



**HERNANDO COUNTY WATERWAYS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES – JUNE 15, 2022**



Date: Wednesday, June 15, 2022

Time: 7:00 P.M.

Location: Hernando County Building Division Training Facility
789 Providence Boulevard, Brooksville, FL 34601

Advertised: Friday, June 3, 2022, The Hernando Sun (CLK22-103)

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 Kathryn Birren called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Attendee Name	Title	Attendance
Kathryn Birren	Chairman	Present
Sarah Hill	Vice Chairman	Present
Mike Fulford	Member	Present
Mike Senker	Member	Present
Chris Licata	Member	Present
Wayne Dukes	Commissioner / Liaison	Absent
Scott Herring	Department of Public Works Director / County Engineer	Present
Keith Kolasa	Aquatic / Waterways Services Manager	Present
Eric Davis	Waterway Project Manager	Present
Steve Snell	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 – February 16, 2022

MOTION: Mr. Mike Fulford motioned to approve the minutes of the February 16, 2022 Waterways Advisory Committee meeting. Mr. Chris Licata seconded. The motion carried and was approved unanimously.

MARINE PATROL REPORT – Steve Snell

Mr. Keith Kolasa indicated Mr. Steve Snell had informed him he was not able to attend the meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Update on State Road Canal Dredging (County) and Weeki Wachee River Dredging (SWFWMD) <https://www.swfwmd.state.fl.us/projects/springs/weeki-wachee-channel-restoration-project>

Mr. Keith Kolasa advised Rogers Park would be closed for one month as dredging was to start next week on the State Road Canal. The Weeki Wachee River dredging would start afterwards, with both projects anticipated to be completed in November 2022. Mr. Eric Davis, new Waterways Project Manager, was in attendance at the meeting and would be overseeing both dredging projects.

Vice Chairman Sarah Hill queried why dredging was being started up the river instead of at the bottom. Mr. Kolasa responded they originally had plans to start up the river; based on changes in plans, they were starting on the west. Upon query by Mr. Mike Fulford, Mr. Kolasa responded Rogers Park was a dewatering site. Upon further query by Mr. Fulford, Mr. Kolasa responded the Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) was fully funding the Weeki Wachee River Dredging project.

Discussion ensued. It was noted that sediment material was clean.

Chairman Kathryn Birren stated she had attended the Board of County Commissioners' (BOCC) meeting on June 14 and had voiced her concerns regarding persons floating in inner tubes and bumping and climbing onto the dredging equipment. She advised the BOCC's consensus was to speak to the dredging contractor and require them to hire security to keep people back and off the equipment. Upon query by Chairman Birren, Mr. Kolasa responded an inquiry could be made to find out if SWFWMD was requiring the contractor to have security. He referenced the SWFWMD link indicated on the agenda for project information while dredging was ongoing.

2. Lake Lindsey Tussock Control

Mr. Keith Kolasa noted many complaints had been received regarding Lake Lindsey being blocked with tussock. He displayed photos of Lake Lindsey boat ramp included in the agenda packet, which had been recently tussock maintained by Aquatics/Waterways. Mr. Kolasa indicated funding has been requested in next year's budget for tussock maintenance.

Chairman Kathryn Birren advised she spoke with local residents at Mountain Lake, and they indicated seeing dead fish and unable to catch any fish. They had suggested if restocking could be done at the lake. Mr. Kolasa responded they should reach out to the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) and request restocking.

3. Overview of East Side Boat Ramps – Lakes and Withlacoochee River

Mr. Keith Kolasa continued with the display of photos included in the agenda packet, including Lake Townsen, Nobleton, Mountain Lake, and Bystre Lake ramps. Mr. Kolasa noted the ramps were paid for by Waterways through a boating improvement grant and the parking lots were paid for by Parks & Recreation, along with the docks and fishing piers.

Chairman Kathryn Birren advised there was no signage leading up to Bystre Lake. Mr. Kolasa responded he would follow up with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) and the Department of Public Works for signage to be placed.

Chairman Birren informed she took a trip out to Lake Townsen and displayed a video of the conditions of the ramp and fishing pier. There was a family at the site which Chairman Birren interviewed and they shared their concerns. Concerns noted on the dock were saggy, rotted wood, planks of wood missing, and that it was very dark out by the water. Mr. Kolasa advised funding for design and permitting was scheduled in the FY 25 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) with construction anticipated in FY 26 CIP.

Vice Chairman Sarah Hill indicated Lake Townsen boat ramp was not listed on the Hernando County Waterways website. Mr. Kolasa responded he would follow up and have it added.

4. Personal Flotation Device Zone Signage at Boat Ramps

Mr. Keith Kolasa announced stencil was purchased and all life jacket zones at boat ramps would be updated.

5. Signage at Boat Ramps

Mr. Keith Kolasa noted signage at the various boat ramps displayed restrictions and regulations on the use of vessels, and as Chairman Kathryn Birren had previously indicated, Hernando Beach was the only one displaying signage specifying the Ordinance and penalties for docking. Chairman Birren expressed concern over the Ordinance's validity and whether it should be countywide. Mr. Kolasa advised further research on the Ordinance would be needed and that it was separate from the mooring of vessels Ordinance to be presented to the BOCC.

Mrs. Diane Greenwell requested signage indicating the noise level be displayed as she is still concerned with the airboat at night. Mr. Kolasa noted the sign was displayed at Hernando Beach.

