



MINUTES

CHARLOTTE COUNTY MARINE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Thursday, May 13, 2021

9:30 a.m.

Charlotte County Administration Center

1120 Centennial Blvd.

Port Charlotte, FL 33948

1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Ireland called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

2. Roll Call

Upon the roll being called it was determined a quorum was present.

3. 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, STAFF AND VISITORS TO PLEASE SILENCE THEIR CELL PHONES.

4. Changes to the Agenda

None offered.

5. Citizen Comments on Agenda Items

None offered.

6. Regular Business

A. Approval of the Minutes of the Pre-Agenda Meeting from April 1, 2021
Additions, Corrections or Deletions, none offered; Approved as submitted, by acclamation.

B. Approval of the Minutes of the Regular Meeting from April 8, 2021.
Additions, Corrections or Deletions, none offered; Approved as submitted, by acclamation.

C. Financials – Jim Darden

Jim Darden said everything this Board approved for the grants was approved by the Board of County Commissioners. They also approved the water fest grant.

Mr. Darden said John Welsh and the Punta Gorda Boaters Alliance requested a grant for a weather station to be placed on Marker 2 in the Peace River/Charlotte Harbor.

A Motion was made by Dr. Roger Strube to approve, seconded by Mike Savino, with a unanimous vote.

Susan Bareither asked is the marker in place?

Mr. Ireland said yes. The marker is in place but not the weather station.

Dr. Strube said the weather station for #4 is in place and up and running. This weather station will go on marker #2.

D. MSBU Update – Zach Patchell/Matt Loan

Mr. Patchell discussed the items on his MSBU project update list.

Ackerman and Manchester Waterway – no projects – refer to Manchester waterway.

Alligator Creek – there is no active project at this time.

Buena Vista – Request letter of interest for engineering design project of the exterior r access and connector channels went out. A firm was selected and work will begin soon. RLI went out for the interior bathymetric survey project.

Edgewater North – An RLI for a bathymetric survey of the entire system was sent out and a firm was selected. Work should begin mid-May.

Gulf Cove Waterways – Atkins North America Inc. was the selected Engineering firm for the Interior canal survey and design project. Atkins has completed a survey of the canal system and is working towards 90% plans. Survey Data reported to MSBU, waterway committee recommended a system wide interior dredge. Budget planning is under way.

Harbour Heights – An RFQ (request for quotation) has gone out to qualified firm for a limited amount of navigational trimming in the Santa Barbara and San Salvador canals. A firm was selected. Trimming will begin the first week of May. An RLI went out to qualified firms for a spot dredge design project of the Harbour Heights canals.

Hayward canals – Johnson Engineering is working towards bid ready specs and plans and has received permitting from State and Federal agencies. A dredging project of the access channel and main canal is anticipated to go out to bid early in FY22.

Manchester Waterway – No active project at this time.

Northwest Port Charlotte – Coastal Engineering Consultants is passing forward with this design work of the interior canal dredging design project, working towards bid ready plans and specs. Deliverables have been received and reviewed. The dredge project is being readied for the bid process.

Peace River shores: No active projects at this time.

Pirate Harbor: No project at this time. The MSBU is exploring budgeting options for a future design and dredge project.

Southbridge Waterway: No active projects at this time.

South Gulf Cove: RLI went out for survey, design and construction oversight for a maintenance dredge project of the turn basin and access channel. A firm has been selected and is working on a schedule for this work. Johnson has submitted draft plans and is working on securing permitting with State agencies. Johnson is waiting on an update status from the Federal agency.

South Gulf Cove Parallel Lock: DMK has submitted the permit application to the agencies for their review and are working toward the 90% plans. SWFWMD permit has been received and DMK is working toward FDEP clearance. The County has requested an estimate of cost to design a Tender House for the locks, and some plan upgrades. A ROM estimate has been received and some internal review and public outreach is under way.

Suncoast Waterway: No active projects at this time. This MSBU is looking into budgeting options for a future dredge project.

Matt Logan updated the Committee on Stump Pass. They are currently working on fiscal year 21/22 for stump pass dredging. The plan is to bid this early to get the time factor maximum amount of time. This is a much smaller dredge than in the past.

On Manasota Key and Don Padro we are monitoring the beaches for birds and sea turtles.

The Port Charlotte beach complex is going through a master plan, redesigning the park. They are working with Natural Resources and Coastal Engineering doing a study to stabilize the shoreline and the adjacent Sunrise channel.

Captain Blago asked for the future dredging on Stump Pass, where will the sand go?

