

MARINE COMMISSION MINUTES
Monday, February 5, 2018 – 9:30 a.m.
Council Chambers, City Hall, Vero Beach, Florida

PRESENT: Chairman, Thomas Juliano; Vice Chairman, Daniel Thomas Members: Brian Cunningham, Robert Snyder, Clinton Lanier, Alternate Member #1 William Walker and Alternate Member #2 Bill Johnson **Also Present:** Marina Director, Tim Grabenbauer, Assistant City Attorney, Stefanie Beskovoyne, and Senior Administrative Assistant, Rita Hawkins

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Juliano called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. and the Senior Administrative Assistant performed the roll call.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A) November 8, 2017

Mr. Cunningham made a motion to approve the November 8, 2017 Marine Commission minutes. Mr. Thomas seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

3. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Mr. Juliano stated that any of the Commission members who are interested in either of these positions are encouraged to step up for consideration.

There were no volunteers.

A) Chairman

Mr. Thomas made a motion to nominate Mr. Thomas Juliano as Chairman. Mr. Cunningham seconded the motion. With no other nominations, Mr. Thomas Juliano was unanimously appointed as Chairman of the Marine Commission.

B) Vice Chairman

Mr. Juliano asked Mr. Daniel Thomas if he would accept the nomination as Vice Chairman. Mr. Thomas replied yes. With no other nominations, Mr. Daniel Thomas was unanimously appointed as Vice Chairman of the Marine Commission.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no comments by the public.

5. OLD BUSINESS

A) Update on the Vero Beach Rowing Club

Mr. Juliano stated that Mr. Snyder is a member of the Vero Beach Rowing Club, so he asked him to provide them with an update on their progress.

Mr. Snyder announced that they hired a new Director of Rowing, Mr. Austin Work. Mr. Work comes from Austin, Texas, is very energetic, and has been in the rowing business for quite a while. The old director is going to firefighter school, but he will stay on until April. The fundraising for the building is going good and they are currently about \$400,000 shy of their goal. They are looking at breaking ground in the spring.

Mr. Cunningham asked for an update on the Dragon Boating. Mr. Snyder replied that they never have trouble filling the boat when they take it out. They had a Dragon Boating Coach and his wife come up from Stuart, Florida to give lessons.

Mr. Juliano commented that his wife watched the video on the Dragon Boating and was a little skeptical about trying it. However, she went on a Sunday morning and discovered it was not hard and that anyone can do it the first time around.

Mr. Johnson explained that the inaugural launching of the dragon boat was during the Christmas boat parade, which was a long route. He said he was going to row in the Dragon Boat, but he had a friend and his son come to town and he thought that would be a great experience for them. They jumped right in and none of them had little or no training in Dragon Boating. They all had a great time and they were not exhausted at the end.

Mr. Walker asked how many Dragon Boats do they have. Mr. Snyder explained that they only have one (1) boat right now. It holds up to 10 people plus a drummer and an oarsman to steer.

Mr. Johnson asked if the new floating dock that the Rowing Club installed is being overused by other people. He suggested that they might want to post a sign listing the restricted usage.

Mr. Snyder replied that they have a few people who fish or cast net from it, but if he sees them he asks them to clean up afterwards. He said there is a sign posted near the dock that states “no mooring, no power boats, and that the Vero Beach Rowing Club has priority use of the dock. If someone is fishing and a rowing shell pulls up they usually step out of the way.

B) Recap of the Christmas Boat Parade

Mr. Cunningham reported that the Christmas Boat Parade was a great success. At the Captains meeting they originally had 27 boats sign up. There was one boat that was a no show and another boat had a problem with their lights, so they lost a couple. They received a lot of good feedback. People were saying they would like to see 40 to 50 boats next year and the route should be longer. He believes the route size is maxed out especially with the paddleboats that participated. There was a lot of great enthusiasm from the participants and those who watched. Vero Beach had more boats than both the Martin and St. Lucie County boat parades. They had great involvement by the Vero Beach Yacht Club, the Power Squadron, and the Moorings Yacht Club.

Mr. Juliano said that with so many people watching perhaps they should talk with the Recreation Department and maybe incorporate some food trucks or vendors.

Mr. Cunningham said that they have been doing the boat parade for over 30 years and they were blown away by the number of boats and the size of the crowds.

