

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

Wednesday, February 13, 2019

I. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting was called to order at 4:30 p.m. by Chair Veach. Members present: Patty Feste, Steve Johnson, Shannon Mapes, Justin Paulauskis, Mary Rose Spalletta and Bill Veach.

Excused: Greg Holmes

Staff: Rae Burns

II. INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – January 9, 2019

MOTION: Chair Veach moved to approve the minutes; second by Ms. Mapes.

VOTE: Motion passed unanimously.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT – no public comment

V. CURRENT ITEMS

A. ADA Accessibility onto the Beach

Chair Veach described the wheelchair program at Barefoot Beach. He noted the wheelchairs were located in a gated area and available to anyone during regular hours. On Vanderbilt Beach, the wheelchairs were secured and a gatekeeper was responsible for providing access. He suggested placing wheelchairs at any beach access and provide a phone number for beach patrol for access to the wheelchairs. He mentioned wheelchairs at Lynn Hall and Ms. Burns noted that they would have to enter an agreement with Lee County. Town Manager Hernstadt suggested that they write a letter to Lee County asking that they replicate what the Town was doing.

Chair Veach questioned where to locate wheelchairs other than Newton Park. Ms. Mapes reported that Distinctive Beach Rentals rented at least three wheelchairs per week. She described details of their program and they will work with a voucher system. She noted that they rented non-motorized wheelchairs, which cost Distinctive Beach Rentals \$3,500.00 each and one motorized wheelchair, which cost \$6,500.00. Ms. Mapes thought the charge to rent a wheelchair was \$45 for 12 hours. Discussion was held regarding where and how to store wheelchairs.

Ms. Mapes suggested that they go through Distinctive Beach Rentals in the meantime. Chair Veach was not comfortable with the Town giving something away that a business was renting. He suggested recommending that the Town buy chairs and store them at Newton Park. The second option could be to work with a private/public partnership. Ms.

Mapes questioned whether they could use Newton Park as a storage area for two or three wheelchairs and have staff deliver the chairs. Ms. Spalletta brought up the limited number of staff available. Chair Veach suggested installing signs at beach accesses with a number to request wheelchairs. Chair Veach recommended placing wheelchairs at Pompano and Newton Park. Ms. Spalletta listed beach accesses with handicapped parking.

MOTION: Chair Veach moved to recommend chairs be staged at Newton Park, Pompano and Flamingo; second by Ms. Maples.

VOTE: Motion passed unanimously.

B. Signs

Ms. Burns stated that the purchase order for the small black and white signs was in, a new quote was obtained and they will receive the signs next month. The DEP permit for the beach access signs was approved and the signs will be installed sometime during the week.

C. Reusable Bags

Chair Veach displayed two samples of bags. He reported that they could buy 3,000 foreign made bags or 1,800 US made bags with their budget. He noted that the bags would be purchased with a purchase order. Consensus was reached to recommend Ms. Spalletta's choice, one vendor from Chair Veach and Crusty Pete's. Chair Veach mentioned that he knew a syndicated cartoonist and provided a rough sketch of a graphic for the bags. He suggested that they drop the "Thank You" from the side of the bags and add the Town logo or leave it blank for future sponsors. He will forward the information to Ms. Burns. Chair Veach noted that he had around \$300 in the samples and he questioned whether the Town would reimburse him. Ms. Burns suggested that he submit a request.

D. Fertilizer and Glyphosate Use on Fort Myers Beach

Chair Veach reported that Council was obtaining a legal opinion on the proposed glyphosate ban and the fertilizer ordinance. Ms. Burns stated that if they changed their fertilizer ordinance, they would have to meet all of DEP's guidelines and some of them were not as strict as their current guidelines. Ms. Burns will forward the DEP guidelines to members. Ms. Burns stated that FWC was scheduled for a home turtle lighting presentation on March 18, 2019 at around 10:00 a.m.

Ms. Burns will contact the DEP regarding the possibility of making small changes in the fertilizer bill. Chair Veach noted that he was waiting for permission from Council to start the glyphosate project. Discussion was held concerning various aspects of the project, including different solutions, signs, and publicity.

