

MEETING MINUTES
NORTHWEST PORT CHARLOTTE WATERWAY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
August 7, 2008
1:00 p.m.

Attendees: Jack Fawsett, Renee Larson
County - Dawn Harrison, Chuck Mopps, Kim Raymond
Department of Environmental Protection- Elizabeth Gillen
Absent - William Mango, Richard Cochran, Richard Hopkins, Stanley Bliss

The meeting was called to order at 1:10 p.m.

Minutes:

- The July 8, 2008 minutes were unanimously approved as submitted.

Unfinished Business:

- Mr. Mopps reported to the Committee the status of the dredging project. He stated the paperwork is in the Purchasing Department and a line item had to be added for additional markers that need to be installed. The dredging contract will be sent out for bidding on August 15, 2008. The Army Core permit expires on December 31, 2009. Mr. Mopps stated the contractor will have 120 days from the awarded date to complete the project.
- Ms. Larson made a motion to move forward with the dredging contract that will be submitted out to bid on August 15, 2008. The two members present along with a proxy from an absent member voted on this motion. However, the Committee did not have a quorum, three or more members present, which makes this motion unofficial.
- Mr. Fawsett thanked everyone for supporting the approval of the tax assessment increase.
- Mr. Fawsett stated he has spoken with Mr. Pilikian regarding his concerns along with reviewing the Public Hearing video. Mr. Fawsett read and submitted a memorandum to the members of the Committee with his comments about these concerns.
- Mr. Pilikian asked the Committee to consider over the next few days the concerns he has expressed at the Public Hearing and at today's MSBU meeting. He stated it is not the time to push a project with multiple complicated components and to have the residents be left with the consequences. Mr. Pilikian expressed his concern with the depth of the dredging, which he feels is unsafe access to the Myakka for all residents. He stated shallower water, less than five feet deep, restricts the average boater to navigate in the waterway, which is unfair to the residents. He stated this is a navigational hazard and boater's hit bottom when traveling through the markers. Mr. Pilikian inquired if the Waterway Committee considered the economic impact this project will have on the residents. He stated that Florida should display what they have to offer and allow the residents to view the creatures in their natural habitat. Mr. Pilikian stated that dredging a few feet more will not make a dramatic impact on the habitats. He commented that when more groups get involved with projects, the County and The Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), then more problems arise. Mr. Pilikian stressed that his wife and himself object to the next dredging.

- Mr. Fawsett stated that the last dredging was not done incorrectly or the contractor would not have been in compliance. He explained the previous depths were agreed upon with the Northwest Port Charlotte Community League, Public Works, and the Advisory Boards to be three feet deep and twenty feet wide. He stated the channel mouths were never dredged. Mr. Fawsett stressed that this Committee does not want to delay the dredging process that could possibly be starting at the end of this year.

Open Floor:

- Ms. Pilikian expressed her concerns about the safety hazards of the waterway and channel mouths depths. She stated only kayaks and canoes can be used. Ms. Pilikian stated they are trying to prevent previous mistakes from the last dredging, which she stated was not dredged to three feet. She discussed the first page of the DEP permit regarding the historical depths and questioned if the previous dredge would have been allowed to be dredged deeper to historical depths.
- Mr. Mopps stated that DEP has laws and guidelines they have to follow. Mr. Pilikian stated they could mitigate and negotiate to have the mouths and waterways dredged deeper.
- Ms. Gillen, DEP, explained that when the County made an application requesting to dredge the mouths of the three canals, the DEP had to examine the channel mouths to see how they have changed over time (hence the creation of the upland canals). She explained the process of how the DEP established the three-foot depth from the previous dredging, which derived from the core borings. Mr. Pilikian stated they only are asking if DEP would review their concerns. Ms. Gillen stated she explained this to Mr. Pilikian previously that the final agency has already received their action on this issue. Ms. Gillen stated the County can submit a new application for the project that Mr. and Mrs. Pilikian are requesting, and present any new information or findings.
- Mr. Dave Rubin stated any delay on this project will result in losing \$50,000 from the Marine Advisory Committee for the markers.
- Ms. Cathy Hrsika commented on the meeting.
- Mr. Pilikian stated the residents that do not live on the canals are affected by the quality of the canals. Mr. Fawsett explained these residents are not assessed for the waterways.
- The next meeting has been scheduled for Tuesday, October 7, 2008, at 2:00 p.m. in the Murdock Administration Building, Room B106.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dawn Harrison
Municipal Services District Representative

DH/sb
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