

MINUTES
Town of Fort Myers Beach
Cultural and Environmental Learning
Center Advisory Board “CEL CAB”
Town Hall – 6231 Estero Blvd.
Fort Myers Beach, FL 33931
Thursday, October 23, 2025

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 1:01 p.m. by Chair Hill.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. REORGANIZATION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

CEL CAB Member Vaughan nominated Cherie Smith as Chair.

MOTION: CEL CAB Member Werner moved to approve Cherie Smith as Chair, seconded by CEL CAB Member Vaughan.

VOTE: The motion carried unanimously.

MOTION: CEL CAB Member Werner nominated Ellen Vaughan as Vice Chair, seconded by CEL CAB Member Hill.

VOTE: The motion carried unanimously.

IV. ROLL CALL

Members present: Barbara Hill, Carolyn McKeown, Cherie Smith, Ellen Vaughan and Becky Werner.

Excused: Kerrie Henderson and Lorrie Wolf.

Town Staff: Community Services Director Jeff Hauge and Cultural Resources Coordinator Karina Britez.

Council Liaison: Jim Atterholt (virtually)

Deputy Town Manager Traci Kohler provided an update on the town council’s Strategic Plan process, which started a year ago. The Strategic Plan is available on the town’s website. On November 17, 2025, the town council will be presented with a brief recap with homework and an in-depth workshop will be held at the December 3, 2025, M&P Session. The final continuation will be held during the M&P Session on January 7, 2025. She suggested that CEL CAB could focus on preserving the Mound House as a tourist destination and on increasing visitation rates.

The real goals for the town’s Strategic Plan will be crafted next fall. Director Hauge noted that he sent CEL CAB’s Strategic Plan to the facilitators. He suggested adding setting goals to future agendas.

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – September 25, 2025

Tabled until next meeting.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENT – no public comment

VII. STAFF REPORT

Director Hauge said the programming was great and that some directional signs had been installed. A discussion was held regarding the design of the Dan Hughes sign and driving the loop to enter the property. CELCAB Member Vaughan asked about putting an image of the inside of the underground exhibit on the boarded-up entrance.

Coordinator Britez reported that three groups visited in October, with another scheduled for October. The Moonlight Market event was a success and a virtual lecture event was scheduled for October 30, 2025. The museum will be closed for two weeks for termite treatment. Emily and Breanna are attending the SEMC conference in Montgomery, AL and Breanna was one of the speakers.

Coordinator Britez completed the virtual AAM training and Sandra Britez will be registered for the guest-first customer service certification program with the VCB.

The new volunteer orientation and tour program began this month and a refresher training will be scheduled for current volunteers. She noted that docents were needed for the house and grounds. The MAP program is advancing and she indicated that a collections management policy was in their packet for review.

A presentation was in the works to request funds for the Friends of the Mound House, and a donation was received for lighting the mural outside. Performance metrics for visitors was included in the packet and four members renewed and a discussion was held regarding why there were no kayak tours.

CELCAB members praised Coordinator Bretiz's comprehensive report.

A discussion was held about replacing the trees that died and about what happened to the medicinal, edible, and third garden that existed before the house opened. Director Hauge revealed that TDC (Tourist Development Council) funds were available for vegetation and signage. Chair Smith described the popularity of the garden tour and suggested exploring bringing them back. She also suggested creating a memorial garden or adding a memorial bench in Pat McKeown's honor. CELCAB Member McKeown described a space under the trees on the house side to place a couple of benches, with a metal statue between them. She mentioned capturing the story of people who sat on barrels and wrote for funding. She volunteered to organize a meeting with Anita Cereceda and John Gucciardo. CELCAB Member Hill thought the ideas about history and the gardens should be dovetailed with the Strategic Plan. A discussion was held regarding where the impetus for the history and gardens should come from. CELCAB Member McKeown noted that she requested that part of the donations she received be earmarked for a memorial bench.

VIII. MEMBER ITEMS AND REPORTS

CELCAB Member Hill congratulated the new chair and vice chair.

Chair Smith thanked CELCAB Member Hill, on behalf of the members, for her years of service.

Liaison Atterholt also thanked CELCAB Member Hill.

Director Hauge reminded members that the Sunshine Law training was on the town's website.

IX. PUBLIC COMMENT – no comments.

X. SET NEXT MEETING AGENDA AND DATE – November 30, 2025, at 1:00 p.m.

Add MAP program, Strategic Plan, adding an image to the underground exhibit, collection management policy board action, gardens and benches, a botanical tour and the loop road. There will not be a meeting in December and the January meeting will be on the 27th, 2025, at 1:00 p.m.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: CELCAB Member Hill moved to adjourn, seconded by CELCAB Member Vaughan.
Chair Smith adjourned the meeting.

Adopted _____ with/without changes. Motion by _____
(DATE)

Vote: _____ Signature: _____

DRAFT