



**HERNANDO COUNTY WATERWAYS ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES – OCTOBER 20, 2021**



Date: Wednesday, October 20, 2021

Time: 7:00 P.M.

Location: Hernando Beach Marine Group Inc. Training Center  
4340 Calienta Street, Hernando Beach, FL 34607

Advertised: Friday, October 8, 2021, The Hernando Sun (CLK21-203)

The meeting agenda and back-up material are available online at:  
<https://www.hernandocounty.us/departments/departments-n-z/public-works/aquatic-services/waterways-advisory-committee/agendas-and-minutes>

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Chuck Morton called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

<b>Attendee Name</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Attendance</b>
Chuck Morton	Chairman	Present
Kathryn Birren	Vice Chairman	Present
Michael Senker	Member	Absent
Mike Fulford	Member	Present
Sarah Hill	Member	Present
Wayne Dukes	Commissioner / Liaison	Absent
Scott Herring	Department of Public Works Director / County Engineer	Present
Keith Kolasa	Aquatic / Waterways Services Manager	Present
Steve Kelly	Corporal / Marine Patrol Officer	Absent
Tina Duenninger	Co. Administration / DPW Executive Office Manager	Present

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**APPROVAL / MODIFICATION OF AGENDA (Limited to Staff and Committee Only)**

There were no changes made to the agenda.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES – JULY 21, 2021**

**MOTION:** Mr. Mike Fulford motioned to approve the minutes of the July 21, 2021 Waterways Advisory Committee meeting. Ms. Sarah Hill seconded. The motion carried and was approved unanimously.

**MARINE PATROL REPORT**

Corporal Steve Kelly was not present at the meeting.

**OLD BUSINESS**

There was no old business.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **1. HB Channel Marker Status – Request to Add Additional Markers**

Mr. Keith Kolasa stated that a few Committee members at the last meeting held had requested staff look at the status of channel markers, mainly in Hernando Beach. There were three (3) channel markers identified as indicated in attachment item #1 in the agenda packet. Upon query by Mr. Mike Fulford, Mr. Kolasa responded funding was currently budgeted.

Mr. Dylan Kramer suggested red and green composite glow in the dark markers which require no maintenance. Mr. Kolasa agreed it was worth looking into. He noted the county's cost for one marker was approximately \$1,800. Upon query by Vice Chairman Kathryn Birren, Mr. Kolasa responded the permits needed to specify what type of structure and he would have to determine pole or buoy prior to permitting.

**MOTION:** Mr. Mike Fulford motioned to move forward with the three (3) channel markers identified. Vice Chairman Kathryn Birren seconded. The motion carried and was approved unanimously.

### **2. Boundary of Aquatic Preserve and OFW Regulations Related to Docks**

Mr. Keith Kolasa provided a brief update on the Aquatic Preserve Boundary. He advised new OFW dock regulations went into effect on July 1<sup>st</sup> as clarified via email by Ms. Carla Burmann, Environmental Manager with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP), a copy of which was available in the agenda packet. Upon query, Mr. Kolasa responded he had not done a boundary map for Pine Island but would follow-up.

Ms. Bea Shafer inquired on how to access the agenda packet on the website. Vice Chairman Kathryn Birren provided information regarding the agenda packet. Ms. Tina Duenninger clarified the link and invited the public to provide her with an email address to be added to the agenda distribution list following the meeting.

### **3. Update on Artificial Reef Program 14-1**

Mr. Keith Kolasa stated the consultant contract was approved by the Hernando County Board of County Commissioners on August 24, 2021, and a kickoff meeting had been held two weeks prior to the Waterways Advisory Committee meeting. The project will consist of site surveys and assessments for 15 new reef sites, rankings, public meetings, design and permitting process, and monitoring aspects leading up to construction. It will be a three-year process leading up to construction. Mr. Kolasa indicated he would keep the Committee apprised on the progress and public meetings held.

Mr. Kolasa shared that 28 pallet reef balls were deployed August 22-26, 2021, at the Bendickson Reef to create a trail between two large areas of culverts from previous deployments. He also shared the economic impact of artificial reefs by the University of Florida/IFAS Extension, pointing out Dr. Michael Allen's example provided via email which indicated the value associated with artificial reefs in Hernando County would not only improve Tourism but take away impact from natural reefs. Mr. Kolasa noted the information referenced was included the agenda packet.

### **4. Nature Coast Aquatic Preserve Management Plan Meetings**

Chairman Chuck Morton stated both he and Mr. Keith Kolasa were representatives on the Nature Coast Aquatic Preserve (NCAP) Management Advisory Committee and brought up the Sunshine Law. He shared that he had inquired on how the NCAP would affect Hernando County's reef program and was advised that if it was already in the planning, it was exempt. Chairman Morton stated some of the preliminary work done by the Waterways Advisory Committee in designating sites gave Hernando County exemption.

Mr. Kolasa noted there was a list of meeting dates and presentations attached in the agenda packet. Upon query, Mr. Kolasa responded the purpose of the NCAP was to develop the details of the Aquatic Preserve Management Plan. It was noted the next public meeting was scheduled to be held on May 19 and May 24, 2022. Mr. Kolasa temporarily left the meeting at this time.

Chairman Morton provided a brief overview of the goals and objectives of the NCAP and the type of discussions to be held at the advisory committee meetings.

Mr. Kolasa returned to the meeting at this time.

