

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

Wednesday, March 16, 2022

I. CALL TO ORDER

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

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. ROLL CALL

Members present: Bob Beasley, Greg Holmes, Ted Lawwill, Katherine Light, Sam Lurie and Mike Ratliff.

Excused: Douglas Eckmann

Staff: Public Works Director Chelsea O'Riley and Harbormaster Austin Gilchrist.

Council Liaison: Rexann Hosafros

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT

Lawrence Abramoff, resident, questioned the role of the AAC and the need for the upland facility. Marty White, resident, did not understand the process to bring the anchorage down his canal. He hoped everyone thought hard about the location.

George Kormos, resident, discussed expanding the traffic on a residential canal and affiliated costs. He questioned whether anyone thought of the financial angle.

Gloria Abramoff ceded her time to Lawrence Abramoff.

Mr. Abramoff displayed a photo of the canal at low tide. He stated the canal would have to be dredged because of the mud. He questioned whether they were ready to compensate the neighborhood for the damage dredging would cause.

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – February 16, 2022

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

VOTE: Motion passed unanimously.

VI. STAFF REPORT

Harbormaster Gilchrist stated that staff met with citizens to get an idea of issues surrounding the upland service project. He reported the new pump-out boat would arrive this month or next. The vending machine procedures were initiated. Buoys were being fixed and quotes were out to replace some of the buoys. He noted engineers were training the divers to install buoys. Systems were

being cleaned and inspected this month. Harbormaster Gilchrist indicated two hazards in the navigational waters were identified and marked for contractors. The recent storm damaged two boats in the proposed expansion area and Lee County Sheriff was notified. A utility truck was purchased. The Mooring Field was at maximum capacity and five vessels were rafting up with other vessels. He noted the systems were designed for that purpose per the engineer.

Director O'Riley stated that Coastal Engineering was contracted to inspect the seagrass buoys at the south end. She reported that approximately 20 seagrass buoys needed to be replaced. The expansion ITB went out yesterday and was under the cone of silence. She commented that the application was submitted to the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) for a public dock at Bayside Park. AAC Member Ratliff questioned whether anyone would be allowed to dock their boat at Bayside Park. Director O'Riley replied that vessels would be limited by size and enforced. She added that AAC members could provide input to Coastal Engineering.

VII. STRATEGIC PLAN REVIEW – updated plan to be printed out.

VIII. CRUISERS' APPRECIATION DAY – March 25, 2022, 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Chair Light requested a list of items received. She reported that Marine Resources Task Force (MRTF) would have their pop-up tent at the event. Harbormaster Gilchrist noted that the Yukatan submitted their ABT permit today. He stated he would provide a microphone. Director O'Riley will provide name tags. AAC Member Lurie indicated he applied for the permit with the Sheriff and Director O'Riley will follow up. Harbormaster Gilchrist remarked that he would check about putting the banner on the bridge. Chair Light confirmed that they paid for 140 meals.

MOTION: AAC Member Lurie moved to provide meal tickets to Town Council, staff at the event, AAC Members and Town Manager; second by AAC Member Ratliff.

VOTE: Motion passed unanimously.

IX. HARBOR MANAGEMENT PLAN REVIEW

Director O'Riley indicated that AAC Member Eckmann's comments were incorporated into the plan.

Chair Light suggested checking phone numbers, statute numbers and adding former sections back to the plan. Director O'Riley replied that she would double-check the statute numbers and clean up the references at the end of the document.

Chair Light continued the review with Rules and Regulations on page 7. AAC Member Holmes questioned whether rafting up should be in the plan. Chair Light was not sure and mentioned being too specific. Discussion was held concerning the time frame with failure to vacate, disputes, liability issues with emergency repairs and notifying the Harbormaster when leaving for a day sail. Chair Light discussed leaving her dinghy on the ball while out sailing for a few hours. She did not want to return and find another vessel on her ball. Director O'Riley stated that the Harbormaster should be notified when boaters leave for a day sail. She noted she would research what type of marker would work with their system. AAC Member Beasley commented under Member Items before leaving for another meeting.

