

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

**Minutes**  
**March 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  
William Kumm  
Robert Leonard  
Capt. Tim Lynch  
Raymond Rose  
Capt. Maurice Sabourin  
Cody Vaughan-Birch

**MEMBERS EXCUSED**

Richard Johnson  
Fred Mesler  
Scott Schermerhorn  
Mel Staudmyer  
Douglas Donovan  
Anthony Tonz

**STAFF**

Commissioner Bob Starr  
Tara Musselman, Public Works  
Andy Stevens, Env. & Ext. Services  
Elizabeth Staugler, Env. & Ext. Services  
Bill Taylor, Budget and Admin. Services  
Derek Rooney, Assist. County Attorney

**GUESTS**

Tom Knight, Royal Palm Marina  
Dale Wentzel, Royal Palm Marina  
Richard Dorken, C.H.E.C.  
Ronald Ludvig, Peace River Sail & Power Squadron  
Ron Willis, Flotilla 99 Coast Guard Auxiliary  
Chief C.W. Blosser, III, Boca Grande Fire Dept.  
Commander Jim Kaletta, Civil Air Patrol  
Chief Brian Gorski, Englewood Fire District  
Jo Mogel, Florida Boating Advisory Council

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

**Chair Blago** called the March 11, 2010, **Marine Advisory Committee** meeting to order at 9:29a.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** explained the importance of today's meeting and reviewed the procedures and requirements for requesting and recommending the allocation of funds.

**Chair Blago** introduced **Tom Knight** who addressed the Committee and provided information on his background. He expressed concern regarding the

status of the Stump Pass dredging and marking of the channel. He felt the inability for boaters to safely come into the channel has been a detriment to the County and has resulted in revenues being diverted from Charlotte County to Boca Grande and Venice. It was his understanding the dredge could begin as early as next month and he asked that a recommendation be given to find a contractor to monitor the channel following the dredge and install moving buoys instead of fixed markers. In his opinion, this would be an asset to the County.

**Mr. Knight** introduced his employer and the new owner of Royal Palm Marina, **Dale Wentzel**. **Mr. Wentzel** addressed the Committee and offered his support and assistance as a marina owner. **Chair Blago** welcomed **Mr. Wentzel** to the community.

**Chair Blago** announced that Skip Mansfield's wife passed away this past weekend and offered condolences.

**III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Minutes from the last meeting will be tabled until the next meeting.

**IV. REGULAR BUSINESS**

*MSBU Update*

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

**V. COMMISSIONERS COMMENTS - None**

**V. NEW BUSINESS**

*Budget Update – Andy Stevens*

**Andy Stevens** provided a breakdown and answered questions regarding various funding and how it can be used. **Chair Blago** offered additional comments and **Mr. Stevens** provided members with a handout showing the most up-to-date budget as of March 8, 2010. **Chair Blago** advised that each request would be presented in order and then voted on. **Bill Bergman** provided instructions for deferring items. The following items were reviewed for approval:

Item #1, Charlotte County Extension - \$17,000.00

**Elizabeth Staugler** presented the request and discussion followed.

***ACTION: A motion was presented by Tom Hamilton and seconded by Maurice Sabourin to approve the Charlotte County Extension's application in the amount of \$17,000.00, for misc. expenditures/supplies for Sea Grant boat and truck. Following a vote, the motion carried unanimously.***

Item #2, Charlotte County Extension - \$15,000.00

**Elizabeth Staugler** presented the request and a discussion followed.

***ACTION:*** *A motion was presented by Bill Dixon and seconded by Jay Buckley to approve the Charlotte County Extension's application in the amount of \$15,000.00, for redesign and printing of the 7<sup>th</sup> edition of Boating and Angling Guide to Charlotte Harbor and the creation of a companion website. Following a vote, the motion carried unanimously.*

Item #3, Punta Gorda Boaters Alliance - \$2,950.00

**Bill Bergman** presented a sample of a Boaters Alert card and voiced his approval of the program.

***ACTION:*** *A motion was presented by Bob Leonard and seconded by Bill Bergman to approve a request from the Punta Gorda Boaters Alliance in the amount of \$2,950.00 for the printing of "Boaters Alert cards". Following a vote, the motion carried unanimously.*

Item #4, Charlotte Harbor Environmental Center - \$17,000.00

**Richard Dorken** presented the request and a discussion followed.

***ACTION:*** *A motion was presented by Tom Hamilton and seconded by Bill Dixon to approve the Charlotte Harbor Environmental Center's request in the amount of \$17,000.00 to provide boat-based, environmental education programs for students and citizens of Charlotte County. Following a vote, the motion carried unanimously.*

Item #5, Peace River Sail & Power Squadron - \$3,000.00

**Ron Ludvig** presented the request and a discussion followed.

***ACTION:*** *A motion was presented by Bill Bergman and seconded by Len Harris to approve a request from the Peace River Sail & Power Squadron, in the amount of \$3,000.00, to reduce the cost of boater safety classes and to create a more attractive flyer. Following a vote, the motion carried unanimously.*

Item #6, U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Flotilla 99 Rotonda West - \$11,706.00

**Ron Willis** presented the request and a discussion followed.

***ACTION:*** *Chair Blago entertained a motion to approve the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Flotilla 99 Rotonda West's request in the amount of \$11,706.00, minus \$1,935.00 for trailer graphics, for a self contained radio station to be used for emergency situations. The motion was moved by Bob Leonard and seconded Tom Hamilton. Maurice Sabourin announced he had a voting conflict and asked to be excused from the vote. Following discussion, a vote was unanimously approved to call the question. A vote was taken and the motion failed 5-8. A motion was presented to approve the full \$11,706.00 requested for this item and was seconded by Bill Dixon. A vote was taken and the motion*

*carried 9-4.*

Item #7, Boca Grande Fire Control District - \$40,827.00

**Chief C.W. Blosser, III** presented the request and discussion followed.

***ACTION:** A motion was presented by Tom Hamilton and seconded by Bill Bergman to reject the request from the Boca Grande Fire Control District in the amount of \$40,827.00 for the purchase of a boat for fire/rescue response. A vote was taken and the motion carried 12-1 with Cody Vaughan-Birch abstaining due to a conflict of interest. The request was declined.*

(Items #8 and #9 were heard out of order.)

