

MINUTES
FORT MYERS BEACH
Anchorage Advisory Committee
Town Hall
2525 Estero Boulevard
Fort Myers Beach, FL 33931

Wednesday, February 20, 2019

I. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting was called to order at 9:01 a.m. by Chair Light. Members present: Robert Beasley, Greg Holmes, Ted Lawwill, Katherine Light, Sam Lurie and Mike Ratliff.

Absent: William Kubicek III

Staff: Austin Gilchrist

Mr. Gilchrist stated that he will visit Mr. Kubicek's home to check on him.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. PUBLIC COMMENT – no public comment

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – January 16, 2019

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

VOTE: Motion passed unanimously.

Chair Light noted that Coastal Engineering was assisting with inspecting shackles ~~haekles~~ and downlines to make sure they were usable.

V. MOORING FIELD AND STAFF REPORT

Mr. Gilchrist noted the POS system was installed at Matanzas Inn and staff was providing training. Mr. Gilchrist introduced Sargeant Tim Galloway and Corporal Sue Daley from Lee County Sheriff's Marine Operations. Sargeant Galloway stated that they received numerous complaints regarding the condition of vessels and illegal dumping in and out of the Mooring Field. They wrote 24 citations and issued 7 warnings since January 16, 2019. He discussed illegal dumping issues and water quality. He stated that they would continue to be proactive and hold people accountable. He noted that there was an increase in derelict vessels and he described the process to remove them. Corporal Daley commended Mr. Gilchrist's assistance. Sargeant Galloway noted that two felony warrants were for illegal dumping.

Mr. Gilchrist stated that a vessel in the Mooring Field showed up one day and the Town was in the process of obtaining the title to place a lien on it and auction it off. He noted that they were having some issues with accounts and the new system but they were working on it. He indicated that late fees were implemented now and he hoped the POS system would alleviate paperwork.

Mr. Gilchrist introduced Tim Baber from WCIND (West Coast Inland Navigational District) to discuss derelict vessels. Mr. Baber stated that they and the Lee County Sheriff's Department were

working on seven derelict vessel cases and an additional four or five vessels were considered at risk. He described the at risk statute and the long and expensive process to remove vessels. He indicated they were trying to change the laws to simplify the process. He noted that out of the seven being investigated, three will be removed in the near future.

Mr. Lurie questioned emergency removals. Mr. Baber replied that environmental hazards could be removed but not destroyed. He stated that no vessels on the beach were considered to be hazardous.

VI. MAINTENANCE

Mr. Gilchrist reported that a sinkhole opened up at the water station and the Town is addressing the situation. Ball 15 popped off the cartridge and will be back in the water today. A special purpose buoy was missing and would be replaced soon. He noted that due to damages to the Town's pump out boat, they stopped pumping out boats that do not have an operating MSD system. Mr. Gilchrist stated there are crab traps in the Mooring Field; he was waiting on a response from WFC (Fish & Wildlife Commission) regarding the legality of the traps. Mr. Ratliff questioned whether they should have a designated disposal area for vessels with composting toilets. Mr. Gilchrist replied affirmatively and he noted that the systems he referred to were not composting toilets.

Mr. Gilchrist indicated that the Coast Guard requested that the Town move the No Wake sign out before the Island to stop boats from speeding and creating a wake. The area belongs to the Department of Natural Resources. Mr. Gilchrist is waiting on a response from them prior to moving the sign.

VII. MOORING FIELD WELCOME PACKET

Mr. Gilchrist stated that the redesigned letter was at Matanzas and he was waiting from a response from the designer regarding the diagram sheet.

VIII. CRUISER'S APPRECIATION DAY

Mr. Gilchrist indicated that they had some tickets left over from last year. He stated that free tickets and the banner were included in his budget of \$200.00. Chair Light noted that the raffle helped to cover expenses. Mr. Lurie stated that the press release was on the Town's website and he will distribute it to local papers the week before the event. He noted that the menu would be similar to last year. Chair Light requested that members email her when they received raffle items. Discussion was held regarding how many tickets were needed.

IX. MEMBER'S ITEMS & REPORTS

Mr. Lawwill noted that the monthly revenue report was not up to date. Mr. Gilchrist replied that he would update it. Mr. Lawwill reported that they had not made much progress determining the actual expenses of operating the anchorage.

Chair Light questioned the status of the Coast Guard designation. Mark Kincaid, Coastal Engineering, replied that they hit a brick wall with their requests for a meeting. He felt that they needed to obtain direction from the Town in order to elicit a response.

MOTION: Chair Light moved to request that Town Council give Coastal Engineering permission to pursue obtaining the Coast Guard designation of anchorage for the Mooring Field; second by Mr. Lurie.

VOTE: Motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Gilchrist will draft a letter. Chair Light noted that their joint meeting with Council was scheduled for May 9, 2019 at 1:00 p.m.

Mr. Lurie stated that the ad in Southwinds looked great. He reported that Council discussed closing the dinghy dock behind Topps. Mr. Gilchrist was not aware of that discussion, but he was working to clean up the area. He indicated that he was contacting the estate lawyer to get a DEP permit to trim the mangroves to keep the area open. He noted that he checked the area every morning. Chair Light stated that eliminating the dock would not solve the Town's problem because people would still land their dinghies at that location. Mr. Ratliff felt it was a stretch to connect crimes with people coming ashore using that dock. He agreed that removing the dock would not solve problems but cleaning it up and monitoring the area would probably help to solve the issues. Sergeant Galloway reported that people were using the dock to go out to some of the vacant vessels. He stated that people were renting out the abandoned boats to homeless people. He described his history with the Town and noted that some things had not changed but they were trying to clean things up and hold people responsible. Mr. Ratliff questioned how homeless people were getting to the derelict boats. Sergeant Galloway replied that they usually used kayaks and canoes. Mr. Ratliff clarified that some people gathered in the mangrove area and others came in from the water side.

Mr. Beasley commented that they had a problem with homeless individuals at Sea Grape Plaza prior to the library incident. He stated that he had never seen so many homeless people on the Island. A friend of his indicated that Fort Myers Beach was part of the "bum route" and homeless people were well aware of where to go for their needs.

X. PUBLIC COMMENT

Don Hansen questioned the status of the dinghy dock and he complimented Mr. Gilchrist and Penny for the good job they do in the field. He questioned why there were so many derelict vessels. Chair Light stated that the plan was in place for the dinghy dock but they will wait until after season to put it in. Mr. Kincaid agreed and noted they were also waiting for the grant funds to become available.

Leon Moyer stated that he had been on his boat for six years and there was no conspiracy among homeless people. He knew many of the people but he also wondered why they were anchoring within 20-50 feet from his boat. He described some of the boaters and he noted that they were not homeless. He stated that one person was renting out boats and that person gave everyone a bum rap. Mr. Beasley agreed that not everyone was homeless but they did have a problem. Mr. Ratliff thought part of the problem was defining homelessness.

XI. SET AGENDA FOR NEXT MEETING – March 20, 2019

XII. ADJOURN

MOTION: Mr. Beasley moved to adjourn; second by Mr. Holmes.

VOTE: Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 9:56 a.m.

Adopted 3/20/2019 with/without changes. Motion by _____
(DATE)

Vote: _____ Signature: Katherine Light

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