



**HERNANDO COUNTY WATERWAYS ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES – DECEMBER 15, 2021**



Date: Wednesday, December 15, 2021

Time: 7:00 P.M.

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

Advertised: Friday, December 3, 2021, The Hernando Sun (CLK21-229)

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 7:04 p.m.

<b>Attendee Name</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Attendance</b>
Chuck Morton	Chairman	Present
Kathryn Birren	Vice Chairman	Present
Michael Senker	Member	Present
Mike Fulford	Member	Present
Sarah Hill	Member	Absent
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**

Chairman Chuck Morton requested New Business Item 1. Red Tide Overview, be presented by Ms. Brittany Hall-Scharf at this time so that she may leave the meeting as soon as possible.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**1. Red Tide Overview – Brittany Hall-Scharf, IFAS/Florida Sea Grant**

Ms. Brittany Hall-Scharf provided a brief overview on red tide bloom and monitoring utilizing a PowerPoint presentation. The presentation covered red tide algae, samples collected, monitoring, and descriptions of concentrations.

Ms. Hall-Scharf reviewed certain seafoods not consumable during red tide blooms due to poisonous toxins and provided information for citizens to get involved. A brief Q&A followed.

Ms. Hall-Scharf left the meeting at this time.

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES – OCTOBER 20, 2021**

**MOTION:** Mr. Mike Fulford motioned to approve the minutes of the October 20, 2021 Waterways Advisory Committee meeting. Vice Chairman Kathryn Birren seconded. The motion carried and was approved unanimously.

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

New Business Item 1. Red Tide Overview, was moved up on the agenda following the Pledge of the Allegiance. Mr. Mike Fulford requested a brief status on the Weeki Wachee River Dredge project be added to the agenda under New Business. There were no other changes made to the agenda.

## **MARINE PATROL REPORT**

Corporal Steve Kelly was not present at the meeting.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **2. Proposed Ordinance on Mooring of Commercial Vessels at Boat Ramps**

Mr. Keith Kolasa noted the Proposed Ordinance on Mooring of Commercial Vessels at Boat Ramps was included in the agenda packet for the Committee's review and feedback before the item moved forward. He noted more recently, a shrimping boat had been docked at the boat ramp doing repairs for an extensive period of time. The County had determined this to be constant occurrences in the past few years and deemed it necessary to revise the existing Ordinance to add language and enforce associated fines. A copy of Mr. Kolasa's comments on the proposed Ordinance were highlighted and provided in the agenda packet for review.

Vice Chairman Kathryn Birren requested the Ordinance should include all vessels, not just commercial vessels, and that the same rules and fines should apply to both commercial and recreational vessels. Mr. Scott Herring advised the Ordinance was being proposed to include sponging vessels and not commercial vessels actively fishing. He further advised the non-commercial vessels were already prohibited. Mr. Mike Fulford clarified the purpose of the Ordinance was to allow for enforcement by the Sheriff's Office and impose fines. He expressed he was comfortable with the wording in the Ordinance packet.

Mr. Scott Herring clarified certain sections of the Ordinance for Vice Chairman Kathryn Birren. Vice Chairman Birren requested wording to include "actively launching and recovering" vessel. Mr. Mike Fulford requested a glossary within the Ordinance defining vessel to include dockage to be assembled with the addition of motor to transport.

In conclusion, the following recommendations were made by staff and committee members:

- Add language to include "commercial sponging *and shrimping* vessels *docking or* blocking boat ramps in Hernando County for extended period of time when not actively engaged in commercial fishing; and"
- Add language to include "within 150 feet *or less* of any public ..."
- Add language to include "commercial sponging vessels, *including shrimping vessels*, are commercial fishing vessels ..."
- Treat ALL vessels the same (same rules and fines should apply to both commercial and recreational vessels).

- Allow time for boat owner to get their vehicle and pull boat out of the water.
- Wording to include prohibition against anchoring or mooring within 150 feet or less of a boat ramp does not apply *“while actively launching and recovering”* vessel.
- Concerns regarding assembling docks and tying up boat ramp, i.e., docks being put together at the ramp. Wording to include docks in the vessel description or as a separate commercial activity use of the ramp; or
- Include glossary within Ordinance defining vessel to include “dockage to be assembled with the addition of motor to transport”.

Mr. Scott Herring advised he would forward all recommendations to Legal.

**MOTION:** Mr. Mike Fulford motioned to accept with the performance conditions stated. Mr. Mike Senker seconded. The motion carried and was approved unanimously.

### **3. Member Replacement for Chuck Morton**

Chairman Chuck Morton welcomed newly appointed committee member Mr. Chris Licata, who was present at the meeting as a citizen.

