

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

Wednesday, December 11, 2019

I. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m. by Chair Veach. Members present: Greg Holmes (arrived late), Steve Johnson, Shannon Mapes, Mary Rose Spalletta and Bill Veach.

Unexcused: Justin Paulauskis

Staff: Environmental Services Coordinator Chadd Chustz

Council Liaison: Rexann Hosafros

II. INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – October 9, 2019

It was determined that Greg Holmes and Justin Paulauskis were unexcused.

MOTION: Chair Veach moved to approve the minutes as amended; second by MRTF Member Mapes.

VOTE: Motion passed unanimously.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT – no public comment.

V. CURRENT ITEMS

A. Reusable Bags

Discussion was held regarding contacting potential sponsors for available spaces. MRTF Member Johnson commented that they needed three more sponsors and he hoped to have them before the end of the year.

B. Fertilizer Ordinance Update

Coordinator Chustz noted that they were waiting for the Town Attorney to review the issue. He indicated that he would draft the ordinance. MRTF Member Mapes stated that she was not sure whether the ball fields at Bay Oaks were fertilized. Chair Veach noted if they did not fertilize, they did not need an exemption.

C. Water Quality – no update.

D. Tree Grant

MRTF Member Mapes reported that the DEP grant closed for the year. She will contact Cultural Parks and Recreation Director Alison Giesen concerning future grants. MRTF Member Spalletta offered to help track dates for available grants. Coordinator Chustz revealed that Council approved \$10,000.00 for an Adopt-A-Tree program. He described the proposed program and commented that Town Council would vote on it in January. He noted that trees would be available on January 17, 2020.

E. MRTF Issued Certifications – Pollinator Neighborhood

Chair Veach will resend his ideas to Coordinator Chustz. He suggested that the Woman's Club might be interested.

F. Invasive Lizards

MRTF Member Mapes contacted a trapper who would trap the lizards and he offered to train public works staff. She questioned whether the Town would install a drop box. Chair Veach directed MRTF to the lizard article in the newspaper. He proposed that Town employees be trained to trap lizards or hire contracted trappers.

MOTION: Chair Veach moved to recommend that Town Council adopt an invasive lizard control program that included a contracted trapper or training staff to trap and euthanize iguanas and monitor lizards on town property immediately and on private property when requested; second by MRTF Member Johnson.

VOTE: Motion passed unanimously.

MOTION: Chair Veach moved to recommend that Town Council adopt a policy of capturing other invasive lizards including the agama and curly tail on Town property; second by MRTF Member Mapes.

VOTE: Motion passed unanimously.

G. Manatees

MRTF Member Mapes stated that the FWC (Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission) was already studying Lee County concerning manatee deaths. She noted that 25% of deaths were caused by boats and they could petition the state for more protections. MRTF Member Johnson stated that Fish Tale Marina did not require renters to sign anything regarding best boating practices but they would be willing to distribute information. MRTF Member Johnson suggested that they contact the Save the Manatee Club. Chair Veach revealed that he received information from the Club. He questioned whether Buccaneer Bay was a wake free zone. MRTF Member Johnson replied that Council Member Butcher tried to change the zoning but he was denied. Liaison Hosafros stated that it was not easy to change zones for manatees due to jurisdiction issues. Chair Veach suggested that they look into involving Town Council to petition the state. He commented that they had to target a location for reclassification.

Chair Veach brought up the possibility of installing signs on individual docks, at Fish Tale

Marina or at the Mound House. Coordinator Chustz stated that they were prohibited from posting signs regulating speeds without the permission of the FDOT (Florida Department of Transportation). Chair Veach responded that they could post warning signs. He recommended purchasing informational signs for individual docks and for the Town to install signs at key locations. He suggested creating stickers for rental boats instead of distributing a handout. He will reach out to the Save the Manatee Club.

H. MRTF Small Signs – no update.

I. Good Citizen Award aka the “Murphie”

MRTF Member Spalletta submitted a photo of someone who painted a turtle mural on their house, the Community of Fairview recently installed more mini reefs and the Council Beach Condominium Association did not want boardwalks on the beach.

MRTF Member Mapes noted the boardwalk issue was timely. Consensus was reached to bank the turtle mural. MRTF Member Johnson questioned whether they wanted to promote the Council Beach Condominium Association’s request. Consensus was reached not to get involved in an issue currently in front of Council.

MOTION: Chair Veach moved to award the Murphie to the Community of Fairview Isles for installing mini reefs; second by MRTF Member Mapes.

VOTE: Motion passed unanimously.

MOTION: Chair Veach moved to bank a Murphie for the person who painted the sea turtle mural on their house on Coconut; second by MRTF Member Johnson.

VOTE: Motion passed unanimously.

VI. MEMBER ITEMS AND REPORTS

MRTF Member Johnson mentioned Estero Bay street lighting. MRTF Member Mapes noted that the topic was addressed in the newspaper. MRTF Member Johnson described health issues in humans and wildlife that were linked to the LED lights. He felt that they should consider the topic and keep abreast of developments. (Greg Holmes arrived.)

Chair Veach suggested that they write a position paper and he would contact the Public Safety Committee. He indicated they could investigate the possibility of a “dark skies” certification program and he questioned writing an opposition to the consultant who stated the lights were turtle friendly.

Town Manager Hernstadt noted the lighting consultant was provided by the MPO (Metropolitan Planning Organization) to the Town. He stated that many groups had concerns and they all had to figure out what they wanted.

Discussion was held regarding increasing the number of light poles for amber lights. Town Manager Hernstadt confirmed that the program was through FPL. Chair Veach questioned whether they explored using solar panel battery systems. Town Manager Hernstadt replied affirmatively and noted they had to research the product. MRTF Member Johnson volunteered to research the economics of solar. He questioned whether the new bridge would include a fishing platform. He suggested using pieces of the old bridge for an artificial reef. He will investigate whether grants were available. He questioned whether MRTF Member Paulauskis was interested in remaining on the Committee. Liaison Hosafros suggested that Chair Veach discuss the matter with the Town

Clerk. MRTF Member Johnson suggested they contact MRTF Member Paulauskis. Coordinator Chutz confirmed that after three unexcused absences, MRTF could vote to remove the member. Chair Veach will contact MRTF Member Paulauskis.

Chair Veach questioned the effectiveness of the artificial reefs and wondered whether anyone was following up. MRTF Member Spalletta indicated that she suggested that Director Giesen purchase an underwater camera with TDC (Tourist Development Council) funds. Liaison Hosafros suggested questioning Penny Jarrett regarding the results from water testing. MRTF Member Holmes indicated he had an underwater camera and offered to take pictures.

VII. PUBLIC COMMENT

Renee Heil noted she co-owned a subscription box company for scuba divers and they were working with a marine safe sunscreen company. She invited MRTF to attend a presentation regarding safe sunscreen products on January 15, 2020, at Bayfront Bistro at 5:00 p.m.

VIII. SET AGENDA FOR NEXT MEETING – add lighting

IX. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Chair Veach moved to adjourn the meeting; second by MRTF Member Mapes.

VOTE: Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting was adjourned at 4:58 p.m.

Adopted 1-8-20 with/without changes. Motion by VEACH
(DATE)

Vote: 5-0 Signature: 

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