Ramp. In response to Chair Blago's inquiry about budget cuts, **Mr. Stevens** stated they are expecting a decrease but need to wait until the Trim Notices are available before anything definitive can be reported. **Chair Blago** confirmed there is surplus in the budget and **Mr. Stevens** advised the BCC approved to fund the Sea Grant Assistant position through the Grant funds at their last meeting. Chair Blago complimented Mr. Stevens on the efforts he put forth and voiced his view that this position will help out all tax payers of Charlotte County in the future.

VIII. OTHER BUSINESS

Committee Vacancy

Chair Blago turned the meeting over to **Secretary Gerald Meckenberg**. **Mr. Meckenberg** stated the vacant position is for a representative of the Coast Guard Port Charlotte Auxiliary Flotilla 98 and he advised Commander Crockwell has forwarded a recommendation for their candidate, **Douglas Donovan**. **Mr. Donovan** was introduced and provided the Committee with information on his background and qualifications. **Mr. Meckenberg** stated **Mr. Donovan's** credentials are exemplary and asked him to leave the room while the Committee discussed his candidacy.

ACTION: A motion was presented by Gerald Meckenberg to recommend to the Charlotte County Board of County Commissioners that Douglas Donovan be recommended to fill the position vacated by Paul Marcuzzo. Following a second by Bob Leonard, the vote was taken and the motion was unanimously approved.

Mr. Donvon re-entered the meeting and was welcomed by the Committee as their recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners. **Chair Blago** stated the Board will decide on this matter before the next meeting in September.

IX. GOOD OF THE ORDER

Chair Blago commented on the accomplishments of the Committee this session stating they did two budgets this year.

Fred Mesler advised permits are in place and construction has been started on the 3-ton sailboat lift at the back of the Charlotte Harbor Yacht Club Marina. He further stated the State and DEP that the lift which protrudes out approximately ten (10) feet will not interfere with boat traffic on the river or other things of that nature. **Skip Mansfield** asked about status of the ramp and was told they are short on funds at this time.

Summer Recess (July & August)

Bill Bergman's recommendation that the Committee break during the summer months of July and August resulted in the following motion:

ACTION: Bill Bergman presented a motion that the Marine Advisory Committee take a summer hiatus during the months of July and August with regular meetings resuming in September, 2009. The motion was seconded by Mel Staudmyer. Following a vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Chair Blago invited members of the audience to offer comments or suggestions.

Howard Shaw, Harbor Blvd., Port Charlotte, spoke on the issue of sunken vessels still remaining in local canals. In addition to the clear and present danger the vessels present in the waterways at night, he also voiced concern for marine and wildlife that might be affected by oil slicks caused from the vessels. He stated he has contacted Representative Paige Kreegel in this regard and received a reply that there was nothing that could be done. **Chair Blago** commented this is not an uncommon occurrence and **Andy Stevens** confirmed the boat in question has been identified and is on the list for removal. **Chair Blago** responded to **Mr. Shaw's** comments that he felt unlicensed vessels should hold the same criteria as motor vehicles. **Bob Leonard** asked if the Coast Guard was contacted regarding the oil spill. **Mr. Shaw** provided background information on the vessel and the organizations that have been contacted to date. **Mr. Meckenberg** recommended asking Mr. Donovan, the newly elected member of the Committee, to contact his Marine Safety Officer as leaking oil is something the Coast Guard is involved in and authorized to act upon. **Chair Blago** estimated a six (6) month time frame to have the boat removed and asked **Mr. Shaw** to keep the Committee informed.

X. NEXT MEETING

The next Pre-Agenda Meeting will be held on September 3, 2009, at 9:30a.m., Room B207. The next regular meeting will be held on Thursday, September 10, 2009, at 9:30a.m., in Room 119.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting **ADJOURNED** at 10:48a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jane Starr

Jane Starr, Recording Secretary

/jms