

MINUTES
FORT MYERS BEACH
MARINE & ENVIRONMENTAL
RESOURCES TASK FORCE
Town Hall Council Chambers
2731 Oak Street
Fort Myers Beach, FL 33931
Wednesday, June 11, 2025

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chair Nusbaum.

II. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

III. Roll Call

Members present: David Nusbaum, Ed Rood, Jennifer Rusk and Leo Sand.
Excused: Bill Althoff, Robert Howell and Sharon Hegstrom.
Staff: Environmental Projects Manager Chadd Chustz
Council Liaison: John King

IV. Approve The Agenda

MOTION: MERTF Member Sand moved to approve the agenda, seconded by MERTF Member Rood.

VOTE: The motion carried unanimously.

V. Approve Previous Meeting Minutes – May 1, 2025

MOTION: MERTF Member Sand moved to approve the minutes, seconded by MERTF Member Rood.

VOTE: The motion carried unanimously.

VI. Public Comment

Michael Thornton, resident, asked for an update on dredging canals. Liaison King replied that the staff was researching funding opportunities.

VII. Current Items

A. Mulholland Award

Chair Nusbaum asked Liaison King if he would obtain permission from the town council to open nominations. Liaison King responded that it would be brought up at the June 16, 2025, meeting. MERTF Member Rusk read her letter nominating Ellen Vaughan.

B. Hazardous Materials Disposal

Manager Chustz was waiting to hear back from a person who could help with disposal. Chair Nusbaum felt it was imperative to have numerous dates available for disposing of hazardous materials. He suggested reaching out to the contractors if there was a cost associated with collection.

C. Beach Renourishment Project

Manager Chustz stated they were out of the south segment and after it was tilled, a sea turtle nested the next day. Staging was occurring at the Dakota access and pumping towards Lanark, which is the southern limit for the central segment. Once that area is complete, they will move to Sterling and use that as a construction zone. After that, they will break back to probably the Connecticut beach access and pump the rest of the central beach. He noted they were in the home stretch and the project was expected to be complete by June 30, 2025.

The dune planting contract will go before the council on June 16, 2025, and Manager Chustz was hopeful that they would start planting as soon as possible. MERTF Member Rood raised concerns about water entering residents' homes by bypassing the berms due to gaps. Manager Chustz explained that the water could come behind the berm and he did not think there were many gaps in the south end.

Manager Chustz indicated that the state and grant funding paid for the beach renourishment and FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) will also reimburse some costs. The town will be responsible for less than what was expected.

D. Wave Attenuation Wall

Chair Nusbaum provided background information on the wall and noted Mayor Allers promoted the idea. He suggested inviting Elizabeth Fountain from J.R. Evans to discuss their product. MERTF Member Rusk distributed a handout from FWC (Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission) regarding living shorelines. A discussion was held regarding planted dunes, mitigation walls, cost, preventing scours and flood insurance savings.

MOTION: MERTF Member Sand moved to invite Elizabeth Fountain from J.R. Evans to a future meeting, seconded by MERTF Member Rood.

VOTE: The motion carried 3-1 with MERTF Member Rusk opposing.

Manager Chustz will contact Ms. Fountain.

VIII. Members' Items

MERTF Member Rusk asked for an update regarding the trees on Estero. Manager Chustz referred her to Community Services Director Jeff Hauge. He added that they would be native to the area. MERTF Member Rusk received quotes for printing the children's book: 10,000 copies would be approximately \$4,800, 12,000 copies would be over \$5,500.00 and 15,000 copies would be about \$7,500.00. She noted

that the \$4,500.00 in their budget was not quite enough. She suggested adding QR codes to the logos on the back of the book and those changes would cost about \$130.00. She indicated that they needed an additional \$300.00 to print 10,000 books. MERTF Member Rood revealed that the Friends of Little Estero Island would donate the money. MERTF Member Rusk stated that the storm drainage in front of her house was gurgling because it was clogged. She asked the town to

clean all the storm drains on the island before hurricane season. MERTF Member Rood noted that the storm drains in front of his house were filled with sand. Manager Chustz responded that he will report issues to the stormwater staff.

MERTF Member Sand was told that the lighting should be completed in November.

Chair Nusbaum was saddened that the dolphin, which was covered in monofilament line, ultimately passed away. He encouraged everyone fishing to properly dispose of their monofilament line because it was hazardous to all marine life. He noted there was a sea turtle nest on the north and south edges of the property at the 6000 block. MERTF Member Rusk noticed that she has seen numerous buoys along the beach with monofilament lines stretched out with fish bait containers tied to the line. She asked if that was allowed. Manager Chustz will check with FWC. Chair Nusbaum thought it was allowed.

IX. Staff Update

Manager Chustz stated they had 37 sea turtle nests, 150 false crawls and 38 obstructed nesting crawls due to the dredging pipe. Two turtles chose a sandy ramp to gain access to landward of the pipe and crawled back over the ramp to return to the Gulf. Scours were forming in the south end and they had work to do on lighting before hatching. He encouraged residents to inspect their lighting and he noticed a lot of floodlights on the landward side. Construction sites were also leaving bright lights on. For residents on the Gulf side, all lights should be amber, directed downward and shielded. Properties on the streetside should have amber lights directed downward. Least turn chicks were running around Liaison King's beach and Manager Chustz contacted FWC law enforcement to help prevent people from watching the 4th of July fireworks from that area. Manager Chustz explained that they were working on finding funding for the canal dredging and a special assessment was a possibility if they had support from the community. He described the process.

MERTF Member Rood offered to talk to property owners on the 8000 block who were violating lighting regulations. Chair Nusbaum indicated that he and Chair King from the Anchorage Advisory Committee (AAC) will share results from their research on municipalities regarding canal dredging.

X. Public Comment – no public comment.

XI. MERTF Award

MOTION: Chair Nusbaum nominated MERTF Member Howell and his team for trying to save the dolphin, seconded by MERTF Member Sand.

VOTE: The motion carried unanimously.

XII. Set Agenda for Next Meeting - skip July's meeting and resume August 13, 2025.

Liaison King and MERTF Member Rusk will not be present.

Add J.R. Evans presentation.

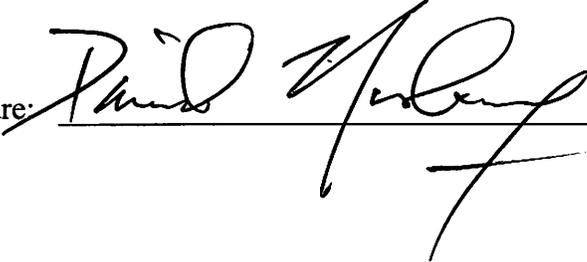
XIII. Adjournment

MOTION: MERTF Member Sand moved to adjourn, seconded by MERTF Member Rood.

VOTE: The motion carried unanimously.

Adopted August 13, 2025 with/**without** changes. Motion by Member Rood and seconded by member Althoff.

Vote 7-0

Signature:  _____