



**HERNANDO COUNTY WATERWAYS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES – SEPTEMBER 20, 2023**



Date: Wednesday, September 20, 2023

Time: 7:00 P.M.

Location: Hernando County Building Department Training Room
789 Providence Blvd., Brooksville, FL 34601

Advertised: Friday, September 15th, 2023, The Hernando Sun (CLK22-024)

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

Vice Chairman Sarah Hill called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

Attendee Name	Title	Attendance
Kathryn Birren	Chairman	No
Sarah Hill	Vice Chairman	Yes
Ronald Zellmer	Member	Yes
Chris Licata	Member	Yes
Brian Hawkins	County Commissioner	No
Carla Burrmann	Aquatic Services & Waterways Manager	Yes
Dave Craighead	Deputy / Marine Patrol Officer	No
Eric Davis	Project Manager / Aquatic Services & Waterways Dept.	Yes

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

- Agenda approved without changes.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – July 19th, 2023

Motion presented, seconded, and passed. Minutes approved without changes.

STAFF INTRODUCTIONS:

Sarah Hill introduced the members of the WAC and Hernando County staff.

MARINE PATROL REPORT – Deputy Dave Craighead

Deputy Craighead was not present, so a Marine Patrol Report was not conducted.

UPDATE ON DAMAGE FROM HURRICANE IDALIA - Carla Burrmann

- **WATERWAYS BUILDING:** Suffered major flooding damage and may be condemned by the County.
- **PINE ISLAND:** Suffered major damage and is expecting to be closed for a year to complete repairs.
- **BAYPORT:** Flood did not damage new docks. There is habitat restoration and planting going on post storm. Members of the audience asked if there was a need for volunteers to help with the planting. Carla Burrmann explained there was no need for volunteers as the project had to be completed by the deadline. Carla Burrmann also explained that the park is open, but the observation platform area is closed and fenced off. There was a question brought up by the audience about the Jenkins shoreline restoration project. Carla Burrmann explained the project is run by Brittany Scharf, IFAS, and will happen sometime next year.
- **ROGERS PARK:** Carla Burrmann confirmed there was no damage.
- **LINDA PETERSEN:** Carla Burrmann reported the new boardwalk and piers currently under construction were damaged. The contractor and the County are working on a solution now. The Port Authority building was also flooded. Building repairs have been halted pending an inspection.

NEW BUSINESS

There is no new business.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Audio/Visual recording of WAC meetings – Carla Burrmann

Carla Burrmann reported the Clerk of Courts needs to be involved in the decision to record the meetings. She also noted that the fact that the meetings are not held in a permanent location presents a problem to recording the meetings.

2. Weeki Wachee Springs Protection Zone – Carla Burrmann

Carla Burrmann reported the Springs Protection Zone has been approved by FWC and is currently under legal review by the State. The zone is expected to be executed by September 26th. Law enforcement will conduct six months of public education before issuing citations. FWC and the County are getting their education information together. The County will monitor river conditions to see if the rule is helping and may change the rule based on results of monitoring.

3. Weeki Wachee River Dredge – Carla Burrmann

Carla Burrmann reported the dredge project is on schedule. They are currently 1000 feet from the start. There have been no issues with turbidity.

4. Eco Harvester Vessel – Eric Davis

Eric Davis reported the current water levels in the lakes affected by marine vegetation are much too low to safely launch the harvesting vessel.

5. Pine Island Dredge – Carla Burrmann

Sarah Hill suggested a motion be made to establish 1. Who owns the property... Carla Burrmann explained the bottom is privately owned and the State owns the water. 2. Whether the survey has information on the current elevation of the bottom at the time it was made. Carla Burrmann explained it did not give any additional information on additional sediment at the time it was made. She further explained the survey could be used to compare the results of a new survey to determine if additional sediment has been deposited. Sarah Hill asked if the County would be

taking financial responsibility for the new survey. Carla Burrmann explained they would not. Chris Licata asked why the county was involved in a dredge of private property under State owned water? Carla Burrmann explained there was precedence for this type of dredge and explained the property owner would have to be a co-permittee. Any further activity would need to go before the BOCC. A citizen commented that in 2019 the Port Authority asked the county legal department this question and was told the County could provide funding to dredge. Aerial photographs show sand from the Pine Island Beach filling in the channel at both ends. The citizen further commented that the seagrass is gone at the north end of the channel. She mentioned that people fishing use the channel to move to different areas north and south, thus the channel functions as an “inland waterway”. She further stated that the canal was a dredged navigational canal and should have a controlling water depth. Sarah Hill asked if the goal was to prove the channel was filled in or to prove it needs to be made navigational again. She also asked what needs to be proved to make this dredge project a benefit to the County. Carla Burrmann mentioned the county is working on a comprehensive Canal Maintenance Program to address canal maintenance issues within the county.

Committee Member Chris Licata volunteered to meet with Jeff Rogers and Carla Burrmann to discuss this item.

6. Channel navigation lights – Eric Davis

Installation complete and functioning per US Coast Guard requirements.

7. Minnow Creek bird trees – Carla Burrmann

Code Enforcement is addressing the deterioration of the building/property.

8. Update on Bayport dock replacement – Eric Davis

Two floating docks have been replaced and a third will be replaced by the end of year.

9. Red Tide update – Carla Burrmann

No reports of red tide along the Gulf coast.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

10. Coastal Conservation Association – Troy Smith

Introduction to CCA and all that the organization accomplishes.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS

WATERWAYS ADVISORY COMMITTEE / STAFF COMMENTS

1. Kathryn Birren, Chairman
2. Sarah Hill, Vice Chairman
3. Ronald Zellmer, Member
4. Chris Licata, Member
5. Carla Burrmann, Aquatic Services/Waterways Department Manager
6. Eric Davis, Aquatic Services/Waterways Department/Project Manager

OTHER – Waterways Advisory Committee Agenda Requests for Future Meetings

There was no other business.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:57 p.m.

Upcoming Meeting(s):

The next regular meeting of the Waterways Advisory Committee will be held on Wednesday, November 15, 2023, at 7:00 P.M., in the Hernando County Building Department Training Room, 789 Providence Blvd., Brooksville, FL 34601.