

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

Wednesday, February 10, 2021

I. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m. by Chair Johnson.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. ROLL CALL

Members present: Greg Fossum, Renee Jeffreys Heil, Steve Johnson, Rose Larkin, Jennifer Rusk, Mary Rose Spalletta.

Excused: Sarah De Beer

Staff: Environmental Project Manager Chadd Chustz

Council Liaison: Bill Veach

IV. APPROVE THE AGENDA

MOTION: MRTF Member Spalletta moved to approve the agenda; second by MRTF Member Jeffreys Heil.

VOTE: Motion passed unanimously.

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – December 9, 2020

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

VOTE: Motion approved unanimously.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENT – no public comment.

VII. CURRENT ITEMS

A. Fertilizer Certification & Training

Chair Johnson listed four items to discuss, including whether there was a need, did they have resources, was there a way to determine success and did they have the ability to enforce it? Project Manager Chustz indicated that approximately 20 landscaper companies worked in the Town. MRTF Member Rusk felt that certifying companies was a great idea and suggested a sticker be placed on the vehicle after certification. MRTF Member Jeffreys Heil agreed and thought it would help educate homeowners and Homeowner Associations (HOA's) to determine who to do business with. She felt that

MRTF had the resources to develop an online course and create stickers, but a larger effort might require more resources. Chair Johnson noted that Sanibel certified fertilizer companies quarterly and landscapers were required to complete testing. MRTF Member Spalletta stated that they needed to update everyone who worked on the island because parameters changed. She suggested that a \$25.00, six-week course be required before companies could work. Project Manager Chustz mentioned sending educational links to firms. MRTF Member Fossum questioned whether landscapers were certified by the state. Project Manager Chustz replied that he would forward the database concerning fertilizer certifications. He described code enforcement measures to determine whether they were certified. Consensus was reached to table the discussion until the next meeting.

B. Sea Turtle Ordinance Review

Chair Johnson noted it was one year since the town adopted the state model ordinance. Project Manager Chustz and Turtle Time provided additional language regarding lighting. MRTF Member Spalletta commented that changes were minimal. Chair Johnson suggested minor changes to section 32-105, above 32-107, add a section on dark skies and require structures landward of the Coastal Construction Control Line (CCCL) to comply with dark skies language. Project Manager Chustz will make the changes.

MOTION: Chair Johnson moved to modify the sea turtle conservation ordinance with input provided and direct staff to present to Council; second by MRTF Member Spalletta.

AMENDED

MOTION: Chair Johnson moved to submit the amended sea turtle conservation ordinance and present it to Council; second by MRTF Member Spalletta.

Discussion was held regarding dark skies. Project Manager Chustz described instances where lights were too bright and aimed incorrectly. He felt that the lighting ordinance addressed many issues. He suggested they review section 34-1831 through 1834 regarding general lighting standards for the CCCL. MRTF Member Fossum questioned adding dark skies to a specific ordinance. Chair Johnson mentioned adding dark skies to the lighting standards. MRTF Members agreed that dark skies should be a separate issue.

Motions and seconds withdrawn.

MOTION: Chair Johnson moved to amend the sea turtle conservation ordinance with the additions provided to the staff liaison and to bring that to the attention of Town Council; second by MRTF Member Spalletta.

VOTE: Motion passed unanimously.

C. Beach Excavation

Chair Johnson thought that staff was filling in small holes and larger holes would be filled by tractors. MRTF Member Spalletta described massive holes in front of the Sandpiper and stated that the town finally filled them with equipment. She questioned whether code could have told the people to fill the holes. Project Manager Chustz replied affirmatively. Discussion was held regarding adding language to define excavation. Project Manager

Chustz stated that Public Works filled in holes as they were reported. He indicated he would research what other beach communities were doing concerning holes.

D. Ocean Friendly Sunscreen

MRTF Member Jeffreys Heil stated that they could not mandate products but they could provide education. She would like to start with shop owners so they could educate consumers. MRTF Member Larkin suggested that Ostego Bay could help. MRTF Member Jeffreys Heil remarked that education included reading the ingredients on the container. MRTF Member Rusk brought up pop-up educational sessions at Times Square or Lynn Hall to educate the public on several issues throughout the year. MRTF Member Jeffreys Heil agreed but questioned logistics and resources. Project Manager Chustz stated that a special event permit would be needed and CDC guidelines followed. MRTF Member Rusk asked to put the topic on the agenda for next month. MRTF Member Fossum suggested adding signage at beach access points. MRTF Member Jeffreys Heil supported signage and educating local businesses but felt pop-up sessions were a large-scale endeavor. MRTF Member Rusk commented that it did not have to be a big event. MRTF Member Jeffreys Heil stated she would follow up with Cultural Parks & Recreation Director Alison Giesen and others. She discussed contacting businesses for sunscreen samples.

E. Dark Skies Model Ordinance – discussed above.

Chair Johnson brought up the lighting consultant and Liaison Veach commented on.

F. FMB Dune Management Policy

Project Manager Chustz indicated he was working on the policy and encouraged input.

G. Good Citizen Award aka the “Murphie”

Discussion was held concerning assigning monthly articles. MRTF Member Jeffreys Heil volunteered to write the next article. Discussion was held regarding whether last month’s Murphie was submitted to the press since an article appeared in The Observer. Project Manager Chustz stated he did not submit his article yet. MRTF Member Rusk offered to write an article for March. MRTF Member Spalletta for April, Chair Johnson for May, MRTF Member Fossum for June, MRTF Member De Beer for July, and MRTF Member Larkin for August.

VIII. MEMBER ITEMS AND REPORTS

MRTF Member Larkin submitted a list of top 10 invasive plants. She noted that pictures would be included in the final document. She questioned who would enter data including addresses. Chair Johnson noted they would have to evaluate the data first. Discussion was held regarding digitizing and analyzing the data. MRTF Member Larkin will discuss the process with the Master Gardeners. MRTF Member Rusk suggested adding the location of the plant on the property. MRTF Member Jeffreys Heil noted a picture of the plant would help to educate people who were

not familiar with species. She supported adding QR codes to provide education. Chair Johnson will investigate the lecture series. He questioned the status of resources for invasiveness. Project Manager Chustz replied that it would have to be discussed at a Town Council M&P session.

MRTF Member Rusk questioned the process for obtaining a permit for pop-up events. MRTF Member Spalletta stated that she hesitated gathering with people due to the coronavirus. MRTF Member Rusk noted that everything could be ready to go forward when the situation changed. No items from other members.

IX. PUBLIC COMMENT – no public comment.

X. SET AGENDA FOR NEXT MEETING – remove sea turtle ordinance review and add pop-up events.

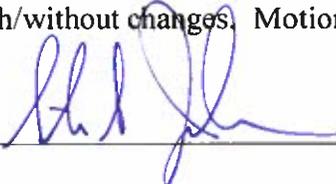
XI. ADJOURNMENT

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

VOTE: Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting was adjourned at 5:39 p.m.

Adopted 3-10-21 with/without changes. Motion by JOHNSON
(DATE)

Vote: _____ Signature: 

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