

MINUTES
CHARLOTTE COUNTY MARINE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Thursday, October 8, 2015, 9:30 a.m.
Charlotte County Administration Center
18500 Murdock Circle, Room 119, Port Charlotte, FL 33948

I. Call To Order and Pledge of Allegiance

II. Roll Call

III. Chairman's comments

A. REMINDER TO ALL VISITORS ADDRESSING THE COMMITTEE: PLEASE SIGN IN. It is helpful when preparing the Minutes. A clipboard and a pen are provided on the podium for your convenience.

B. REMINDER TO ALL MEMBERS STATE THEIR NAME AND ORGANIZATION and TO USE THE MICROPHONE WHEN ADDRESSING THE COMMITTEE. It is helpful when preparing the Minutes.

C. REMINDER TO ALL MEMBERS AND VISITORS TO PLEASE SILENCE THEIR CELL PHONES.

IV. Changes to the Agenda

Capt. Blago will report on the recent BSAC under New Business.

V. Citizen Comments on Agenda Items

Commissioner Deutsch commented regarding the recent meeting of numerous County staff with WCIND, on the topic of possibly increasing funding support for County projects, which he said was a very productive meeting; he anticipates having more detailed comments in the future. He expects particular attention to the old railroad bridge, for further removal efforts on the parts of this failing structure that produce hazards to navigation. WCIND has helped in the past with these removal efforts, but the structure continues to deteriorate and needs further effort.

Commissioner Deutsch further noted that the new executive of WCIND has been invited to address the Commission at the next meeting. Chair Ireland commented further, indicating he would appreciate it if Mr. McBride would present to MAC as well; Commissioner Deutsch said he would work on arranging this.

VI. Regular Business

A. Approval of the Minutes of the Pre-Agenda Meeting from October 1, 2015 – Additions, Corrections or Deletions – none offered. Approved by acclamation.

B. Approval of the Minutes of the Regular Meeting from September 10, 2015 – Additions, Corrections or Deletions – none offered. Approved by acclamation.

C. MSBU Update

Mr. Mopps began by directing members' attention to the County website and specifically the links to project updates which incorporate his written monthly comments but with day-to-day updates; he asked that people be aware of this for themselves and also to direct their fellow citizens to this very current source of information. He then provided comments, on individual projects where appropriate, in support of his most recent written report dated October 2015.

With regard to Manasota Key North, he reported on the October 7th meeting with Sarasota County staff to review the currently-proposed plan for beach renourishment, intended to explore Sarasota's interest in partnering with Charlotte County on such a project. This was an information-only meeting to bring them up to speed, particularly in regard to the exposure of the hard bottom along the Charlotte County shore. Mr. Mopps also commented on progress made on the parallel lock project, including adjustments made in order to keep the price of the project reasonable.

There was also a review of the extensive progress regarding the Stump Pass project, based on the most recent emails from National Marine Fisheries and the Army Corps. With regard to dayboards, he noted that this project was currently with the County Attorneys Office with additional information that had been requested, including traffic counts throughout the area, and affidavits from citizens which had been collected; this material and more is being submitted to FWC on Oct. 9th. The ACOE has indicated they have no problem with the proposal; likewise the Coast Guard – these are good indicators that the matter will go forward with FWC as well.

Mr. Harris asked about the NMF responses, and how we track them; Mr. Mopps indicated that they do not in fact regularly update their own website so that people know where the project stands. Further discussion ensued on this situation. Ms. Buck asked when he anticipated the dayboards would actually be installed; Mr. Mopps said that he didn't expect a long timeline after the final submittal tomorrow. However, he noted, there are then just a few local, technical issues (passing of the ordinance by the Commission, etc.) to be accomplished. He felt that by next month he should be able to report more accurately.

- D. Budget Update – Mr. Johnston offered comments with respect to the question regarding Boater Registration Fees posed at last week's pre-agenda – he referenced the handout he had prepared on this subject (**copy attached**). He also noted that there is no longer any advantage to registering in one place over another; amount you pay is based on your home address. Capt. Blago said his research showed state-wide boat registrations overall have gone down 10% over the past five years; he asked Mr. Johnston to comment on whether the county is following this trend. Commissioner Deutsch commented on this trend in relation to the overall economy and predicted an uptick based on improved economy. Capt. Blago then asked what the 50% of BIF funds shown on the report represents; Mr. Johnston responded that we get 50% of registration fee, and out of that 50%, the first \$1.00 goes to the Manatee Fund, then the costs and fees which vary by vessel, but are about \$4.00.
- E. Capt. Blago reported on his attendance at the BSAC meeting Oct. 1st, starting with BSAC's need for someone to fill the vacant seat; they are soliciting recommendations. He then spoke about the very interesting presentation by Mopps and Poff. His sense of the reporting on Stump Pass was that it still faced challenges, noting that they hope to start by Dec.15th and it MUST start before Feb. 15th; this is challenging given the complexity of the project. He also commented on the beach renourishment presentation.

