

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

Wednesday, July 8, 2020

I. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m. by Chair Johnson.

II. INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. ROLL CALL

Members present: Greg Fossum, Renee Heil, Greg Holmes, Steve Johnson, Jennifer Rusk, Mary Rose Spalletta and Sarah Torgerson.

Staff: Environmental Project Manager Chadd Chustz.

Council Liaison: Bill Veach

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – June 17, 2020

MOTION: MRTF Member Spalletta moved to approve the minutes; second by MRFT Member Heil.

VOTE: Motion passed unanimously.

MOTION: Chair Johnson moved to add Review of Estero Lighting Project to the agenda; second by MRTF Member Spalletta.

VOTE: Motion approved unanimously.

V. PUBLIC COMMENT – no public comment.

VI. CURRENT ITEMS

A. Set Committee Goals to Present to Town Council for Direction

Manager Chustz stated they needed to set short-term and long-term projects and priorities. Chair Johnson brought up speed reduction in the channel. Manager Chustz noted that staff was working on the issue. Discussion was held regarding derelict vessels. MRTF Member Holmes suggested obtaining an update from the Town. Manager Chustz replied that Harbormaster Gilchrist was responsible for derelict vessels.

MRTF Member Heil commented that she would like to focus on sunscreen education. MRTF Member Rusk agreed that they could educate people on what to buy and encourage local businesses to carry the products. MRTF Member Heil suggested working through the Chamber of Commerce to inform tourists.

MRTF Member Rusk discussed having the Town or a group of volunteers fill in holes

on the beach and to educate beachgoers. MRTF Member Holmes noted that staff could put a shovel in their vehicles to fill big holes. Liaison Veach suggested working with Turtle Time. Manager Chustz encouraged MRTF Members to call him regarding furniture on the beach at night. He added that a picture and address would help expedite the process.

MRTF Member Fossum commented on making sure that vessels outside of the Mooring Field were being pumped out. MRTF Member Holmes noted that pump-outs were available to all boats outside the Mooring Field for \$5.00. He reviewed pump-out systems in vessels. Discussion was held regarding sending a letter to boat owners. Manager Chustz stated that it was a priority for the Harbormaster. He agreed to invite him to a future meeting.

Chair Johnson discussed obtaining bridge rubble from the old bridge for an offshore artificial reef. He suggested adding a fishing platform to the new bridge.

MRTF Member Spalletta suggested educating residents regarding improving the vegetation on the beach and advising against non-native and invasive species.

Discussion was held regarding Lee County Sheriffs driving in the Critical Wildlife Area.

B. Year-Round Landscape Irrigation & Water Shortage Ordinances

Discussion was held regarding different fees and different structures in the water ordinances. MRTF Member Fossum noted that fines should be higher when there was a shortage of water. Routine watering violations should include a lesser fine. MRTF Member Heil agreed the penalty should be higher in an emergency situation.

MOTION: MRTF Member Fossum moved that fines for water in the 2010 Ordinance be the same for both ordinances; second by Chair Johnson.

VOTE: Motion passed unanimously.

Chair Johnson discussed adding private wells for clarification on Page 5 and whether technology should be clarified on Page 8. There was no support to change the language.

MOTION: Chair Johnson moved to send the change to Town Council to harmonize the two-water shortage fine structures to match those of the water conservation 2010 and that 2011 should match 2010 and remove the fine structure in 2011; second by MRTF Member Spalletta.

VOTE: Motion passed unanimously.

C. Creation of Water wise Education

Chair Johnson indicated that Manager Chustz distributed three documents. He described creating a cost of water sheet for various water activities, such as running a sprinkler twice a week compared to three times a week. MRTF Member Rusk suggested reaching out to rental facilities regarding the cost of water and conservation efforts. MRTF Member Heil discussed a multi-step marketing strategy based on the audience. MRTF Member Rusk questioned whether the hotels or beach rentals had water conservation information in their rooms. MRTF Member Holmes suggested focusing on facilities that were above the standard water usage for their building. He noted that many condominiums were not

occupied all year and had a low usage rate. MRTF Member Spalletta suggested creating a brochure with information on how the water rate increase affected everyone and ways to lower their rates. Discussion was held regarding adding information to water bills and educating owners of rental units and hotels. Information to add in the water bill included irrigation, towel washing, showering and laundering. Chair Johnson suggested researching ideas before the next meeting.

D. Discuss Beach Driving Guidelines

Chair Johnson felt that the Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWCC) flyer contained too much text. He noted that Manager Chustz highlighted the pertinent information. Discussion was held regarding driving on the beach at night.

E. Good Citizen Award aka the “Murphie”

MRTF Member Heil noted she sent an article with the Murphie to Manager Chustz and he will forward it to the appropriate entity and to MRTF Members. MRTF Member Holmes described his neighbors rescuing ducklings from stormwater drains. He will provide pictures.

MOTION: Chair Johnson moved to award the next Murphie to the duck saviors; second by MRTF Member Spalletta.

VOTE: Motion passed unanimously.

MRTF Member Spalletta suggested an article regarding removing Australian Pines. Manager Chustz noted his plan was to contact property owners to obtain permission to remove the pines after nesting season. MRTF Member Spalletta will work with Manager Chustz on an article to educate people regarding exotic plants. She mentioned educating people concerning dogs on the beach, tuna kits and parchment worms. She volunteered to write an article on Australian Pines for July. MRTF Member Torgerson offered to write one in August, MRTF Member Rusk will write one for September, Chair Johnson for October, MRTF Member Holmes for November and MRTF Member Fossum will submit one for December.

F. Review Estero Lighting Project

MRTF Member Fossum noted they were not included in the kick-off meeting. Chair Johnson indicated the Public Safety Committee (PSC) Chair commented on MRTF’s exclusion when they held their meeting. Chair Johnson agreed that a member of MRTF should attend the meeting. He discussed lighting wildlife areas, inviting the public to the meeting and crosswalk lighting. He mentioned that the PSC and MRTF should have input concerning Task 7. Manager Chustz stated that FPL shut off approximately 50 lights prior to turtle season. Discussion was held regarding expanding the scope of the study to include street lights that were not only on Estero Blvd. Chair Johnson brought up showing a video demo on various lights. MRTF Heil noted that reasons for changing lights presented another educational opportunity. Manager Chustz stated they would send the Streetscape Master Plan to MRTF Members.

VII. MEMBER ITEMS AND REPORTS

MRTF Member Rusk will work on information to help educate visitors concerning conserving water. She will not be able to attend the August meeting.

MRTF Member Holmes stated that he would be out of town in August and September.

Liaison Veach described Flip My Yard sponsored by the (Department of Environmental Protection (DEP).

No items by other members.

VIII. PUBLIC COMMENT – no public comment.

IX. SET AGENDA FOR NEXT MEETING – August 12, 2020

Add prioritize list of projects.

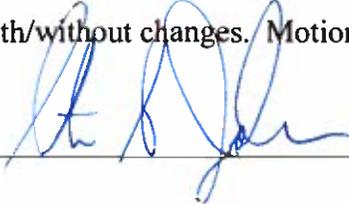
X. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Chair Johnson moved to adjourn the meeting; second by MRFT Member Holmes.

VOTE: Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting was adjourned at 5:13 p.m.

Adopted 8-12-2020 with/without changes. Motion by _____
(DATE)

Vote: _____ Signature: 

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