

**MINUTES**  
**FORT MYERS BEACH**  
**Anchorage Advisory Committee**  
Bay Oaks Recreational Center  
2731 Oak Street  
Fort Myers Beach, FL 33931  
Wednesday, February 21, 2024

**I. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 9:06 a.m. by Vice Chair Lurie.

**II. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance**

**III. Roll Call**

Members present: Chris Riedel King, Ted Lawwill, Sam Lurie, John Wesley Nash and Ed Schoonover.

Excused: Doug Eckmann and Jim Hockett.

Staff: Harbormaster Austin Gilchrist and Environmental Projects Manager Chadd Chustz.  
Council Liaison: Jim Atterholt

**IV. Approve the Agenda – no motion**

**MOTION:**

**VOTE:**

**V. Approval of Minutes – January 17, 2024**

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

**VOTE:** Motion passed unanimously.

**VI. Public Comment**

Star Sherwood and Kathy Greff, Tropical Shores Way residents, did not support the pump-out station on their canal. She noted it was a residential canal heavily damaged by the hurricane. She stated that a boat could not get up and down the canal during low tide. She asked why they could not rent the pump-out stations at Moss Marine and Diversified.

**VII. Presentation: Dockside Sanitary Connection Location Preliminary Feasibility Analysis**

Projects Manager Chustz noted that they did not have a projector, but the February 15 town council meeting presentation was on the website. The Mooring Field has 89 balls and 77 were open to rent. Matanzas Inn provided upland services and charged an additional \$650.00 monthly for the pump-out boat. The temporary dinghy dock facility was up and

running and the permanent dinghy dock was in the design stage and would be in the exact location under the bridge.

Harbormaster Gilchrist explained how the 1,000-gallon pump-out boat worked and indicated no marina in the area had a working pump-out station. Moss Marina had a portable 20-gallon system, but it was not efficient. A truck was being used now and the loud pump ran for about an hour. Pink Shell had an operating pump-out at their facility and Harbormaster Gilchrist displayed a video of how it worked and what was going on visually. The pump-out boat did hook up to Pink Shell, but the town had to work around their service schedule. He noted the peristaltic pumps were low impact, low flow, low voltage and did not smell because they were closed systems. He agreed that a private entity could be contracted, but there was a risk of being liable for other entities' equipment and scheduling. The pump-out boat was offloaded once a week and he explained why that was important. He stated that before Ian, the town partnered with Diversified Yacht Service, but they had to work around its schedule, which was not feasible for several reasons.

Projects Manager Chustz used his laptop to play the video regarding the pump at Pink Shell. He described how the trucks differed from the peristaltic pump and noted the trucks impacted the community where the pump did not. He indicated that the town wanted to be able to pump out when needed without relying on another facility. Trucks charged between \$375.00 to \$500.00, but the marinas did not charge.

Projects Manager Chustz described potential town-owned locations and why the final three were chosen. He noted the cons were that all of them were near residentially zoned property and public input would be solicited from all three locations. He indicated that the town's needs included adequate space for the pump, lifts for two to three vessels, the ability to connect to the Lee County sewer system, power for the pump, space for a facility, parking for one or two town vehicles and proximity to the Mooring Field. There would be no public access, dinghy dockage, or upland amenities at the site. He addressed why many of the other identified locations would not work.

Projects Manager Chustz noted that the site would be buffered with landscape and fenced-in. He clarified that the pump-out boat would be moored at the location, with pump-outs occurring on Mondays at a minimum. He stated that the canal would be dredged to make it navigable.

Projects Manager Chustz described the pros and cons of the locations at Chapel St., Bay Oaks and Virginia. Vice Mayor Atterholt noted this was a less intrusive proposal than the proposed upland facilities building voted down a couple of years ago. Projects Manager Chustz stated that the community would be engaged this time. Vice Mayor Atterholt described the difficulties of dealing with the submerged land owner. AAC Member King questioned the cost comparison of the three sites. Projects Manager Chustz reviewed the potential costs of all three locations. He described the different grant opportunities and deadlines for each.

AAC Member King asked Ms. Sherwood and Ms. Greff whether the information changed their feelings about the pump-out facility. They both responded negatively and discussed the lack of mangroves. Harbormaster Gilchrist discussed actions in the past and stated they were a customer service-based operation. Projects Manager Chustz discussed the benefits of the Mooring Field.

Harbormaster Gilchrist noted the next steps were to compile the pros and cons of each site and let the residents decide. Vice Mayor Atterholt suggested Bay Oaks or purchasing the submerged land rights in conjunction with the fire department. He added that they would better understand what the community wanted after presenting the facts. He mentioned

selling the two parcels behind the old town hall to help develop the Bay Oaks location if needed. Vice Chair Lurie suggested creating a visual design so people could see what the site would look like at each location. AAC Member Nash questioned looking at the San Carlos side or the Coast Guard facility. Projects Manager Chustz explained that the facility had to be in the town's jurisdiction.

**MOTION:** AAC Member Lawwill moved that AAC agreed with the course set out by the council to continue to investigate the sites and get to know the people to see if they can find a location most acceptable and build out the feasibility from a financial perspective and ease of doing it perspective as well as the public input and public impact; seconded by AAC Member Schoonover.

**VOTE:** The motion passed unanimously.

### **VIII. Current Items**

#### **A. Laguna Channel Project**

Projects Manager Chustz reviewed the dredging history of the channel. He indicated that funding was an issue and the neighborhood still wanted access. He read the engineer's assessment of the channel post-lan. Discussion was held regarding the price of dredging, beach-compatible material in the channel, depth, the willingness of the neighborhood to contribute financially, the difference between the channel and canals and property for staging and handling.

**MOTION:** AAC Member King moved to recommend that this is an issue that the council should prioritize and that we should move forward to figure out ways to fund it and get the project underway for the benefit of the town and residents with the most grant money they can find; seconded by AAC Member Lawwill.

**VOTE:** Motion passed 4-0, with Vice Chair Lurie abstaining because he lives in the neighborhood.

#### **B. Marketing Project**

Vice Chair Lurie suggested that the new Public Information Officer (PIO), Nicole Berzin, be invited to the next AAC meeting. Harbormaster Gilchrist will extend an invitation.

**C. Budget** – to be discussed at the next meeting.

### **IX. Member Items and Staff Report**

Harbormaster Gilchrist noted most systems were working, a sunken vessel split one of the systems and was being worked on, three derelict vessels still had to be removed, the field was about half full, good reviews were starting to stream in, short-term people were staying longer, and pump-outs were ongoing about three times a week. The Pink Shell was assisting with some pump-outs. Anchored vessels were increasing, and reports were sent to the Sheriff's Office. The fuel pump on the boat was being repaired and perimeter buoys were being replaced. More staff will be hired to help cover hours. Vice Chair Lurie suggested that fishing near the dinghy dock be prohibited, and Harbormaster Gilchrist replied that signs were ordered. Vice Chair Lurie suggested that everyone get familiar with

Florida statute 327.410(a). He brought up the shrimp channel being vacated from the aquatic preserve.

No items from other members.

**X. Public Comment** – no public comment.

**XI. Set Next Meeting Agenda** - March 20, 2024

**XII. Adjournment**

**MOTION:** AAC Member Schoonover moved to adjourn the meeting; seconded by AAC Member King.

**VOTE:** The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:21 a.m.

Adopted 03/20/2024 with/without changes. Motion by John Wesley Nash /  
(DATE) Seconded by Ed Schoonover

Vote: 6-0 Signature: Amy Baker, Town Clerk

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