Mr. Logan historically we renourish stump pass state park, but for this project, we will use the sand from the inlet dredging to place north and south of the pass. (north of the groin)

Steve Scott asked on planning for Port Charlotte beach complex, is there any way to include the sailing people, I know they would like to be included.

Mr. Logan said that is what Natural Resources will work on and will reach out to them.

Dr. Strube said he and Mr. Killion should be on that crew. He also said the lack of input from this committee and others is impediment for the sailing center to be successful. They are putting up a small garage. The square footage would have allowed more if the County had sailing people involved. Charlotte Harbor is one of the top 10 sailing venues in the country. Charlotte Harbor/Peace River is one of the best locations/harbors to sail because of our geography, climate, current and wind patterns. Charlotte County's portion of the harbor is grossly underused in spite of its being one of the best places to sail in the Country. The two car garage recently built at Port Charlotte Beach Complex does not qualify as a "community sailing center". For Reference, see the pictures of three Florida, one Wisconsin and one Texas "Community Sailing centers".

E. Derelict Vessel Report – Roger DeBruler

Roger DeBruler said they have 6 boats in the water to be removed. 2 boats have been re-located. The County has gone to the State and requested grant money for 2 of the vessels. We are waiting on that contract to be signed and sent to Tallahassee so we can get reimbursed for the boat removal.

Mr. Ireland asked about the status for the one labeled Chadwick Cove.

Mr. DeBruler said the owners have come forward and one is living on the vessel. The owners are in compliance.

Robert Hickey asked if there is any updates on the derelict boats off Alligator Creek by the Riviera marina?

Mr. DeBruler said the manager is overseeing the boats. The marine officers are watching the marina and if they are moving boats.

Dr. Strube said the owner of the Riviera marina is moving boats to Gasparilla marina. They might take control of it. He said he believes the marina is still in the courts from the original owner.

F. Community Services Update – Tina Powell

Roger DeBruler did the report for Tina. They had the ribbon cutting at the Port Charlotte Beach complex sailing center. The sailing center is now open. Nothing else has changed from last month.

Mr. Hickey said the boater's alliance is working through Tina with an idea. This is for day docks. (or the lack of/shortage of docking). He read a letter from the Punta Gorda Boaters Alliance. The Punta Gorda Charlotte County boater's alliance has identified the need for more day docks on the Peace River. We believe the ideal location for additional day docks is behind the Charlotte County event center. The boater's alliance proposes to work with the County to secure permits and funding provided Charlotte County is supportive on this project to place day docks behind the event center. Once we have a commitment from the County, we will begin securing funding. Placing day docks behind the event center, much needed parking for boaters, will be provided in downtown Punta Gorda, which in turn, will increase traffic for local business and have a positive impact on sales tax revenue. There is serious lack of areas for local and visiting boaters to dock for the day and visit the community. When boaters cannot find a place to dock, they drive all the way down to Burnt Store marina which is Lee County.

Dr. Strube motioned that the MAC board have a resolution and support for the day docks, seconded by **Mr. Hickey** with a unanimous vote.

Mr. Bigness said in Englewood, a group approached him about having a skating room in the area. He said many said they would chip in and pay for it. The County has been kicking this around and it was on the BCC agenda, but then got canceled. He said this may come back again.

Ainger Creek – The park redevelopment project is managed by the Facilities construction and maintenance department. The most current information can be found on the County's Project Status Updates webpage.

Allapatchee – The fishing pier replacement design budgeted for this fiscal year; design is in the site data collection phase.

Hathaway Park – Design for the Hathaway Park floating dock and gangway will be starting the site data collection in the next 2 weeks.

Live Oak Point – installation for the new sidewalk handrail project is in fabrication.

Placida Park – 2014 sales tax project for the boating ramp expansion is managed by Facilities. The most current information can be found on the County's project status updates webpage. Project programming, master planning and concept planning are ongoing.

Port Charlotte Beach Park – the 2014 sales tax project for the sailing center is managed by Facilities construction and maintenance department. The most current information can be found on the County's project status updates webpage. Facilities provided the following: contractor is working on final punch list items and close out documents. Ribbon cutting is scheduled for Thursday May 6th at 2:30 p.m.

Riverside Park – the boat ramp has been closed due to safety issues for motorized vessels. Due to safety issues, they cannot be addressed via repairs.

South Gulf Cove Park – Design for the South Gulf Cove Park boarding piers will be starting the site data collection in the next week.

William R. Gains Jr. Veterans Memorial Park – a grant for additional trails, boardwalk, fitness equipment and interpretive signs was awarded; design phase and initial site condition assessments are in process.

