

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

**Minutes**  
**September 10, 2009**

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Capt. Ron Blago, Chair  
Len Harris, Vice Chair  
Gerald Meckenberg, Secretary  
Douglas Donovan  
John Homer Fleming  
Tom Hamilton  
Richard Johnson  
William Kumm  
Robert Leonard  
Capt. Tim Lynch  
Fred Mesler  
Raymond Rose  
Maurice Sabourin  
Scott Schermerhorn  
Mel Staudmyer  
Anthony Tonz

**STAFF**

Tara Musselman, Public Works  
Missy L. Christie, Env. & Ext. Services  
Inga Williams, Growth Management  
Andy Stevens, Natural Resources  
Jane Starr, Recording Secretary

**GUESTS**

Randy Brodersen, City of Punta Gorda  
Grace Amodeo, MWWAC  
Mary McMurray, FDEP/CHAP

**MEMBERS EXCUSED**

Richard Anderson  
William Bergman  
Capt. Jay Buckley  
Keith Buechel  
Skip Mansfield

- I. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL/DETERMINATION OF QUORUM**  
**Chair Blago** called the September 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.
- Chair Blago** welcomed **Douglas Donovan** as the newest member of the Marine Advisory Committee, representing U.S.C.G.A. Flotilla 98 Port Charlotte.
- III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**  
A motion was presented and seconded to accept the June 11, 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, Southbridge Waterway, South Gulf Cove, Suncoast Waterway, and Stump Pass. A question and answer period followed.

**V. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS - None**

**VI. NEW BUSINESS**

*County Coastal Concerns & Issues – Community Development Proposal for New Advisory Committee*

**Chair Blago** thanked the members who attended the Board of County Commissioners meeting held during the summer and advised of their discussion regarding the creation of a regional advisory committee that would bring together various groups and stakeholders to address Coastal Concerns and issues. **Inga Williams** provided an update and stated the policy discussed would look into the possibility of creating an advisory committee consisting of stakeholders in Sarasota, Lee, and Charlotte County, and would deal specifically with issues concerning Charlotte Harbor. The County will inquire if neighboring counties are interested in forming an alliance to discuss the particular issues that would impact all three counties. In response to a question from **Chair Blago**, **Ms. Williams** reported that each Element in the Comprehensive Plan is being redrafted and the Coastal Planning Elements and Natural Resources Elements are now divided into two separate elements to follow suit with State Statutes and to deal with specific issues concerning coastal areas. **Chair Blago** offered the Committee's assistance as needed. **Ms. Williams** suggested members review the Plan and post comments on the Smart Charlotte 2050 website, adding that this will be an ongoing redrafting process. She stated the Coastal Planning Element, along with all other Elements, is scheduled to go before the Planning and Zoning Board in November and to the Commission in December. If approved for transmittal, it will then be forwarded to the Dept. of Community Affairs for review and comment. **Ms. Williams** responded to questions from members. **Chair Blago** reiterated **Ms. Williams'** recommendation that members review the information online and leave comments as needed. **Chair Blago** inquired about the timeline for completion and was told that the Evaluation and Appraisal process, which occurs every seven (7) years, needs to be completed by next year. In addition, vision for the county has changed drastically since 1997 when the last Comprehensive Plan was completed, and the County has decided to do an entire redraft. She suggested keeping this topic on the agenda and stated she will invite Bill Byle, who developed the element, to attend the next meeting and provide the Committee with an update. **Ms. Williams** identified herself as Principal Planner for Growth Management.

## **VII. OLD BUSINESS**

### *Update – Day Docks*

**Randy Broderon** explained that the docks are actually located in the DOT Right-of-Way and reported the FDOT Airspace Agreement Modification was received yesterday. He went on to say that FDEP and Army Corp have both stated they want to see approval from FDOT before they will approve the project and this has caused a delay in the completion date.

In answer to an inquiry from **Chair Blago** about the new restaurant in Punta Gorda, **Mr. Broderon** confirmed it is flourishing and there have been no reports of parking conflicts.

### *Supplemental Budget Update*

**Andy Stevens** discussed the status of the supplemental budget and presented members with an update on both completed and partially completed projects. He advised that WCIND's budget hearing is scheduled for tomorrow evening and said it was his understanding that Commissioner Skidmore will attend on behalf of Charlotte County. An update will be provided at the next meeting.

