

**MINUTES
FORT MYERS BEACH
MARINE RESOURCES TASK FORCE
Town Hall
2525 Estero Boulevard
Fort Myers Beach, FL 33931**

Wednesday, January 9, 2019

I. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting was called to order at 4:30 p.m. by Chair Veach. Members present: Patty Feste, Greg Holmes, Steve Johnson, Shannon Mapes, Justin Paulauskis, Mary Rose Spalletta and Bill Veach. Staff: Rae Burns
Town Manager Hernstadt and Finance Director Lange stopped by.

II. INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – December 12, 2018

MOTION: Mr. Holmes moved to approve the minutes as amended; second by Mr. Johnson.

VOTE: Motion passed unanimously.

Correction: Mr. Johnson did not suggest extending mobi mats to the water.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT – no public comment

V. CURRENT ITEMS

A. Environmental Symposium

The start time had been moved from to 5:00 p.m. from 8:00 p.m. on January 17, 2019 so Council Members could participate. All speakers were confirmed to speak except All Native Plants, which had to cancel. The topics to be presented had been reviewed.

B. ADA Accessibility onto the Beach

Chair Veach questioned where beach friendly wheelchairs could be located if the Town decided to provide them. Member Feste questioned whether the Town was required to provide wheelchairs under ADA requirements. Chair Veach replied that the Town was required to provide access for ADA recipients anywhere able-bodied people could go. He noted there were some exceptions. Ms. Spalletta questioned whether they could partner with a business currently renting wheelchairs. Ms. Mapes reported that Distinctive Beach Rentals rented wheelchairs. Chair Veach noted that they did mention a voucher system earlier. Ms. Mapes indicated that Distinctive Beach Rentals required a 72-hour notice for renting wheelchairs. Mr. Paulauskis questioned whether they could delay making a recommendation until they determine the feasibility of stationing wheelchairs at some

beach accesses. Ms. Spalletta noted that room was a premium at beach accesses. Chair Veach stated that it was worth discussing the idea with Distinctive Beach Rentals. Ms. Mapes offered to contact them. Ms. Mapes noted that she would also ask Distinctive Beach Rentals how many wheelchairs they typically rented. Chair Veach replied that he would speak with Council. Ms. Mapes questioned the Town paying for wheelchairs and offering to rent them for a nominal fee.

Mr. Johnson questioned whether they researched ADA access at other Towns. Chair Veach was told that most beach Towns did not feel an obligation to allow motorized golf carts and similar vehicles on the beach. Mr. Paulauskis questioned whether a security deposit would work better than charging people for wheelchairs. Ms. Mapes stated that it depended on whether the Town owned the wheelchairs or whether they were outsourced. Ms. Burns commented that Town Council could provide further direction.

Town Manager Hernstadt stated that they were exploring the possibility of the Town purchasing non-motorized ADA compliant devices and stage them at different locations at the beach. Requests would go through Town Hall and BASE would manage the process. He stated that the service would be provided for free but the issue was finding locations to stage them. He indicated that they were willing to talk to rental companies or anyone else with ideas but they were trying to vet it internally. Ms. Feste questioned the frequency of illegal golf carts on the beach. Ms. Burns responded that there were three instances last year. Discussion was held regarding allowing handicapped golf carts on the beach. Town Manager Hernstadt noted that all non-motorized wheelchairs on the beach would be provided by the Town to cut down on people who wanted golf carts for convenience purposes only. Ms. Mapes questioned whether residents who owned motorized wheelchairs would be allowed on the beach. Town Manager Hernstadt replied that the preferred course of action would be to require everyone to use non-motorized devices provided by the Town. The goal was to provide reasonable accommodations without allowing motorized vehicles on the beach.

Ms. Mapes questioned whether they decided on suitable beach accesses for ADA. Ms. Spalletta indicated that they were looking for storage locations. Ms. Burns noted that some of the potential accesses were owned by Lee County. Chair Veach will obtain clarification from Council.

C. Reusable Bags

Chair Veach reported that he worked directly with Chinese manufacturers but the Town prohibited transferring funds to China. He explored other avenues to purchase the bags, but none were successful. He stated that US companies charged almost twice the amount for the same number of bags, so they would have to order approximately 2,200-2,800 (depending on size) bags rather than 5,000. Finance Director Robert Lange explained that they would have to get at least three bids and select the best bid. He indicated that the State prohibited municipalities from purchasing or bidding on anything overseas. If they did not receive any bids, they would have to adjust their specifications. Mr. Paulauskis noted that they had three bids. Mr. Johnson commented that they were not domestic suppliers. Director Lange stated that all bids had to be submitted on letterhead. He explained that they needed to define the product and determine the specifics before sending out bids. Chair Veach questioned whether they could bypass the Town and use a different entity to purchase the bags overseas. Director Lange replied that as long as the

Town and taxpayer's money were not involved, it was fine. Chair Veach will bring up the issue at the next Council meeting. He encouraged members to research companies online.