AAC Member Lurie questioned whether Dockwa could send a message to every patron, especially in the event of bad weather. Director O'Riley replied that Dockwa did not have the capability the

last time she checked, but she would check again and noted that an email blast could also be created. Marine pollution and debris were discussed.

Director O'Riley stated the Town closed on the property and Tetra Tech and Coastal Consultants created the conceptual plan. She pointed out the area where mangroves would be trimmed. She noted that phases 2 and 3 were for whatever the Town wanted to do with the property in the future. The upland facility would be located in the yellow section. AAC Member Ratliff questioned whether dredging would be necessary. Director O'Riley responded that the engineer would review the situation. She reviewed the grant process and zoning.

X. MEMBER ITEMS AND REPORTS

AAC Member Beasley addressed the audience regarding the new property and stated that the AAC's role was to advise only. He described the situation in the bay before the Mooring Field was created and noted that AAC members understood the resident's concerns.

AAC Member Ratliff mentioned the murky relationship between the AAC, Town Council and staff. He did not recall the AAC supporting the current location for an upland service provider.

AAC Member Lurie discussed the AAC's support for a building at Bayside Park, but the neighbors struck down the plan. He felt the new location was railroaded through. He referred to the Town Council meeting the previous week and thought that an estimate of 10 trips per day down the canal was an understatement. AAC Member Lurie brought up the poll conducted by The Observer that found 72% did not support spending \$1 million for the land for the service provider. He understood why the property owners were concerned. He recognized Liaison Hosafros for consistently communicating what the AAC wanted to Town Council.

Chair Light stated that the location was previously identified but was not in the AAC's top three choices. She noted she lived on Chapel St. and had a boat in the Mooring Field. She agreed the traffic would increase but added the facility was not open to the public. She indicated a lot had to be worked out before anything was built. She encouraged patrons to voice their concerns moving forward.

Liaison Hosafros explained that, if asked, she would report to Town Council that the AAC had varying levels of agreement and disagreement regarding applying for the grant. AAC Member Ratliff stated that AAC made it very clear they wanted the facility at Bayside Park. Liaison Hosafros reiterated that the AAC did not have to take a position. AAC Member Ratliff suggested that members not take a vote and leave it up to Town Council. AAC Member Holmes agreed.

MOTION: AAC Member Ratliff moved not to make any recommendation; second by AAC Member Lawwill.

VOTE: Motion passed unanimously.

XI. PUBLIC COMMENT

Larry Abramoff thanked AAC for the service they provided. He stated he was a boater and was not against the Mooring Field; however, he did not support putting toilets in their backyard. He appreciated the frankness of AAC members. He commented that he would fight to protect his neighborhood. He recommended that the AAC make a motion against the location.

Sylvia Lucas commented that many agreed that the decision was rushed because of the grant deadline. She suggested that they wait until next year to apply for the grant.

George Kormos stated that the grant was tied into maritime and they could make a motion that the grant not be used for the facility. He agreed that the issue was forced and was a bad idea.

Marty White appreciated AAC Members Ratliff, Lurie and Holmes for caring. He felt the decision was wrong. He supported locations at Bowditch Point and the Mound House and felt there would be consequences for the Town.

Gloria Abramoff stated the location was inappropriate and questioned having a facility at the end of a residential canal. She suggested that they rescind their motion and vote no for the grant.

Star Sherwood invited AAC members to their neighborhood so they could understand why residents did not want the upland provider. She urged them to vote against the grant.

Tim Quintin stated their vote not to make a recommendation against the grant would be a vote for the project.

Jean Kormos appreciated AAC Member Lurie's comments and did not understand why the committee's hands were tied.

Liaison Hosafros clarified that if the Town was awarded the grant, it did not mean that they had to accept it.

XII. SET NEXT MEETING AGENDA - April 20, 2022.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: AAC Member Lurie moved to adjourn the meeting; second by AAC Member Holmes.

VOTE: Motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:02 a.m.

Adopted 4-20-2022 with/without changes. Motion by _____
(DATE)

Vote: 5-0 Signature: Katherine Light

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