VII. New Business

VIII. Old Business

IX. Other Business

A. Budget Application Period for 2017

Mr. Johnston spoke to the grant application process this year, noting there are a greater number of applicants these days, causing the process to run to its deadlines. He indicated they would be trying new time frames to make things move more efficiently, specifically opening up the process earlier so it can be closed earlier. He said the intention would be to hear and approve all applications by March, which would require presenting applications to the MAC in February, including a complete analysis of the applications. For that to work, the deadline for applications to be submitted would be in January, and therefore we need to open application process NOW and let applicants apply right away.

Chair Ireland asked who will ensure that everyone knows it is getting under way earlier; Mr. Johnston said that his group will handle that part of the process. Mr. Ludvig asked if it was necessary to ask permission to make this change; Mr. Johnston indicated that was not necessary, but Fiscal is bringing it to MAC as the most important folks in the process. Mr. Hamilton asked what date the applications would be online, and Mr. Johnston responded they would be available by the end of October.

Commissioner Deutsch suggested working with the Public Information Office in terms of publicizing this change; Mr. Johnston indicated he would talk with Elaine Jones to assist with this.

Chair Ireland clarified that the members had already discussed having two meetings in one day in March; the room has been reserved for that purpose. The members indicated agreement with this plan.

B. Update on Boater Registration – given above. Chair Ireland confirmed this subject had come up at pre-agenda, with the same concern about a possible decline in region-wide boater registration numbers, since this constitutes one source of MAC funding. He went on to note that, first of all, the numbers are not dropping off as precipitously as first thought, and also that Charlotte County, along with Sarasota and Collier counties, are within a few registrations of one another, and Lee County numbers have almost doubled. Further comments were offered on this subject.

C. Though it was not on the agenda, Chair Ireland indicated he wanted to comment on the daily log of pump-out boat figures. Noting that WCIND has pulled their funding of this service, he asked of Mr. Buckley to help clarify some of the information on the log, specifically about what seemed to be burning an inordinate amount of gas in servicing the Lashley Marina customers.

Mr. Buckley indicated he didn't know about that specifically, as he has just been looking at the numbers of out-of-state vs. Florida-registered boaters. He commented on the intention that the boat be a county-wide effort, not just a city effort; he also mentioned the current thinking about moving the mooring field from the east to the west of bridge, near Gilchrist, and felt that permitting should

be easier now. He said he had no idea what the plans for the pump-out boat would be going forward, and that he didn't know anything about the WCIND decision on pulling funding.

Commissioner Deutsch indicated that the pump-out boat was only eligible for funding for a short time under the original understanding. Mr. Johnston indicate he didn't recall that detail, but he was aware that WCIND has tightened up covering operating costs. Further discussion ensued on the matter, including the opinion that if the pump-outs are being used by live-aboards at Laishley, those folks should contribute more inasmuch as this is "their home" and certainly land-based homes get sewer bills.

Mr. Harris expressed his concern that, from the beginning, MAC has asked for a breakdown on these figures by location, but the data haws all been lumped together; he asked why it can't be reported on specific locations? Mr. Buckley said he could look into it, noting that it used to be done for the City Council but has been abbreviated, and he doesn't know why.

Mr. Ludvig indicated he agreed with Mr. Harris regarding the need for MAC to receive a detailed report. Ms. Bareither indicated she also wanted to see separate details on Laishley use of the pump-out boat; she said she felt MAC wasn't here to help out a private business that charges money for their services, and she felt this report suggested intermingling. Mr. Davidson indicated he agreed with Commissioner Deutsch and would support helping the effort but only if they are collecting money for this service; motor home pump-outs cost money and so should this. Further discussion on this matter continued.

D. Citizen Comments

None

E. Good of the Order

- F18 Mid-Winter Regatta 10/19 – 10/24 – review of the anticipated activities.
- Ms. Buck also mentioned that MP Officer John Kennedy had recently had successful brain surgery and was recuperating at home
- Ms. Bareither commented on the Coast Guard Auxiliary being part of a study group on red tide; will report to group on anything of interest.

F. Next Meetings

- The next Pre-Agenda Meeting will be held Thursday, November 5, 2015 at 9:30 a.m. in B-106.
- The next Regular Meeting will be held Thursday, November 12, 2015 at 9:30 a.m. in Room 119.

G. Adjournment

On motion made and unanimously accepted, the meeting was adjourned at 10:36 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Gayle Moore,
Recording Secretary

Minutes Approved

Tom Ireland, Chairman
Marine Advisory Committee