

MINUTES
FORT MYERS BEACH
Anchorage Advisory Committee
Town Hall
2525 Estero Boulevard
Fort Myers Beach, FL 33931

Wednesday, May 19, 2021

I. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Chair Light.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. ROLL CALL

Members present: Bob Beasley, Douglas Eckmann, Ted Lawwill, Katherine Light, and Sam Lurie.
Excused: Greg Holmes and Mike Ratliff.
Staff: Public Works Director Chelsea O’Riley and Harbormaster Austin Gilchrist.
Council Liaison: Rexann Hosafros

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT – no comment.

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – April 21, 2021

MOTION: AAC Member Lurie moved to approve the minutes; second by AAC Member Beasley.

VOTE: Motion passed unanimously.

VI. MOORING FIELD AND STAFF REPORT

Harbormaster Gilchrist reported that the field was emptying, and the pump-outs were at 600 gallons a week. The pump-out boat was out of service for a couple of days, but they made up for the time they were not in the field. The Lee County Sheriff’s Department checked vessels and issued citations and warnings. The anchorage field channel was cleared out and was now a straight line from marker to marker. Harbormaster Gilchrist noted that he would request a detailed report from the Sheriff’s Department. The Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWCC) inspected the field and they passed. The FWCC wrote a letter of recommendation. One staff member completed their advanced dive training and Harbormaster Gilchrist received his Master Captain license. The backfield was being cleaned for inspection.

Director O’Riley stated that 43 boats were in the field. She praised the staff for their hard work. AAC Member Beasley indicated that a dinghy was stuck under the dock on Carolina St. Director O’Riley replied that they would keep track of it.

VII. EXPANSION OF THE MOORING FIELD UPDATE

Director O'Riley stated that she expected the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) approval by the end of the week. She indicated they should hear something regarding the grant application for Florida Boating Improvement Program (FBIP) in the summer or fall. Bayside Park construction was expected to start over the summer.

VIII. UPLAND SERVICE PROVIDER UPDATE

Town Council determined that Bayside Park was not an option. Director O'Riley presented options to Town Council on Monday and the list was narrowed down by two. Options 4 and 6 were eliminated. The pros and cons of each site were listed on the handouts. Site 1 was between Pink Shell properties on the bay with a price tag of \$2.2 million. AAC Member Beasley noted that the property was filled with fleas and the existing structure needed to be inspected. He noted it was a good location but a long way for Mooring Field patrons. AAC Member Eckmann agreed with the assessment and suggested the building be demolished.

Site 2 was one unit at Harbor House. Liaison Hosafros noted that the owner was trying to sever the unit from the condominium association. She did not think it was likely to happen, but the rest of Town Council refused to eliminate the location as an option.

Site 3 was on San Carlos Island and owned by Lee County. Director O'Riley noted current businesses on the property did have long-term agreements with Lee County. AAC Member Beasley stated that the property was zoned industrial and commercial. He was not sure about the location due to the heavy equipment and commercial vessels. AAC Member Lurie thought the site location was good, but he did not believe the property and lack of amenities fit their goal to create a premier facility. He commented that he avoided the area at night.

Site 4 was directly behind Town Hall and required development. Chair Light noted that three of the parcels were zoned residential and the fourth was commercial.

Site 5 was Bay Oaks. Ownership of the bottom of the canal was an issue. AAC Member Lurie remarked that he thought one of the parcels was pending or was sold. He will verify and get back to Director O'Riley.

AAC Member Lurie noted that Bayside Park was not mentioned at the last Town Council meeting. Liaison Hosafros stated that three Council Members were against the location because of pressure from neighboring properties. AAC Member Beasley commented that none of the present options were as good as Bayside Park. Town Manager Hernstadt explained that they had to follow the will of Town Council and the majority determined Bayside Park was not an option. AAC Member Beasley stated that they might as well stay with Matanzas. Director O'Riley noted they had to respond to the bid request. Town Manager Hernstadt explained why the funds initially set aside for Bayside Park went to Times Square.

Liaison Hosafros discussed the history of the condo association's actions regarding the Harbor House location. They refused to allow the general public access to restrooms and took away parking for existing business owners. She commented that they could pass rules that would hinder operations at the Mooring Field. Chair Light felt the location was the best, but she hoped someone would bid. She would rather stay with Matanzas than use trailers under the bridge. Chair Light discussed the central location and access to amenities with Matanzas. AAC Member Eckmann offered his opinion.

Chair Light felt that the price tag for Site 1 was high, Harbor House was in a good location, but the condo issue was concerning. She did not think Bay Oaks and the site on San Carlos were viable and she was not sure about a parcel behind Town Hall. Liaison Hosafros noted that other uses could be considered for the property and they should keep that in mind when discussing

options. She indicated that the Fire Department did not need all the space they purchased. AAC Member Beasley remarked that the option next to Pink Shell and Harbor House were his two choices. Chair Light ranked her preferences as 1, 2, 5, 7 and 3. AAC Member Lurie agreed that Site 3 was the last option. AAC Member Eckmann commented that 5 and 7 were interchangeable and 3 was last.

MOTION: Chair Light moved to rank the sites 1, 2, 5, 7 and 3 in order of preference; second by AAC Member Eckmann.

VOTE: Motion passed unanimously.

IX. STRATEGIC PLAN REVIEW/COMMUNICATION PLAN

Chair Light questioned the long-term goal of investigating the feasibility of adding an anchorage area. The goal was determined to be moot.

X. MEMBER ITEMS AND REPORTS

Director O'Riley questioned whether the Committee needed more than \$2,500.00 in the budget. Chair Light felt the amount was sufficient. Director O'Riley stated that she would forward a report from finance as soon as she had access.
No items from other members.

XI. PUBLIC COMMENT – no public comment.

XII. SET NEXT MEETING AGENDA - tentatively September 15, 2021

Director O'Riley stated that she would forward monthly reports. AAC Member Holmes previously offered to participate on the Selection Advisory Committee in the fall and AAC Member Eckmann volunteered to be the back-up. Chair Light indicated that a meeting could be called. Liaison Hosafros stated that anyone could sign up for summaries of Town Council meetings provided by Coordinator Dexter. Director O'Riley will forward information to AAC Members.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: AAC Member Beasley moved to adjourn the meeting; second by Chair Light.

VOTE: Motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:15 a.m.

Adopted 9-15-21 with/without changes. Motion by _____
(DATE)

Vote: UNANIM. Signature: Sam Lurie

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