Item #9, Charlotte County Natural Resources - \$53,000.00

**Betty Staugler** presented the request and discussion followed.

***ACTION:** A motion was presented by Bill Bergman and seconded by Tom Hamilton to approve the Charlotte County Natural Resources' request in the amount of \$53,000.00 to fund the Sea Grant Assistant position. Following a vote, the motion carried unanimously.*

Item #8, Charlotte County Natural Resources - \$55,000.00

**Betty Staugler** presented the request and discussion followed.

***ACTION:** A motion was presented by Tom Hamilton and seconded by Len Harris to approve the Charlotte County Natural Resources' request in the amount of \$55,000.00 to build concrete reefs and deployment with funding match - \$12,500.00 in a U of F account. Following a vote, the motion carried unanimously.*

Item #10, Charlotte County Public Works - \$5,000.00

**Tara Musselman** presented the request and discussion followed.

***ACTION:** A motion was presented by Jay Buckley and seconded by Cody Vaughan-Birch to approve a request from Charlotte County Public Works, in the amount of \$5,000.00, for the Alligator Bay Educational Program for school age children. Following a vote, the motion carried unanimously.*

Item #11, Charlotte County Public Works - \$5,000.00

**Tara Musselman** announced she was withdrawing the request in the amount of \$5,000.00 for the removal of navigable waterway debris other than derelict vessels and will seek funds later in the year only if necessary.

Item #12, Charlotte County Composite Squadron, Civil Air Patrol - \$11,500.00

**Commander Jim Kaletta** presented the request and discussion followed.

***ACTION:*** A motion was presented by Tom Hamilton and seconded by Jay Buckley to approve a request from Charlotte County Composite Squadron, Civil Air Patrol, in the amount of \$11,500.00, to offset some of the costs of operating aircraft on four Sundown Patrols each week. Following a vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Item #13, Englewood Area Fire Control District - \$85,000.00  
**Chief Brian Gorski** presented the request and discussion followed.

***ACTION:*** A motion was presented by Bill Bergman and seconded by Capt. Maurice Sabourin to reject the request from the Englewood Area Fire Control District in the amount of \$85,000.00 for the replacement of the existing Fire-Rescue Boat to enable continued safe, quick, and reliable response of Marine Fire-Rescue Services to all types of watercraft. Following a vote, the motion carried unanimously to decline the request.

**Bill Taylor** provided information and answered questions regarding the amount of funds available for allocation and the balance remaining. **Chair Blago** reminded members that there will still be requests that occur on an emergency basis throughout the year and it is good to have some sort of surplus available for this purpose. Discussion continued. **Chair Blago** requested that revised numbers be provided by **Mr. Stevens** and **Mr. Taylor** before the beginning of the next meeting.

*El Jobean Ramp Status*

**Tara Musselman** provided an update on the progress to date and confirmed renovation should begin next week.

*Parks and Recreation Areas of Mutual Concern*

**Chair Blago** advised that Parks and Recreation is going through a period of transition at this time and he will continue to document a list of mutual concerns to discuss at a later date.

**VII. OLD BUSINESS** - None

**VIII. OTHER BUSINESS** - None

**IX. GOOD OF THE ORDER**

*Consolidated CIP Report Online*

**Gerald Meckenberg** made known that it was brought to the group's attention that there is a Consolidated CIP Report available online that sheds light on what projects exist and their status. **Ms. Musselman** offered additional information.

**Chair Blago** advised that he was informed that the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission has requested that Charlotte County begin the process of starting a state mandated Manatee Protection Plan. **Mr. Stevens** confirmed that the Commission has

approved a resolution to form a committee to look at the viability of potentially making a recommendation in this regard and once the committee is formed, will be looking at all aspects of developing such a plan. **Chair Blago** discussed the costs involved in this type of program and encouraged interested members to bring themselves up-to-date on the issue and possibly apply for a position on the Committee if there are still vacancies. **Commissioner Starr** requested that interested parties submit their applications to the Board. **Mr. Leonard** mentioned the first volunteer group that was created for manatee protection was not successful and suggested that some existing voluntary organization add this to their duties. **Chair Blago** also made the suggestion that members of this committee be Charlotte County residents. **Mr. Stevens** responded with additional information regarding the committee and the type of background they are looking for.

**Chair Blago** advised that **Jo Mogle** is conducting research on the marker situation at Stump Pass.

**Attorney Rooney** commented on a recent question as to whether emails between members would be considered a violation of Sunshine. He confirmed that it would be considered a violation if the discussion contained any information that could come up at a board meeting. **Chair Blago** reminded members they are responsible for their own conduct in this area. **Attorney Rooney** offered to provide members with additional materials regarding Sunshine if needed.

**X. NEXT MEETING**

The next Pre-Agenda Meeting will be held on Thursday, April 1, 2010, at 9:30a.m., Room B-207. The next regular meeting will be held on Thursday, April 8, 2010, at 9:30a.m., in Room 119.

**Mr. Stevens** made known that the next WCIND Board meeting will be held on Friday, March 12, 2010.

**XI. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the meeting **ADJOURNED** at 11:34a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Jane Starr*

Jane Starr, Recording Secretary

/jms