D. Fertilizer and Glyphosate Use on Fort Myers Beach

Ms. Burns will meet with Director Jason Green and Town Manager Hernstadt regarding the timing of the ordinance. Chair Veach noted it would be beneficial if the current Council Members could hear the ordinance. Ms. Burns discussed high levels of red tide eventually returning.

Chair Veach will bring up creating a test patch of non-glyphosate products to Council. He noted that the lot at the Lighthouse was full of weeds and would be a good test area. Ms. Mapes offered her formula for use. Chair Veach suggested roping off the area and publicizing it. Discussion was held regarding which products to use and using glyphosate as a control. Ms. Burns stated that they could perform the test without glyphosate to determine the best natural or non-glyphosate product to use. Ms. Spalletta heard that Lee County was using glyphosate in Matanzas Preserve to control invasive species. Ms. Burns commented that they probably had permission. Ms. Spalletta stated that that area was their control site. Ms. Mapes will contact Lee County. She noted that they could dig out the invasive species instead of treating them with glyphosate. Ms. Burns discussed the difficulty of removing vines without glyphosate.

Chair Veach supported using a control patch of glyphosate for the sake of good science. Ms. Mapes disagreed because everyone knew that glyphosate worked. Ms. Spalletta agreed. Discussion was held regarding how long it took various products to kill weeds, how that would impact the test site and the pros and cons of using any glyphosate products. Ms. Mapes mentioned having people vote on what product was used on each of the four test squares. Mr. Johnson indicated that it was important to provide options if the ban was passed. Mr. Paulauskis suggested listing detriments to the environment as a supplement to the experiment. Chair Veach noted that the area in front of the pool at Bay Oaks would be another good site for their experiment. He suggested that the test area be described as an alternative to glyphosate instead of a weed-killing experiment. He discussed publicity efforts. (Video froze up from 1:18 to 1:24.)

E. Good Citizen Award aka the "Murphie"

MOTION: Chair Veach nominated Gayle Crabtree; second by Ms. Spalletta.

VOTE: Motion passed unanimously.

VI. MEMBER ITEMS AND REPORTS

Ms. Feste - suggested installing signs via the Garden Club at homes acknowledging chemical free use. Ms. Mapes commented that guidelines could be found on the Florida Friendly Yards Program website and they would visit homes to determine whether they qualified for the program. She indicated that they could develop their own criteria. Ms. Feste will contact the Garden Club regarding signs. Discussion was held concerning using plastic bags for yard waste.

Mr. Holmes - no items.

Ms. Mapes - described signs she created.

Mr. Paulauskis - no items.

Mr. Johnson – no items.

Ms. Spalletta – noticed many dogs off-leash on the beach. She stated that they put leashes on after BASE told them, but as soon as BASE left, they let the dogs run loose. She questioned whether BASE should issue citations after the first incident. Ms. Burns discussed the difficulty of enforcement. She will check statistics on how many citations were issued. Ms. Spalletta suggested calling the newspapers. She questioned subscripts on beach access signs. Chair Veach replied that LEEPA (Lee County Property Appraiser) identified private accesses.

Chair Veach - questioned the status of the rotating signs. Ms. Burns replied that the signs were on her list for February. Chair Veach noted that he would not be in town for the Shrimp Parade but he offered his panels for use. Ms. Mapes suggested setting up an informational booth along the route. Chair Veach requested permission to invite former member Louise, who is now a ranger for the Calusa Waterkeepers, to talk to MRTF at the next meeting regarding their current activities.

MOTION: Chair Veach moved to invite Louise and the Calusa Waterkeepers on the agenda for February, second by Ms. Mapes.

VOTE: Motion passed unanimously.

VII. PUBLIC COMMENT – no public comment

VIII SET AGENDA FOR NEXT MEETING

Add Louise, rotating signs and green yard certification. Remove environmental symposium.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Chair Veach moved to adjourn the meeting; second by Mr. Paulauskis.

VOTE: Motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:18 p.m.

Adopted 2/13/19 with/without changes. Motion by Veach
(DATE)

Vote: 6-0 Signature: 

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