Mr. Ireland said Commissioner Steven R. Deutsch called him this morning. He said the Commissioner had a focus group today and could not attend this meeting. He said the Coast Guard Auxiliary is apparently looking for space. The Commissioner could not remember who spoke to him about it. Commissioner Deutsch did say he believe there may be space at the Port Charlotte Beach Complex.

Mr. Scott said that space is to keep our trailers.

7. New Business

- Coral Creek speed zones

Jane Collingwood said she is concerned about the impact on the manatees and the use of jet skis. She sent a letter to Commissioner Truex and read that into the record. She said Coral Creek is a unique area and it has shallow areas. There are many manatees and waiting birds on the creek. The creek has lots of fish and tarpon. Marine research boats come around and others come to get bait. They are concerned about the sea grass getting destroyed, bad boating habits and would like to see speed restrictions on the waterway. They would like to see a Public signage at the fishing pier and said it is supported by Cape Haze non-profit group and friends of Stump Pass.

Mr. Ireland said thank you and he believes MAC would not disagree, but we do not put up signs. The County puts up the signs.

Ms. Collingwood asked if the MAC can guide us to who can put up the signage?

Matt Logan said he is in touch with our signage department. He said State Statutes portions of Coral Creek would qualify for slow speed minimum wake signage. FWC needs to give their input. He said to get a manatee sign, it would probably need a consultant, and this is not an easy process. It took years to get other manatee signs.

Mr. DeBruler said the signs she mentioned about Blueway trails, those signs were specifically designed and put in there only for the Blueway trails. Manatee and slow speed signs are much larger signs. Smaller signs can probably happen on the poles at the entrance.

Mr. Ireland said he did not believe you would be able to ban any boat style, but they would have to obey the signs.

Ms. Collingwood said she would like to see the signs to educate the boaters.

Mr. DeBruler said Tina has received word of this and she sent it off to Richardson in the sign department. They are working on what is needed at this point and time. Tina is willing to put signs on the poles.

Mr. Bigness said manatees have been thriving in the past few years. One third is killed by boats, one third is from cold weather and another third is from red tide.

Capt. Blago said this issue has come up before. Marion Schneider bought her property, Boca tour kayak place, she got the zoning changed to commercial. That upset her neighbors. She wanted slow zoned to protect her customers. The people who live up creek, said we have to get on plane to get over the extremely shallow spots to get out to open water. He wondered if they had a MSBU – because they should do research to see what others on Coral Creek would like.

Carol McCoy said she is a Charlotte County resident and she did not think the manatees were doing okay. She said they are dying off because of starvation issues with no seagrass and getting hit by boats.

- US Coast Guard Auxiliary – Safe Boating Week

Steve Scott said every year the Coast Guard establishes a safe boating week. This year it is May 22 to May 28th. Have a life jacket and wear it. 80% of all boating fatalities are people who drown. Those people did not wear their life jacket. We have 3 flotillas and will be putting these signs out. (he had a sign saying wear your life jacket) He also wanted to emphasize wear your life jacket. He said boat fatalities are down but paddle board fatalities are up. They also have safety classes.

Betty Campanella said the Punta Gorda boating club every year they do a safety project education demonstration day. It is open to the public and our main thing is teaching people how to set off flairs. This year we can't use flair because of the dry weather, but on Saturday May 22 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Punta Gorda boat club. This is for national safety week.

8. Old Business –
None offered

9. Other Business -
None offered.

10. Citizen Comments –

Brian Irwin said he is new to Charlotte County and he lives over by the Manchester Waterway. He is the Vice President of the Manchester Civic Association. He has applied for the MAC vacancy and wanted to attend today's meeting. He went over some of his past and would like to represent the greater Port Charlotte area.

11. Good of the Order -
None offered.

12. Next Meetings

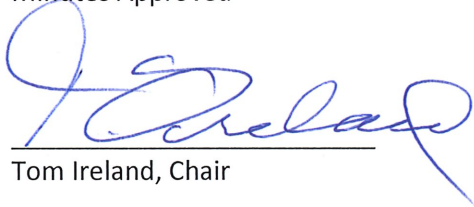
- The next **Pre-Agenda Meeting** will be held Thursday, June 3, 2021 at 9:30 a.m. in the **E. Jay Carlson Large Conference Room. (f/k/a Building Construction Services)**
- The next **Regular Meeting** will be held Thursday, June 10, 2021 at 9:30 a.m. at 18500 Murdock Circle, Port Charlotte, in B-106 Conference Room.

13. Adjournment

Mr. Kumm made a motion to adjourn, second by **Mr. Hickey**, the motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:30 a.m.

Minutes Approved



Tom Ireland, Chair