

MINUTES
FORT MYERS BEACH
PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE
Town Hall Council Chambers
2731 Oak Street
Fort Myers Beach, FL 33931
Thursday, January 23, 2025

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chair Thomas.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. ROLL CALL

Members present: Ron Benak, Jim Bougoulas, Todd Capela, Keran Farrell, and Dawn Thomas.

Excused: James Knickle

Staff Liaison: Thomas Yozzo

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT – no comment.

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – December 17, 2024

MOTION: PSC Member Bougoulas moved to approve the minutes, seconded by PSC Member Farrell.

VOTE: The motion passed unanimously.

VI. STAFF REPORT AND UPDATES

Liaison Yozzo reported that the streets were coming back and there had not been any recent flooding. The town was working with Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) and Lee Department of Transportation (LDOT) regarding the expansion of the circle and they were working on a new safety plan for pedestrian movement. Rangers have been on traffic posts down there and LCSO (Lee County Sheriff's Office) was contacted about adding officers for public safety. Lights are operating on the bridge now.

VII. DISASTER RESPONSE FOR EMERGENCY

A. Lee County Emergency Operations Center

Deputy Chief of Readiness Caroline Briones shared how they help support emergency operations and available resources. She utilized PowerPoint for her presentation. She stated that every disaster starts and ends locally. The first slide was FEMA – NIMS Framework 3 Major Components, Principles, Standardized Concepts and Languages, Cover Page of an Incident Action Page, Hurricane

Season, RUN!!!, Response Plan Action Items, Public Information, Hurricane Watch Declared, Making the Incident Action Plan, Benefits of the Planning Process, How are Resources Acquired in the Middle of a Disaster? And Lee County Emergency Management & Lee County Emergency Operations Center (EOC). Discussion was held regarding what the town could do to help them.

B. FMBFD

Chief Worth stated there were very few calls during the fireworks and credited the evacuation plan for smoothly getting people off the island. He distributed the call volume report and apologized for not including details of the trauma-type calls. The call distribution was similar to last month. The water main break caused them to shut the water off for a while and he described the fire department's process. He explained the traffic backup on the bridge earlier in the month and reported that the county would have the switch to turn the bridge from three lanes to two lanes. They proactively addressed the situation and worked on preemption with GPS in all their intersections to help control traffic.

C. LCSO

Lt. Chitwood indicated there was nothing to report this month, but he was available to answer questions. He reviewed preparations for Spring Break and the Shrimpfest Parade. Last month, PSC Member Capela mentioned that the area past Seagrape was the Wild West, with stuff parked everywhere. He noticed a huge change and most of the bike lanes and sidewalks were clear. He thanked Lt. Chitwood and the LCSO for increased enforcement. PSC Member Bougoulas asked for an update on whether the special event permitting process to alert the LCSO regarding extra officers was in place. Liaison Yozzo replied that they were discussing the best standard operating procedures but had conversations with the LCSO regarding upcoming events.

D. Town of FMB Emergency Operations – not addressed.

VIII. MEMBER ITEMS AND REPORTS

PSC Member Benak encouraged the community to watch the presentation.

Chair Thomas drafted a shared pedestrian and bike proposal and will give it to Liaison Yozzo for review and feedback. She discussed signs and adding lights to the pathway at Margaritaville. PSC Member Capela commented that a temporary sidewalk should have been created at Crescent Park instead of mobi mats since the whole area is a construction zone. Liaison Yozzo described how FDOT would mitigate the area and indicated the project was almost complete. He added that the town was making sure rangers would be in congested areas. He noted that e-bikes were okay on the sidewalk and they were asking people to go with the flow of traffic.

PSC Member Bougoulas asked for an update on the bike map path to avoid Estero Blvd. Liaison Yozzo replied that it had to go through the council for discussion and study.

PSC Member Benak noted large areas of damaged sidewalks by Anchorage and Connecticut. Liaison Yozzo replied that it might be because of utility work. PSC Member

Benak will forward pictures. PSC Member Capela added that the sidewalks on Crescent were a disaster.

Chair Thomas noted that in Bayside Park, the metal grates around the trees were missing circular discs, and two people fell in the holes. Liaison Yozzo will contact public works. PSC Member Capela suggested adding a yellow line down the middle of Old San Carlos to direct people to stay on their side. Liaison Yozzo will check with public works.

IX. PUBLIC COMMENT – no public comment.

X. SET NEXT MEETING AGENDA – February 20, 2025

XI. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: PSC Member Bougoulas moved to adjourn, seconded by PSC Member Farrell.

VOTE: The motion carried unanimously.

Adopted 2-20-25 with/without changes. Motion by FARRELL
(Date)

Vote _____ Signature 

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