

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

Wednesday, May 26, 2021

I. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting was called to order at 3:02 p.m. by Chair Johnson.

II. INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. ROLL CALL

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

Staff: Environmental Project Manager Chadd Chustz.

Council Liaison: Bill Veach

Chair Johnson reported that Renee Jeffreys Heil resigned and thanked her for her service.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT – no public comment.

V. STREETLIGHT PROJECT

Chair Johnson read the scope and purpose of MRTF and summarized how they got there. Discussion was held concerning light pollution and the effect on wildlife, sky glow, lack of uniformity, on-demand lighting systems, glare, clutter and light trespass issues and health concerns with a blue-light spectrum.

Regulatory issues were discussed. Chair Johnson stated that the one regulation mentioned was brightness (one-foot candle). He brought up the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) 2020 Green Book that provided an approved product list for wildlife lighting; however, the consultant indicated that they did not have to follow the guidelines because the project was for a county road. Chair Johnson revealed that Lee County DOT was following the Green Book with the signal project on Crescent St., including amber lights approved by the Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC). Chair Johnson reviewed the Town's light ordinance regarding direct, indirect and cumulative lighting.

Discussion was held concerning how the dosage of blue light negatively affected health. Chair Johnson commented on studies regarding the sense of personal security. He questioned recommendations from first responders concerning amber lights. MRTF Member Spalletta replied that first responders brought their lights to emergencies and did not depend on street lighting.

Current amber lighting projects on the beach were identified. Community benchmarking was discussed in relation to Sanibel and Bonita Springs. Chair Johnson stated that any light that had to be turned off for turtle season was a failure. He noted they currently turned off over 50 lights

during turtle season. He described the amber light situation on Treasure Island based on a conversation with the Assistant Public Works Director, Stacy Boyles. He noted the FWC did a field certification of two different amber lights. As a result of the testing, the county was scheduled to install an additional 88 amber lights while meeting all applicable regulations. Ms. Boyles stated that there were no complaints from anyone concerning visibility.

Chair Johnson reviewed a previous presentation by Florida Power & Light (FPL) to Town Council and noted that amber lights were not part of the tariff program then; however, they were now approved. He described the tariff program and indicated that adding new poles for amber lights would be covered. Chair Johnson stated that, based on facts, they could do the project today with available products provided by FPL.

Chair Johnson felt that the list of pros and cons was dismissive of other viewpoints. He questioned the sense of security without proof, first responder issues and tourism. MRTF Member Howell commented that it sounded like a sales pitch. Chair Johnson stated they did not have to settle for less and remarked that implications in the pros and cons were left out. MRTF Member Fossum suggested that becoming dark sky compliant would benefit the Town and the turtles.

Chair Johnson described uniform lighting for side streets and questioned whether lights needed to be on all night. MRTF Member Spalletta commented that her neighbors preferred no lights. MRTF Member DeGaetano questioned the height of their current poles. Chair Johnson thought their poles were 30 feet high.

Consensus was reached to light from centerline to sidewalk. MRTF Member DeGaetano brought up the FL ordinance that stated from 9:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. during season, and the light had to extend from the mean high tide landward 750 feet. She questioned the narrow places on the beach. MRTF Member Fossum recommended that side streets comply with dark skies.

MOTION: MRTF Member Spalletta moved that they recommend that Town Council use narrow band amber LED lights year-round with timers and motion detectors be installed; second by MRTF Member Rusk.

Motion and second were withdrawn after discussion.

MOTION: MRTF Member Spalletta moved to recommend that Town Council choose narrow-band amber LED lights year-round on Estero Blvd. and side streets; second by Chair Johnson.

VOTE: Motion passed unanimously.

MOTION: Chair Johnson moved to recommend centerline to sidewalk lighting for Estero Blvd.; second by MRTF Member Rusk.

VOTE: Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion was held regarding crosswalk lighting.

MOTION: Chair Johnson moved to recommend enhanced pedestrian safety at crosswalks utilizing additional on-demand technology while adhering to dark skies guidelines; second by MRTF Member Spalletta.

After discussion, motion and second were withdrawn.

MOTION: Chair Johnson moved to recommend enhancing pedestrian safety at crosswalks utilizing additional on-demand technology while adhering to dark skies guidelines

and sea turtle lighting ordinances; second by MRTF Member Spalletta.
VOTE: Motion passed unanimously.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENT – no public comment.

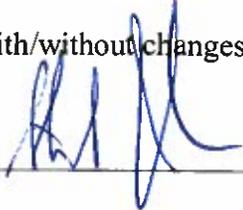
VII. ADJOURNMENT

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

VOTE: Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting was adjourned at 5:16 p.m.

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

Vote: 7-0 Signature: 

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