Mr. Juliano said he has been in Vero Beach for 15 years and he feels like this was the first real boat parade they have had. He asked Mr. Cunningham if he will be chairing the boat parade again next year. Mr. Cunningham replied that he already volunteered to do it.

6. NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Cunningham commented that most of them have probably been following the publicity about the trains and the bridges over the St. Lucie and Loxahatchee Rivers. There has finally been some media coverage on how these issues are affecting the boaters. They had some great interviews with boaters regarding the caliber and the quality of the bridges and how safe they are for the trains and the boaters around them.

Mr. Juliano asked Mr. Cunningham to provide them with another update at the next Marine Commission meeting, if he has more information.

Mr. Walker stated that Mr. George O'Malley has been updating the Florida Council of Yacht Clubs on the trains and bridges every month. Mr. Juliano suggested that they ask Mr. O'Malley to attend their next meeting.

Mr. Lanier asked to refer back to the fishing and netting activities on the floating dock. He feels it might be a good idea to put up a sign asking the public not to fish or net there. There is a nice fishing area under the bridge, which has railings for safety.

Mr. Johnson said rather than a sign maybe they could paint on the edge of the floating dock in red lettering "no docking". It will be very clear to anyone pulling up there. He is not sure if there is a product that will stick to the surface of the dock without wearing off. Mr. Snyder said he can discuss that with the board, but the dock is textured, so they will have to look at that. He has fallen off the dock along with several other rowers and the bottom is very soft mud.

7. MARINA DIRECTOR'S MATTERS

A) Update on the Marina Facility Repairs

Mr. Tim Grabenbauer, Marina Director, reported that they just finished the first section of work on the center dock, which replaced some pilings and pile caps. They also installed concrete jackets on some of the pilings and did some cross bracing. There is more work that will be done this year, which is part of the Florida Inland Navigation District (FIND) Grant. He said the hurricane repairs are almost done. The Boylan Yacht Sales office space was flooded from the hurricane and the floor is in the process of being replaced.

Mr. Juliano asked if any of these repairs are covered by insurance.

Mr. Grabenbauer explained that insurance covers the buildings, but the dock repairs are reported to the Florida Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). He said the restroom remodeling project will be going before the City Council tomorrow night. They will be recommending awarding the work to Bill Bryant Construction. He explained that the lowest bid for the job came in just under \$115,000, but the City only budgeted \$50,000.

Mr. Cunningham asked if Bill Bryant was the low bidder. Mr. Grabenbauer explained that the bid was for the Marina restroom and another restroom for the Recreation Department. Bill Bryant has local preference and they asked him if he could lower his bid for the Marina job to match the lowest bid, which he did and that is who they are recommending.

Mr. Juliano asked what is the total cost for the job. Mr. Grabenbauer replied that it will cost \$114,600. Mr. Juliano asked how will they come up with that full amount. Mr. Grabenbauer said they have part of the money, but they will be recommending that the remaining amount come from the 304 account, which is the City's General Construction Account.

Mr. Juliano asked Mr. Grabenbauer to provide the City Clerk's office with the outcome of the City Council meeting pertaining to the restroom remodeling, so that the Marine Commission members can be updated. Mr. Grabenbauer said he would do that.

Mr. Walker asked if the hurricane damage to the south docks has been tended to. Mr. Grabenbauer replied that the south docks are the wood docks and they still need some work.

B) Update on the Florida Inland Navigation District (FIND) Grants

Mr. Grabenbauer explained that they have not formally accepted the FIND grants yet, but they have until March 30, 2018.

Mr. Juliano said they need to remind the City Council that there was an appetite about six (6) months ago when the Marine Commission made their presentation about what it would take to increase the quality of the Marina. He does not want to see them lose that interest.

Mr. Grabenbauer explained that they received one (1) proposal for a Master Plan, which they will bring back to the City Council.

Mr. Cunningham asked if the City Council knows that March 30, 2018 is the deadline for accepting the grants. Mr. Grabenbauer said the date is listed in the memo that went to the City Council.

Mr. Juliano said the exception to accepting the grants is that they have to come up with the other half of the funds. He asked what is that figure. Mr. Grabenbauer stated that amount is \$37,500.

Mr. Juliano told Mr. Grabenbauer if he thinks they need to meet again about the grants, he will schedule a Special Call Marine Commission meeting. They don't want to wait another year to get this done.

