

**MINUTES**  
**FORT MYERS BEACH**  
**Anchorage Advisory Committee**  
DiamondHead Beach Resort  
2000 Estero Boulevard  
Fort Myers Beach, FL 33931  
Wednesday, May 17, 2023

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

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

**II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**III. ROLL CALL**

Members present: Douglas Eckmann, Ted Lawwill, Sam Lurie and John Nash.

Excused: Greg Holmes and Mike Ratliff.

Staff: Harbormaster Austin Gilchrist and Public Works Director Jason Freeman

Council Liaison: Jim Atterholt

**IV. COMMITTEE REORGANIZATION**

**MOTION:** AAC Member Eckmann nominated Vice Chair Lurie as Chair, but he declined.

**MOTION:** Vice Chair Lurie nominated AAC Member Eckmann; second member Nash.

**VOTE:** Motion passed unanimously.

**MOTION:** AAC Member Lawwill nominated Vice Chair Lurie as Vice Chair and he accepted.

**VOTE:** Motion passed unanimously.

**V. PUBLIC COMMENT – no public comment.**

**VI. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – September 21, 2022**

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

**VOTE:** Motion passed unanimously.

**VII. STAFF REPORT AND UPDATES**

Harbormaster Gilchrist reported that the existing 70 systems in the Mooring Field were closed due to Ian and will have to be rebuilt. Nineteen systems received before the hurricane were installed for wet storage only. Six had to be closed down and he was working with the Coast Guard and Army Corps to reopen them. Vessels were still being removed from the Mooring Field and engineers deemed the field non-useable. Two derelict vessels were still in the Mooring Field, and he was working with insurance companies to remove them.

None of the Town's vessels were lost, but the pontoon boat was damaged and had been repaired. The pump-out boat was being serviced and getting pumped out. They were pumping out vessels in the Mooring Field and a grant allowed them to accept requests within 1,000 feet landward of the island. All equipment was under replacement or had been replaced and they were still assessing losses. He was working with Tidal Basin regarding reimbursements and exploring financial opportunities to rebuild the Mooring Field. He was in talks with Matanzas and other upland providers for services when people came back into the field. The community centers were being used for anyone who needed facilities. Part of the main dinghy dock was in the parking lot and he was working with contractors to remove it. The permit to rebuild the dock was approved and negotiations have started with the engineers to reprint the blueprints.

Harbormaster Gilchrist reported that he was researching pumps to see how The Town could self-sustain rather than use public facilities to discharge the pump-out boat. Staff was still working with Dockwa to manage the Mooring Field but he was researching other companies. He indicated they were trying to get the water under the bridge reattached. The utility department hooked up a meter on the Town's property so they did not have to rely on outside services for fresh water.

Four positions have been advertised for the maritime division. He noted that the monthly reports for the maritime division were available to members who provided their email addresses.

AAC Member Lurie questioned the status of the old lease for the building. Harbormaster Gilchrist replied that the lease expired, and they were in negotiations since the structure would be rebuilt. The space will look different, but the function will remain. AAC Member Lurie questioned whether a location was chosen for the land-based pump-out boat. Harbormaster Gilchrist replied affirmatively, and they were working with electricians for a site close to the seawall under the bridge. The pickup would be at the fixed bridge and pump directly into Lee County's collection system. He was working with Lee County regarding how to meter and pay for the collection.

## **VIII. MEMBER ITEMS AND REPORTS**

AAC Member Lurie stated that a video was available with Harbormaster Gilchrist and Liaison Atterholt and was very informative. AAC Member Nash added that the video was excellent and encouraged everyone to watch it.

Chair Eckmann reported that the Local Planning Agency (LPA) discussed docks for residential and multi-unit properties in canals and natural water. Their discussion was tabled until the AAC could provide guidance on ordinances related to dock rebuilding. Liaison Atterholt added that the discussion included the canals since many had more sand and were difficult to navigate. Discussions were being held about hiring a firm to survey the damage in the canals and Tidal Basin was exploring opportunities to obtain financing for dredging.

Harbormaster Gilchrist stated that they inspected every canal and the damage varied. Debris was still an issue and docks were part of that debris. Liaison Atterholt indicated that boats were speeding up and down the canals, which jarred the debris loose. Harbormaster Gilchrist commented that the boat renters were unfamiliar with the area and many signs were gone. Wakes washed up to the seawalls and pulled items into the water. The constant impact of wakes in the canals caused more debris in the water and marine construction debris also ended up in the canals. AAC Member Lurie questioned the status of signage. Harbormaster Gilchrist expected the informational signage to be installed within two weeks. The federal channel waterway and channel markers were installed at Sanibel and will work their way back to Fort Myers Beach.

AAC Member Lurie questioned the status of Katherine Light and Bob Beasley. Ms. Light moved out of state and Mr. Beasley did not seek reappointment. Harbormaster Gilchrist encouraged residents to apply for vacant positions.

Liaison Atterholt welcomed John Nash to the AAC. He noted that the Key Questions with Key Staffers was uploaded to the Town's website and Beach Talk Radio also had the video on their website. He encouraged AAC members to take a tour with Harbormaster Gilchrist and looked forward to serving on the committee.

No items from other members.

**IX. PUBLIC COMMENT** – no public comment.

**X. SET NEXT MEETING AGENDA** – June 21, 2023, at 9:00 a.m.

**XI. ADJOURNMENT**

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

**VOTE:** Motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:25 a.m.

Adopted June 21, 2023 with/without changes. Motion by Ted Lawrie  
(DATE)

Vote: 4:0 Signature: T.H. Edmund

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