

CHARLOTTE COUNTY
MARINE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Charlotte County Administration Center, Room B-106

Minutes
February 11, 2010

MEMBERS PRESENT

Capt. Ron Blago, Chair
Len Harris, Vice Chair
Gerald Meckenberg, Secretary
William Bergman
Capt. Jay Buckley
Mike Conlon
Bill Dixon
John Homer Fleming
Tom Hamilton
Richard Johnson
William Kumm
Robert Leonard
Fred Mesler
Raymond Rose
Scott Schermerhorn
Mel Staudmyer
Cody Vaughan-Birch

STAFF

Commissioner Bob Starr
Tara Musselman, Public Works
Andy Stevens, Env. & Ext. Services
Bill Taylor, Budget and Admin. Services
Elizabeth Staugler, Env. & Ext. Services
Roger DeBruler, Env. & Est. Services
Jane Starr, Recording Secretary

GUESTS

Mary McMurray, DEP Aquatic Preserve
Randy Brodersen, City of Punta Gorda
Jo Mogel, Florida Boating Advisory Council
Jim Kipp, DEP
Lucy Blair, DEP
Dennis Peck, CHCSC

MEMBERS EXCUSED

Douglas Donovan
Capt. Tim Lynch
Capt. Maurice Sabourin
Anthony Tonz

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

Chair Blago called the February 11, 2010, **Marine Advisory Committee** meeting to order at 9:33a.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 new members and led a discussion on Sunshine Law, cautioning members against using their personal computers to conduct MAC business in the event of a Sunshine violation and requesting that a copy of all emails between members be provided to the Recording Secretary to become part of the County's official record.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was presented by **Bill Bergman**, seconded by **Len Harris**, to accept the January 14, 2010, Marine Advisory Committee minutes as written. A vote was taken and

the motion passed unanimously.

Chair Blago advised there would be an addition to the agenda.

IV. COMMISSIONERS COMMENTS

Commissioner Starr addressed the Committee but did not have any formal comments.

V. REGULAR BUSINESS

Budget Update – Bill Taylor

Bill Taylor provided members with a copy of the budget spreadsheet and application details. **Chair Blago** provided an overview of procedures regarding requests for funds. **Mr. Taylor** confirmed the deadline for requests to be submitted was February 5, 2010. **Chair Blago** advised that it is not uncommon to have last minute budget requests. **Bill Bergman** confirmed the process needs to be completed and submitted before the end of March and said applicants will be invited to present their requests and answer questions at the next meeting.

MSBU Update

Tara Musselman provided a handout and presented members with an update regarding the following projects: Alligator Creek, Buena Vista Area Waterways, Gulf Cove Waterways, Harbor Heights, Hayward Canals, Manchester Waterway, Northwest Port Charlotte, Pirate Harbor, South Gulf Cove, and Stump Pass. A question and answer period followed.

Chair Blago commented further on the budget. **Ms. Musselman** advised that she still has three additional requests that would be submitted by the end of the day.

V. NEW BUSINESS

El Jobean Ramp Status

Chair Blago reminded members that the project is underway and it is anticipated to be completed and open to the public by May 1, 2010.

Jim Kipp/Lucy Blair – DEP

Chair Blago provided a brief history of the ongoing problems with Riviera Marina and welcomed **Jim Kipp**. **Mr. Kipp** presented members with an update and said they have the majority of information needed to move forward. **Len Harris** brought up areas of concern and expressed frustrations, adding that this has been an ongoing issue for the past six (6) years. He requested that **Mr. Kipp** share the information he receives regarding the steps that will be taken to resolve the issue as well as the timeline involved. **Lucy Blair** added additional comments and stated there have been significant changes over the past year in procedures and in rule support for enforcement on State lands and said their attorneys will be taking full advantage of those changes as they move forward. A discussion ensued and **Mr. Kipp** and **Ms. Blair** addressed members' questions and concerns. **Betty Staugler** offered additional information and **Chair Blago** thanked **Ms. Blair** and **Mr. Kipp** for attending today's meeting.

Parks and Recreation Areas of Mutual Concern

Chair Blago advised that the Parks and Recreation Department has cancelled the Joint Advisory Committee meeting that they had tentatively scheduled for April. It was their feeling that there were no areas of mutual concern that needed to be discussed at this

time. **Chair Blago** disagreed and felt there were many areas that would benefit from discussion such as:

- Update on the Request for funds from Bay Heights for a Boat Ramp
- Update on the Blue Waters Trail
- Boat Ramp Maintenance
- Port-a-John Removal at the Boat Ramps

It was his feeling there has been a miscommunication with Parks and Recreation and he asked for members to state their opinion on the issue. It was the general consensus that better communication was needed with Parks and Recreation on issues that affect the boating and fishing community.

Commissioner Starr advised that the leadership of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee has changed and he requested an email be sent to him with the Marine Advisory Committee's proposal to hold another meeting. He felt it was an excellent idea to meet once a year and he offered to help facilitate a meeting. **Mr. Hamilton** requested that a Joint Pre-Agenda meeting be held to establish the agenda so that all of the advisory committees can offer input. **Chair Blago** led a discussion regarding his previous suggestion that each advisory committee set the agenda and host the meeting on a rotating basis.