C) Marina Reviews and Comments

Mr. Grabenbauer reported that when he looked, the Marina had four (4) stars with Active Captain, four (4) stars with Google, and 4.6 stars on Facebook. There is an employee that is no longer with them, which should help improve their ratings. Everyone seems to be happy and the Marina has been very busy.

Mr. Juliano said that he would like to see a more detailed report on the reviews. He asked Mr. Grabenbauer if he could put that together and send it to the City Clerk's office so it can be attached to the minutes.

Mr. Grabenbauer reported that all the figures for this fiscal year are up compared to last year.

Mr. Juliano asked if the Marina is pretty well full compared to last year. Mr. Grabenbauer replied yes, in fact they have more triple moorings for a longer period than he can recall since he has been at the Marina.

Mr. Cunningham asked if the dry storage building is full. Mr. Grabenbauer explained that they lost about six (6) boats, but they are refilling those slots.

Mr. Juliano asked if the vacant position was filled. Mr. Grabenbauer yes. They recently hired a gentleman who co-owned a marina up north. He handled a lot of commercial work on large boats and they had a dry storage facility, so he is familiar with driving a forklift and he has great customer service skills.

Mr. Juliano said that one (1) of the FIND grants should allow them to install two (2) boatlifts in the lagoon. He asked how many lifts could they fit in the lagoon area. Mr. Grabenbauer replied that they could fit between 12 to 15 lifts.

Mr. Juliano said he understands that the new buoys will take two (2) to three (3) years to complete, because of the amount of site work involved. Mr. Grabenbauer stated that he received a proposal from a company that included the site work and the permitting, which was about \$90,000. They just need to come up with matching funds.

Mr. Cunningham said his experience with small boats is that 90 percent of them don't want to be in a dry storage building, but would rather be on a lift. At his business they have installed more lifts this year to accommodate them, so there is a demand for boatlifts.

Mr. Juliano commented that they previously touched on the subject of a type of skim coat that could be applied to the concrete to improve the looks. He said Wilco construction mentioned a product and he is interested in what that would cost. Mr. Grabenbauer said that he has not had a chance to look into it yet.

Mr. Juliano asked Mr. Grabenbauer what challenges does he face. Mr. Grabenbauer replied that sometimes it is a challenge to stay fully staffed with the small group he has, but he still has one more part time position to fill. He said it would be nice to have one more part time employee during the season. Currently they are doing pump outs three (3) days a week, which is for about 50 boats.

Mr. Juliano asked what would another employee cost. Mr. Grabenbauer stated it would cost approximately \$25,000 for another part time employee.

Mr. Juliano stated that if he feels strongly about needing another employee then it needs to go in the budget for next year.

Mr. Snyder commented there are boats parked near the islands and he noticed one (1) that has been there for quite a while and is very close to shore. When the tide is out it is laying on the

bottom. He asked if that is against the law, or if there could be an issue with pollution. Mr. Grabenbauer explained that it is legal. He said he was going to engage the Police Department to go with him to look at that boat and others that are anchored further up in the mangroves, but a Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) Officer was at the Marina, so he asked him to check on them. The couple of boats that are up in the mangroves are what he is more concerned about, because they are not coming in for pump outs.

Mr. Juliano asked if the FWC is the only agency he can call on for help. Mr. Grabenbauer replied yes, but the boats are within the City limits, so he can go out there with the Police Department as well.

Mr. Cunningham explained that the FWC can inspect their haul fittings to see if the discharge valves are closed. Mr. Grabenbauer stated that it is required by law that the seal is locked with a padlock or a wire tie.

Mr. Snyder said a resident asked him what is being done about the sewage spill in the Bethel Creek area. He asked if they are aerating the water or anything. Mr. Grabenbauer said he believes it is being flushed naturally.

Mr. Juliano commented that he will ask Mr. Rob Bolton, Water and Sewer Director, to send him a report on the sewage spill.

8. CHAIRMAN'S MATTERS

None

9. MEMBER'S MATTERS

None

10. NEXT MEETING DATE

A) Set Date of Next Marine Commission Meeting

The next tentative Marine Commission meeting was scheduled for Monday, May 7, 2018 at 9:30 a.m. in the City Hall, Council Chambers.

11. ADJOURNMENT

The Marine Commission meeting adjourned at 10:17 a.m.

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