Mr. Mike Fulford suggested to invite Marine Captain Jeff Kraft to attend the next Waterways Advisory Committee meeting to discuss noise concerns and the Ordinance in place regarding marine patrolling. Chairman Birren agreed.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Draft Letter in Support of Additional Law Enforcement for Springs Protection and Waterways

Chairman Kathryn Birren inquired on the status of the draft letter in support of additional law enforcement for springs protection and waterways. Mr. Scott Herring informed of the current process for the establishment of the Springs Protection Zones, and a response to Hernando County's presentation was anticipated at the July 13-14 FWC meeting in Jacksonville. Mr. Herring further informed the meeting agenda was not available as of the Committee meeting date. He advised the Hernando County Sheriff's Office had allocated one additional marine patrol officer in next year's budget and if that was the intent of the draft support letter, then it was already accomplished. The Committee concurred to hold off on forwarding the letter through to the BOCC at this time.

2. Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission Final Meeting to Review Establishment of Springs Protection Zones – July 13-14, 2022, Jacksonville, Florida

Discussion continued regarding Springs Protection Zones, the FWC meeting scheduled on July 13-14 in Jacksonville, and access by residents to the Weeki Wachee River. Mr. Scott Herring provided a brief overview of the intent of the Springs Protection Zones and noted it was not guaranteed to be on the July 13-14 agenda. He advised a public workshop was scheduled in the future and he would get the FWC information to the Committee.

3. Hunters Lake Aquatic Plant Maintenance

Mr. Keith Kolasa noted spraying and aquatic plant maintenance was ongoing at Hunters Lake.

4. Hunters Lake Access Canal Dredging

Mr. Keith Kolasa advised the bid packet for the Hunters Lake canal dredging project was being compiled and would be out to bid in the next few months.

5. Coastal Conservation Association Donation for 2022 Artificial Reef Project

Mr. Keith Kolasa stated the donation from the Coastal Conservation Association (CCA) for the artificial reef project was approved by the BOCC on June 14, 2022.

- 6. Coastal Conservation Association Donation for Living Shoreline Project at Jenkins Creek**
Mr. Keith Kolasa indicated he had recommended the donation from CCA for the living shoreline project be handled through UF/IFAS, which was approved by the BOCC on June 14, 2022. Chairman Kathryn Birren shared she had attended the BOCC meeting and thanked CCA for their donations. She noted CCA had encouraged Waterways to submit projects for consideration.

INFORMATIONAL ITEM – Revisions to Proposed Ordinance on Mooring of Commercial Vessels at Boat Ramps – BOCC Public Hearing June 28, 2022

Mr. Keith Kolasa stated the requested revisions to the proposed Ordinance on Mooring of Commercial Vessels at Boat Ramps had been made and was scheduled for public hearing before the BOCC on June 28, 2022. A copy of the proposed Ordinance was included in the agenda packet for the Committee's information. Chairman Kathryn Birren advised she would be present at the BOCC meeting to express her concerns regarding temporarily tying a vessel to a dock to get vehicle and being cited for mooring.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS

Mr. Steve Barton inquired on the status of the Engineering reef contracts. Mr. Keith Kolasa responded GIS data collection was complete and 15 sites had been identified from 30. He informed request for quotes were out and should be back in next week.

There were no other citizens' comments.

WATERWAYS ADVISORY COMMITTEE / STAFF COMMENTS

1. Kathryn Birren, Chairman
2. Sarah Hill, Vice Chairman
3. Mike Fulford, Member
4. Mike Senker, Member
5. Chris Licata, 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

Mr. Keith Kolasa reiterated the Springs Protection Zone information would be added to the next meeting agenda, and an invitation would be extended to Captain Jeff Kraft to attend the next meeting. Chairman Kathryn Birren reminded to add airboats to the next meeting agenda.

Mr. Mike Fulford queried on the status of the Calienta Street/Petit Lane project. Mr. Scott Herring responded 60% Plans were reviewed and submitted back to the Contractor. It was anticipated nine months for receipt of Restore Act funds and therefore, the project would not be out for bid until sometime next Spring. Mr. Fulford inquired whether the entire parcel of land adjacent to Zig Zags would be used and the balance excess. Mr. Herring responded he would have to review the Plans and get back to Mr. Fulford with a response.

Mrs. Diane Greenwell inquired on the previously issued funds by the Legislature for Calienta Street. Mr. Herring replied those funds by the Legislature were for the design of the project and construction was funded through the Restore Act.

Mr. Charles Greenwell queried how much money was used for the design of Calienta Street. Mr. Herring responded he did not have those numbers, but they were most likely published in the CIP available on the County Budget's webpage.

Upon query by Chairman Birren, Mr. Herring responded construction on the project could potentially not commence until next Fall due to materials and contractor shortages.

Mr. Chris Licata expressed concern with improvements to the public access ramp on Bystre Lake as it impeded onto private lake and suggested taking possession of the lake. Mr. Kolasa responded these issues have been brought up in the past and he would need to review.

There was no other business.

ADJOURNMENT

The Committee concurred to have the next meeting back in Hernando Beach.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Upcoming Meeting(s):

The next regular meeting of the Waterways Advisory Committee will be held on Wednesday, August 17, 2022, at 7:00 P.M., in the Hernando Beach Marine Group Inc. Training Center, 4340 Calienta Street, Hernando Beach, FL 34607.