## **VIII. OTHER BUSINESS**

### *Membership Appointments*

**Gerald Meckenberg** advised that Committee bylaws indicate that individual memberships expire every three (3) years and should renew on a staggering basis with one-third of the memberships renewing each year. Upon review of the Membership List, it was discovered that the current expiration dates were incorrect. Corrections were discussed and the Recording Secretary was requested to provide members with an Amended Member List. The seven (7) members whose terms are expiring were asked to verify their continued endorsement with their respective organizations. **Mr. Meckenberg** stated membership renewals and officer elections will be held at the November meeting.

**Chair Blago** announced an addition to the agenda and introduced **Mary McMurray** from Charlotte Harbor Aquatic Preserves (CHAP).

**Len Harris** inquired about a Cease and Desist Order against Riviera Marina following the Hurricane in 2004. **Ms. McMurray** stated she would make further inquiries and provide the committee with her findings. She advised that the compliance section has improved in recent years and she hopes to see better results with these cases soon. She also mentioned an abandoned boat in Matlacha Bay that was finally removed at the expense of the County. **Chair Blago** agreed these issues remain a sore point for area residents.

**Bob Leonard** commented on the positive effect Hurricane Charley had on Sea Grass. **Ms. McMurray** agreed it is flourishing and confirmed that her agency is still conducting sea grass monitoring. She added that the sea grass is also thriving

because of the drought. **Ms. McMurray** also mentioned the FWC Law which will take affect on October 1, 2009, and will enable officers to impose fines on anyone caught prop dredging. **Mr. Leonard** stated he did not feel there would be enough enforcement to make a difference and went on to comment on the large amount of tannin in the water and the cumulative effect this would have on the filtration quality.

In answer to a question from **Chair Blago** regarding new information on Pole and Troll situations that might be coming to Charlotte County, **Ms. McMurray** stated she was not aware of anything ongoing and added that the four (4) Pole and Troll Zones in Lee County will probably be done sometime this year. **Mr. Leonard** advised he use to attend Pole and Troll meetings in Lee County, but has been dropped from their mailing list and has not been able to get his name re-added despite multiple requests. To his knowledge, the plans were pulled and they were going to go directly to WCIND and then to the Governors office. **Ms. McMurray** replied that it was her understanding they were already at the Governors office.

## **IX. GOOD OF THE ORDER**

### *Update on Mangroves/Hurricane Recovery*

**Chair Blago** advised that Betty Staugler was unable to attend today's meeting. In her absence, he reported on the scallop hunt that would be taking place this weekend and announced they were still looking for volunteers. He also advised that Ms. Staugler has published an article in a CHEC publication on Mangrove Recovery and will be invited to speak at a future meeting on the status of mangroves in both the areas that were replanted following Hurricane Charley and in the areas that were not replanted. A copy of Ms. Staugler's article was made available for review.

**Chair Blago** mentioned the importance of future goals and the succession of leadership for MAC in the coming year. He stated MAC is a composite of its members and needs individuals that will aspire to be more actively involved. He suggested one way to do this would be to consider being on the Executive Committee and he highly recommended attendance at the Charlotte Academy to learn more about government operations. He invited members and staff to attend Pre-Agenda Meetings if they have specific topics they would like to see on the agendas. **Mel Staudmyer** confirmed the next regular meeting will be held in Room B106.

**Len Harris** reminded members of a discussion with Howard Shaw that took place at their June meeting regarding a sunken vessel that was leaking oil. **Douglas Donovan** stated that although he has not received a report, it was his understanding that the Coast Guard investigated this incident and did not find an oil spill. He added that he was aware of a minor spill in Burnt Store Marina that took place last weekend. He will look into the matter further.

**Bob Leonard** inquired about the status of having a permanent Commission Liaison. **Chair Blago** responded that Commissioner Skidmore has been unable to attend due to a schedule conflict; however Commissioner Starr has advised that he would be available if MAC should encounter any difficulties or problems. **Chair Blago** stated he felt this was an acceptable solution.

**Grace Amodeo** commented that she felt it was important to have a Commissioner attend the meetings to support the important efforts of the Committee. She stated she would personally speak with each Commissioner in this regard.

**Tara Musselman** advised she spoke with Mr. Taylor in budget and has not heard anything further regarding funds for the study of the Sunrise Waterway and it would not be going before WCIND tomorrow as it has not yet been approved by the Commission. **Mr. Harris** inquired about previous studies and was told **Ms. Musselman** knew of no other studies.

**X. NEXT MEETING**

The next Pre-Agenda Meeting will be held on October 1, 2009, at 9:30a.m., Room B207. The next regular meeting will be held on Thursday, October 8, 2009, at 9:30a.m., in Room B-106.

**XI. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the meeting **ADJOURNED** at 10:32a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Jane Starr*

Jane Starr, Recording Secretary

/jms