#### **5. Proposed Revisions to Marine Construction Code – Dock Size, Marginal Dock Size**

Mr. Keith Kolasa stated one of the questions brought up at the last Committee meeting was the definition and clarification of a marginal dock and square footage of marginal docks. It was noted that the Marine Construction Code relative to the marginal dock size section would be emailed to the Committee following the meeting. Mr. Kolasa indicated the marginal docks should not exceed 500 sf. related to the Riverine Protection Ordinance; it did not apply to marginal docks in Hernando Beach, as clarified with the county's Planning and Building departments.

Mr. Alan Green stated he was told he needed a variance and questioned what a marginal dock was. Mr. Dylan Kramer stated he cannot get any permits as a dock builder due to marginal docks exceeding 500 sf. and suggested following the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) and Army Corps of Engineers' guidelines. Mr. David Strong also stated he cannot get permits as a dock builder due to marginal docks exceeding 500 sf.

Discussion ensued regarding the Building Department's interpretation of marginal docks relative to location and size as outlined in the Marine Construction Code.

Mr. Mike Fulford suggested Chairman Chuck Morton write a letter to the Hernando County Board of County Commissioners, with a copy to the County Administrator, advising that the residents of Hernando County are not getting their docks built due to bottlenecks in the Building Department and want it fixed.

Further discussion ensued. Mr. Kolasa noted a meeting could be scheduled with Planning and Building staff to discuss the waterbodies and clarify the rule interpretation.

Mr. Paul Thompson stated he thought discussion was to take place regarding increasing the dock inclusion into the canal by 10-15%. Mr. Mike Fulford clarified he understood the question at the last meeting was looking into going to 1,000 sf. total for dock sizes, not changing the percentage out at the canal.

Mr. Steve Barton stated he was involved in the process of drafting the Marine Construction Code and that nobody really considered what would be interpreted, indicating that they were only thinking for those areas currently outlined in the Code and it didn't reflect for Hernando Beach.

Ms. Sheila Barr commented there should be no changes and expressed support for a five-year plan incorporation of Hernando Beach.

**MOTION:** Mr. Mike Fulford motioned to have staff coordinate a meeting with Building staff to seek education and clarification of the plans reviewer interpretation to stop bottlenecks. The motion did not move forward.

Mr. Scott Herring stated this was not Mr. Kolasa's problem to spearhead and advised he had taken notes to discuss up the level of command with his boss, who also oversees the Building

and Planning departments. He recommended the Committee send a letter to the Board's Chairman or the County Administrator. The Committee concurred with Chairman Chuck Morton writing a letter to the Hernando County Board of County Commissioners, with a copy to the County Administrator.

Ms. Sarah Hill distributed a copy of FDEP's Dock Permitting in Florida. Mr. Kolasa stated FDEP's exemption for residential docks is 1,000 sf. The Committee concurred to move forward with the agenda until clarification is made on the Building Department's clarification.

Mr. Steve Barton distributed a handout expressing opposition to change the county's current existing percentages to FDEP's blanket percentage of 25%. Discussion ensued. The Committee concurred there would be no further discussion on the subject.

#### **6. Pine Island Canal Restoration**

Mr. Keith Kolasa stated the legal opinion from the County Attorney's Office was included in the agenda packet, noting Attorney Jon Jouben had determined that the ownership did meet the use as a public waterway. Upon query by Vice Chairman Kathryn Birren, Mr. Kolasa responded the Restore Act applications were lengthy and would be taken on by the Project Manager once hired and onboard.

#### **7. Red Tide**

Mr. Keith Kolasa indicated this item would be reserved until the December meeting as Brittany Hall-Scharf with IFAS/Florida Sea Grant will provide a presentation at that time. Mr. Kolasa expressed Ms. Hall-Scharf did an amazing job on red tide monitoring. Latest samples showed low to medium concentrations and hopefully a one-time event.

#### **8. Future Member Replacement for Chairman Chuck Morton**

Chairman Chuck Morton advised he was termed out as a member on the Waterways Advisory Committee and encouraged applicants to apply, indicating applications were available online. Upon query, Ms. Tina Duenninger provided information regarding the news release deadline for acceptance of applications and the application process.

#### **9. Proposed 2022 Meeting Schedule**

The proposed 2022 meeting schedule of the Waterways Advisory Committee was reviewed. Mr. Fulford noted he would prefer not to have a meeting in July. Vice Chairman Kathryn Birren noted she would not be able to attend the January meeting. Ms. Sarah Hill proposed to table the meeting schedule until the first meeting in 2022.

**MOTION:** Vice Chairman Kathryn Birren motioned to schedule the first meeting in 2022 to be held on February 16, 2022. Mr. Mike Fulford seconded. The motion carried and was approved unanimously.

### **CITIZENS' COMMENTS**

There were no citizens' comments at this time.

### **WATERWAYS ADVISORY COMMITTEE / STAFF COMMENTS**

1. Chuck Morton, Chairman
2. Kathryn Birren, Vice Chairman
3. Mike Senker, Member
4. Mike Fulford, Member
5. Sarah Hill, Member
6. Keith Kolasa, Aquatic/Waterways Services Manager
7. Scott Herring, Department of Public Works Director/County Engineer

**OTHER – Waterways Advisory Committee Agenda Requests for Future Meetings**

There was no other business.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:54 p.m.

**Upcoming Meeting(s):**

The next regular meeting of the Waterways Advisory Committee will be held on Wednesday, December 15, 2021, at 7:00 P.M., in the Hernando Beach Marine Group Inc. Training Center, 4340 Calienta Street, Hernando Beach, FL 34607.