

**MINUTES
FORT MYERS BEACH
MARINE RESOURCES TASK FORCE**

Town Hall
2525 Estero Boulevard
Fort Myers Beach, FL 33931

Wednesday, May 19, 2021

I. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting was called to order at 3:01 p.m. by Chair Johnson.

II. INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. ROLL CALL

Members present: Wendy DeGaetano, Robert Howell, Steve Johnson, Jennifer Rusk and Mary Rose Spalletta.

Excused: Greg Fossum and Rose Larkin.

Absent: Renee Jeffreys Heil

Staff: Environmental Project Manager Chadd Chustz and Public Works Director Chelsea O'Riley.

Council Liaison: Bill Veach

Consensus was reached to approve MRTF Members Fossum and Larkin's requested excuses.

IV. APPROVE THE AGENDA

Remove ocean-friendly sunscreen.

MOTION: MRTF Member Spalletta moved to approve the amended agenda; second by MRTF Member Rusk.

VOTE: Motion passed unanimously.

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – March 10 and April 14, 2021

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

VOTE: Motion passed unanimously.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENT – no public comment.

VII. CURRENT ITEMS

A. Streetlight Consultant Presentation

Suzanne Lansford noted that a longer recording of a previous presentation to stakeholders

was available online. She played a six-minute video introducing the project. She stated that no new outdoor lighting source shall be visible from any part of the beach. She reviewed a handout that described the scope of the project. Ms. Lansford noted that a list of written responses from questions posed at the stakeholder's meeting would be available next week. She requested that each Member rank items and submit them to Director O'Riley.

She recommended pursuing a dual-source option and suggested that side street lights be consistent. She described centerline to keyhole lighting. She reviewed questions from the Public Safety Committee. Joe Hancock commented on dimming options and noted there were liability issues at the state level. Rick Kauffman stated that Bonita Springs had a lighting contract for a future date and Treasure Island in Pinellas County recently started a pilot program with amber streetlights on Gulf Blvd.

Chair Johnson questioned why they were utilizing the 2016 Green Book instead of the 2020 or 2021 version that included an addition for wildlife areas. Ms. Lansford replied that they were not bound by the book because the project was not a Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) project, but they did not ignore wildlife concerns. Ms. Lansford discussed a network-controlled dual-source lighting for turtle season. MRTF Member Spalletta questioned why they could not use amber lights all year due to the white light glare. Ms. Lansford stated their goal was to minimize glare.

Ms. Lansford discussed lighting design criteria in response to MRTF Member Rusk's question. Mr. Kauffman added that national standards were involved with all federal money projects.

Discussion was held regarding research concerning public safety and amber lights. Ms. Lansford stated that the data indicated that 4,000 Kelvin produced better results and their recommendation reflected that information.

MRTF Member Rusk described her confusion with the question regarding the Town's ordinance. Ms. Lansford encouraged her and everyone else to include their comments and questions on the form.

Liaison Veach questioned whether they had experience with dark skies. Mr. Kauffman replied affirmatively and described the project. Liaison Veach questioned a quantitative difference between 4,000 and 3,000 Kelvin. Ms. Lansford replied that the information was available and part of their written responses to stakeholders.

Chair Johnson questioned whether amber lights were the only solution during turtle season. Ms. Lansford replied, not necessarily.

Discussion was held concerning using different lights throughout the year.

MOTION: Chair Johnson moved to hold a special lighting meeting on Wednesday, May 26, 2021, at 3:00 p.m.; second by MRTF Member Spalletta.

VOTE: Motion passed unanimously.

B. Dark Skies - tabled

C. Straws – Polyhydroxyalkanoate – Bio-polymers

Brad LaPorte, CEO of WinCup, provided samples of straws and what was available on the beach. He reviewed data from a handout regarding digestion and inhalation of the product. He noted he would not address information on the thumb drives provided

to members. Mr. LaPorte provided a draft exception to the straw ordinance based on Federal Trade Commission (FTC) guidelines.

Discussion was held regarding the presentation. MRTF Member Rusk noted that she recently saw biodegradable straws all over the streets. Mr. LaPorte stated that PHA was the only plastic proven to be marine-biodegradable and competitors were using different technologies. MRTF Member Howell noted that the Pink Shell was using a straw similar to Mr. LaPorte's product. MRTF Member Rusk discussed researching the product further, but she did not support using them on the Island because it was difficult to tell them apart from the non-biodegradable straws. She felt they would be taking a step back. MRTF Member Spalletta disagreed and thought that the straws were state-of-the-art technology. Chair Johnson stated that the fact that the product disappeared had to be weighed. MRTF Member Spalletta commented that the straws were cheaper than the paper straws and businesses would buy them. MRTF Member Rusk questioned using straws at all. She felt it was a good product but not necessarily suitable for their beach in light of the straw ordinance. Chair Johnson wondered whether people who did not like paper straws would use the biodegradable ones resulting in more straws on the beach.

MOTION: MRTF Member Spalletta moved to recommend that Town Council amend the distribution of plastic straws to have an exception for the straw proven to be marine biodegradable as defined by the FTC; second by MRTF Member DeGaetano.

Project Manager Chustz stated that litter was litter and was a matter of choosing the least harmful product. He encouraged Mr. LaPorte to provide studies showing the breakdown of the whole product rather than just the cellulose. He recommended a marine biodegradable straw per the FTC guidelines.

VOTE: Motion approved; 3-1 with MRTF Member Rusk dissenting.

- D. Water Markers/Manatee Protection Zone - tabled
- E. Osprey Habitat - tabled
- F. Dune Management - tabled
- G. Good Citizen Award, aka the "Murphie"

MOTION: Chair Johnson moved to nominate Keller Williams for the Murphie; second by MRTF Member Spalletta.

VOTE: Motion passed unanimously.

VIII. MEMBER ITEMS AND REPORTS

Project Manager Chustz reported that Lee County was moving and replacing SLOW signs. He indicated that he made changes to the ordinance regarding the Dune Management Plan and encouraged Members to add their feedback.

MRTF Member Rusk provided a list of upcoming pop-up educational events. She encouraged members to attend.

MRTF Member Howell suggested adding a discussion regarding bad behavior by people who anchored outside the Mooring Field. He mentioned illegal activities in the north end. He indicated

he would reach out to the Anchorage Advisory Committee (AAC).
Chair Johnson recognized MRTF Member Rusk for her hard work with the pop-up events. He discussed prioritizing items for the agenda.
Discussion was held regarding the budget.

IX. PUBLIC COMMENT – no public comment.

X. SET AGENDA FOR NEXT MEETING – no change.

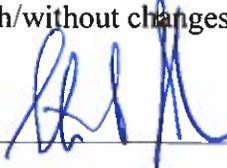
XI. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Chair Johnson moved to adjourn; second by MRTF Member Spalletta.

VOTE: Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting was adjourned at 6:15 p.m.

Adopted 6-9-21 with/without changes. Motion by SPALLETTA
(DATE)

Vote: _____ Signature: 

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