### **4. 2022 Meeting Schedule**

The new dates proposed to the 2022 meeting schedule of the Waterways Advisory Committee were reviewed.

**MOTION:** Mr. Mike Fulford motioned to approve the new dates to the 2022 meeting schedule of the Waterways Advisory Committee. Vice Chairman Kathryn Birren seconded. The motion carried and was approved unanimously.

### **5. Weeki Wachee River Dredge Project**

Mr. Keith Kolasa advised bids had been received for the Weeki Wachee River Dredge project, and the Southwest Florida Water Management District was in the process of selecting a contractor. The project consisted of a two-mile section on the river from Rogers Park to Richardson Drive and was anticipated to begin prior to the State Road Canal Dredge project.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **1. Aquatic Preserve Boundary – Pine Island**

Mr. Keith Kolasa shared the Aquatic Preserve Boundary map for Pine Island, which was included in the agenda packet. Upon query by Mr. Chuck Greenwell, Mr. Scott Herring responded previously approved RESTORE projects were exempt from changes to the Aquatic Preserve, and Pine Island would be moving forward slowly and handled by the new project manager when onboard.

### **2. State Road Canal Dredge**

Mr. Keith Kolasa noted a pre-bid meeting on the State Road Canal Dredge project was held a few weeks ago. Bids are due in early January and the project is anticipated to begin after April 1 once Manatee season is done.

### **3. Lake Townsen Boat Ramp**

Mr. Keith Kolasa advised the contractor was working on acquiring feedback on permitting from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection for the Lake Townsen Boat Ramp project.

He further advised the County will be requesting more grant funding from the State for construction and that design was nearly complete.

## **INFORMATIONAL ITEMS**

### **1. Revisions to Marine Construction Code Ordinance – Marginal Docks**

Mr. Aaron Pool, Zoning and Code Enforcement Administrator, introduced himself and clarified the marginal docks in the riverine, indicating there would not be a 500 ft. maximum for marginal docks in areas that are not covered in the riverine protection Ordinance.

### **2. Hernando Beach Christmas Boat Parade**

Mr. Keith Kolasa displayed pictures taken at the Hernando Beach Christmas Boat Parade held on December 11, 2021. He stated it was an honor having the U.S. Marines and active service work on the toy collection boat and having the residents donate Toys for Tots. Committee members expressed Mr. Kolasa did a great job playing Santa.

### **3. Volunteer Reef Ball Build Event**

Mr. Keith Kolasa announced 18 cubes and four reef balls were built at the Volunteer Reef Ball Build event held on December 4, 2021. A couple yards of cement was donated for the event.

Prior to Citizens' Comments, Mr. Scott Herring thanked Chairman Chuck Morton for his service and all that the Chairman, along with the Port Authority, and now the Waterways Advisory Committee, had done throughout the years. He advised the Board of County Commissioners had prepared a letter and certificate of appreciation but had not been able to get it signed in time for the meeting. Mr. Mike Fulford also thanked Chairman Morton for his service, who was presented with a gift basket by Vice Chairman Kathryn Birren from the members and the community. Chairman Morton thanked everyone and encouraged all to participate.

## **CITIZENS' COMMENTS**

Mr. Sarge Dendy queried what were Code Enforcement's goals relative to enforcement of tagging for derelict docks and boats along the canals. Mr. Aaron Pool responded he has been with the County for seven months and has not been able to see the code enforcement cycle for a full year. He advised there has been a lot of enforcement on the waterways relative to the riverine protection Ordinance. He further advised there were only five code enforcement officers and requested he be notified of any dangerous docks and boats.

Mr. Steve Barton requested the Waterways Advisory Committee place an agenda item on the February 16 meeting to discuss the oil pollution problem in the main channel and come up with solutions.

Mr. Chuck Greenwell stated that it was not clearly defined the differences between water dependent land uses, which involve code enforcement, and water dependent uses that really don't relate to zoning. He further stated there was substantial amount of work involved in regulating docks and water uses in Hernando Beach that Planning & Zoning was not in tune with or equipped to handle as well as the Waterways Advisory Committee and expressed that since the Board of County Commissioners was now the acting Port Authority, may want to get clarified with Planning & Zoning.

There were no other citizens' comments.

## **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

## **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:43 p.m.

## **Upcoming Meeting(s):**

The next regular meeting of the Waterways Advisory Committee will be held on Wednesday, February 16, 2022, at 7:00 P.M., in the Hernando Beach Marine Group Inc. Training Center, 4340 Calienta Street, Hernando Beach, FL 34607.