Letter from Beaches and Shores Advisory Committee

Chair Blago read excerpts from a letter he recently received from the Beaches and Shores Advisory Committee regarding a suggestion to remove the Stump Pass Buoys to save the County funds and to avoid future liability.

(Andy Stevens arrived at 10:29am)

Chair Blago reviewed the history of Stump Pass and opened the floor for discussion.

Mr. Harris commented that \$80,000.00 is set aside each year for maintenance and aid to navigation. **Mr. Leonard** felt that permanent pilings should never be installed and the answer was a properly designed buoy system. He did not feel the channel should be left unmarked. **Chair Blago** agreed removing the markers would cause unnecessary risk to boaters.

Commissioner Starr advised that he previously lived on the Island for thirteen (13) years prior to the year 2000 and never noticed the pass being marked. **Mel Staudmyer** disagreed and spoke of marker maintenance that took place prior to that time. Discussion continued and members offered their viewpoints. It was the general consensus that the channel needs to be marked but it was preferable that it be with a system that is more flexible and cost efficient to maintain than permanent pilings.

Ms. Musselman confirmed that markers were not included in what is out to bid for the contractor. She stated Coastal Engineering Consultants has requested that Public Works give the exact coordinates of where they are placed right now and they will come up with a design on where to correctly mark once the channel is dredged. Discussion continued. **Chair Blago** stated that more input is needed and, at this time, the Committee would not recommend pulling the markers. **Jo Mogel**, introduced herself and offered to research

any available information through the Florida Boater Advisory Council for the purpose of discovering what has been done in past situations. Liability issues were discussed and **Chair Blago** confirmed he would respond to the letter.

Budget Update – Andy Stevens

Chair Blago mentioned that three (3) new applications would be forthcoming. **Mr. Stevens** advised that decisions will need to be made regarding the requests because it is possible there will not be adequate funding for all of the projects. **Chair Blago** announced that anyone requesting funds would be invited to address the Committee at the next meeting. **Mr. Stevens** spoke further on estimated shortfalls and discussed line items that MAC has already agreed upon. He commented on Roger DeBruler's position and said it was his opinion that the program has become much more efficient since Mr. DeBruler has been overseeing it. **Mr. Stevens** responded to questions from members and agreed to provide the Committee with an updated document showing what the funds are and what they can be used for. **Commissioner Starr** inquired about a request from the Boca Grande Fire Department. **Chair Blago** provided details concerning the request.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

Palm Island Speed Zone Update

Chair Blago advised that he considered this a dead issue but went on to say that if the people of Palm Island or any group or organization would like to formally request that the issue be re-opened, MAC would be more than willing to consider it.

VIII. OTHER BUSINESS

Betty Staugler announced that she and Roger DeBruler would be presenting at the Englewood Fishing Club this evening. She went on to say that the City of North Port, City of Punta Gorda, and Charlotte County have a bi-monthly planning group that meet to discuss regional planning projects. She expressed her appreciation to Tim Lynch for his assistance with the half day tour they requested to learn more about water dependent businesses and specifically, Clean Marinas. **Ms. Staugler** responded to a question from **Len Harris** regarding expansion of the marina.

Randy Brodersen updated members and said he expected to be on the March 23, 2010 agenda in Tallahassee. He will confirm this at the next meeting. He advised that he would be attending the meeting if it goes forward in March. **Chair Blago** reminded Mr. Brodersen that there is a timeline before funds need to be returned.

Mr. Bergman asked **Ms. Musselman** to comment on money allocated for floating debris. She responded it will go before the Board of County Commissioners at their next meeting and then to the March 9th meeting of WCIND if it is approved. She stated she has viewed areas in Alligator Creek and advised that private citizens were removing aluminum from the waters which has resulted in a noticeable improvement. She added that most of the debris appears to be from previous hurricanes.

Ms. Musselman advised **Mel Staudmyer** that she was able to obtain information about Harbor Heights and said that originally when the survey was done, there were an additional 14,500 cubic yards. After Coastal Engineering Consultants went out and did the work that was discussed earlier in the meeting, the figure was amended to reflect 13,144 cubic yards.

Jo Mogel provided information on an organizational meeting she recently attended and

discussion that took place regarding the mandatory registration of non-motorized boats. She made known that WCIND has been requested to supply a list of services offered to non-motorized vessels and an effort will be made to put a monetary value on these services. She stated she is in recent of a similar list from the state of Ohio to provide as an example and to be used as a guideline. A follow-up will be provided at the next meeting.

IX. GOOD OF THE ORDER

Robert Leonard mentioned that the Coastal Conservation Association is holding their annual fundraising banquet next month and offered to be available to anyone needing additional information.

Gerry Meckenberg acknowledged Grace Amodeo, who has been a regular attendee at meetings and made known that she has not being able to attend meetings because she is in the hospital having knee replacement surgery. He felt her regret at missing the meetings strikes a milestone for public support.

X. NEXT MEETING

The next Pre-Agenda Meeting will be held on Thursday, March 4, 2010, at 9:30a.m., Room B-207. The next regular meeting will be held on Thursday, March 11, 2010, at 9:30a.m., in Room 119.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting **ADJOURNED** at 11:18 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jane Starr

Jane Starr, Recording Secretary