MOTION: Chair Veach moved to move forward with their glyphosate project pending approval from Town Council that they could spray solutions on Town property, Ms. Mapes will be responsible for determining the solutions and they will set a date for a group activity to set the stakes and signs; second by Ms. Mapes.

VOTE: Motion passed unanimously.

E. Green Yard Certification

Ms. Feste reported that she reviewed the Florida Friendly Yard Certification program. She questioned whether they were interested in doing something different. Mr. Johnson thought they were going to decide whether to customize their program rather than adopting the Florida Friendly Yard Certification in its entirety.

Ms. Feste noted that conversations at the Garden Club focused around eliminating plastic bags. Chair Veach suggested writing to Publix regarding plastic bags, Town Manager Hernstadt recommended MRTF get the reusable bag program going prior to contacting Publix.

Chair Veach commented that it was a good idea to keep the Green Yard Certification simple and focus on criteria regarding non-invasive, native, chemical free and water friendly. Chair Veach recommended joining forces with the Garden Club to determine what they wanted to do. Ms. Feste stated that the Garden Club was in the process of getting the Ann Reasoner garden at Bay Oaks certified as Florida Friendly.

Chair Veach suggested creating simple criteria. Ms. Mapes indicated that they could use portions of the Florida Friendly Yard Certification. Ms. Feste questioned creating smaller, simple criteria for residents to meet such as creating a rain garden or animal friendly plants. Chair Veach suggested implementing a point system. Ms. Mapes suggested installing signs in yards that met the guidelines of their certification.

Ms. Feste read the nine categories listed in the Florida Friendly Yard Certification. Chair Veach narrowed them down to plant type, chemical free, water friendly and wildlife. Ms. Feste stated that they needed to create a grading system for the four categories. Discussion was held regarding criteria. Ms. Feste will work with the Garden Club to come up with something.

Ms. Feste reiterated that the Garden Club was interesting in working with MRTF to eliminate plastic bags. Chair Veach suggested that not using plastic bags for yard waste could be included as a criterion. Ms. Feste will discuss the idea with the Garden Club.

F. Good Citizen Award aka the "Murphie"

Ms. Feste suggested Louise Close, Bernie Hamera and Mary Ann Griffin for their environmental efforts.

MOTION: Chair Veach leaned towards Louise Close; *(CLERKS NOTE: No formal motion was made regarding this item. Staff liaison has been notified to have committee re-visit this item during their March meeting.)*

VOTE: Motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Feste will provide contact information and a photo to Chair Veach.

VI. MEMBER ITEMS AND REPORTS

Ms. Mapes offered to write the invasive plant article for The Observer. The Sand Paper has expressed interest in publishing articles as well.

Ms. Spalletta indicated that they had a problem with Australian Pines. She stated that there were saplings growing by Aberdeen that could be easily removed. Ms. Mapes noted that it was private

property and Ms. Burns added that they could not tell them what they could have on their property. Ms. Feste noted that Kathy White from the Florida Friendly Landscaping Project was presenting a program on October 28, 2019 at the Garden Club. The Garden Club requested that a speaker from MRTF present a program on January 6, 2020. Chair Veach was not sure who would be on MRTF then. He requested that Ms. Feste remind them.

Ms. Spalletta questioned whether MRTF could be in charge of relocating gopher tortoises as a result of construction on Lover's Key. Ms. Burns noted that gopher tortoises were picky and would try to go back to their original location. She stated that the habitat would have to be very similar to where they came from. Ms. Burns noted that the Town was not a registered gopher tortoise repository, but she will double check.

Mr. Johnson noted that he was trying to sew up the FPL lighting and he forwarded the information to Eve Haverfield. Ms. Burns indicated that Public Works was working to replace lights and fixtures on the list. She noted that FPL was supposed to replace the lights before turtle season started.

Chair Veach will not be able to attend the Shrimp Parade. Mr. Johnson will contact Mr. Holmes regarding his involvement. Chair Veach and Ms. Spalletta will not be at the next meeting.

VII. PUBLIC COMMENT – no public comment

VIII SET AGENDA FOR NEXT MEETING

Add Presentation by Penny Jarrett.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

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

VOTE: Motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:06 p.m.

Adopted _____ with/without changes. Motion by _____
(DATE)

Vote: _____ Signature: 

- End of document