

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

Wednesday, August 12, 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, Steve Johnson, Mary Rose Spalletta and Sarah Torgerson.

Excused: Greg Holmes and Jennifer Rusk.

Staff: Environmental Project Manager Chadd Chustz.

Council Liaison: Bill Veach

IV. APPROVE THE AGENDA

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – July 8, 2020

MOTION:

VOTE:

VI. PUBLIC COMMENT

Bob Howell discussed a vendor selling turtles and noted that they did have a permit, but it was illegal to sell turtles smaller than four inches. He stated that the law was not enforced. He distributed a draft ordinance to stop the sale of turtles.

VII. CURRENT ITEMS

A. Discussion of Ordinance Regarding Yellow-Bellied Slider Turtle Sales

Chair Johnson questioned the Town's permitting/licensing requirements for the sale of animals. Manager Chustz discussed regulating the sales of animals. MRTF Member Fossum suggested an invasive species ordinance. Manager Chustz noted the turtles were native to Northern Florida. MRTF Member Spalletta questioned whether the Town Attorney should look into the matter. Manager Chustz suggested that MRTF define their approach before involving the Town Attorney. MRTF Member Fossum discussed regulating the enclosure to be sold with the turtle. Chair Johnson suggested making the sale of the turtles a public health issue.

MOTION: MRTF Member Spalletta moved to add the item to the next agenda; second by Chair Johnson.

VOTE: Motion passed unanimously.

B. Prioritize Committee Goals to Present to Town Council for Direction

Discussion was held regarding presenting reports to Town Council. Discussion was also held concerning pump-outs for boats outside the Mooring Field. Harbormaster Gilchrist stated that Mooring Field issues should be directed to him or Director O'Riley.

Goals discussed were: non-native, exotic and invasive plant species and education, pump-out education, derelict vessels, sunscreen education, fill in holes on the beach, create an artificial reef from the old bridge materials, add a fishing platform on the new bridge, lighting, fertilizer ordinance outreach and turtle sales. Discussion was held concerning landscape on Estero Blvd.

Priorities were discussed. MRTF Member Heil discussed creating a short presentation concerning sunscreen education; fertilizer ordinance outreach in conjunction with water rates; streetlight programs; invasive plant species and turtle sales; pump outs and derelict vessels. MRTF Member Fossum suggested working with landscapers regarding non-native plants. Chair Johnson added dune education to the list and he discussed recent activities involving dunes. MRTF Member Spalletta added beach raking to education.

C. Creation of "Waterwise" Education

Chair Johnson created and described a three-fold mailing insert. MRTF Member Fossum commented that the insert was excellent. Liaison Veach suggested adding that the majority of the cost of water was the wholesale cost that the Town paid Lee County. Discussion was held regarding saving water and cost-saving measures. Liaison Veach will contact the Town Manager about moving forward. MRTF Member Spalletta shared water-saving ideas.

D. Good Citizen Award aka the "Murphie"

MOTION: Chair Johnson moved to award the August Murphie to the people who saved the birds; second by MRTF Member Fossum.

VOTE: Motion passed unanimously.

MOTION: Chair Johnson moved to award the September Murphie to the turtle mural; second by MRTF Member Spalletta.

VOTE: Motion passed unanimously.

VIII. MEMBER ITEMS AND REPORTS

MRTF Member Spalletta reported that there were ¹³¹137 turtle nests and many of them hatched. She noted that they observed gopher tortoise tracks.

Chair Johnson sent kudos to Director O'Riley and Town Manager Hernstadt for the lighting RFP. He questioned whether short-term rental agreements included turtle lighting infractions. Liaison Veach replied that turtle violations were covered under a separate ordinance. Chair Johnson

described the amount of plastic trash affiliated with construction. He noted that he would contact Kaye Molnar.

No items from other members.

IX. PUBLIC COMMENT – no public comment.

X. SET AGENDA FOR NEXT MEETING – add slider turtles, Council feedback and dunes.

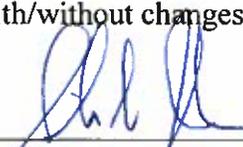
XI. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: MRTF Member Spalletta moved to adjourn the meeting; second by MRTF Member Fossum.

VOTE: Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting was adjourned at 5pm.

Adopted Sept 9, 2020 with/without changes. Motion by _____
(DATE)

Vote: _____ Signature: 

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