

March 3, 2009
Milton, Florida

The Marine Advisory Committee met on the above date with the following members present: Chairman Jeff Marker and members Rick Harris and Dan Wakley. Also present were the County Administrator (Hunter Walker), County Engineer (Roger Blaylock), Marine Extension Agent (Christine Verlinde), and Public Works Director (Avis Whitfield). Chairman Marker called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

The minutes of the January 6, 2009 meeting were approved.

CHAIRMAN / MEMBER ISSUES / REPORTS

Jeff Marker updated the committee on the FWC meeting last month in Destin. He said the meeting went very well and he thought the recommendations he made were well received. One of his suggestions is to let each county control the spending of their BIF and report the spending to the FWC. He believes they were paying close attention and will give some thought to the request.

Marker also noted that Escambia County's requests for Artificial Reef permits will be granted by DEP on March 20, 2009.

Christina Verlinde pointed out that the grant application is due on March 20th and must include the permits. She will submit the application without the permit with an explanation that the permit will be forwarded as soon as possible.

Hunter Walker said the Board of County Commissioners will have to approve a resolution in support of the grant at the next meeting on March 12th in order for the grant package to be mailed within the appropriate time frame.

Dan Wakley moved with second from Rich Harris that the Committee recommend submission of application to the Florida Wildlife and Fish Conservation Commission for deployment of artificial reef in the Escambia Nearshore East site and motion was passed unanimously.

Marker requested input on the Marine Sanctuary meeting. Wakley said he was unaware of the meeting and did not attend. Mark Griffith of Castlewood Street in Navarre stated that he attended the meeting. Walker provided the committee with copies of the Marine Sanctuary Plan (copy attached). Griffith stated that the Marine Sanctuary Committee was formed and the following officers were elected:

Chairman – Mark Griffith
Vice Chairman – Robert Turpin (Permitting Liaison)
Treasurer – Cinnamon Holderman
Friends of the Park Liaison – Dave Barker
Secretary – To be determined
Public Affairs Officer – To be determined

The committee identified permitting as a critical path item and divided the project into three phases.

Phase 1 – Gulf Side Reef
Phase 2 – Sound Side Reef
Phase 3 – Observation Pier

Griffith stated the committee set an initial fund raising goal of \$5,000 to go toward the expenses of gathering required permits and application data for phase 1. He has the digital AutoCAD drawings from the State.

They will have a website up soon. He spoke with John Dodrill, FWCC Artificial Reef Coordinator about the progress of the committee and grant availability. He will meet with Tracey Terry to ask for assistance from Navarre Chamber with promoting the project. The Committee will ask the MAC to make a recommendation to the County for partnering in for permits and grants.

Dan Wakley suggested they incorporate life guards in their plan and requested that they note how they will mark the reef area for safety and consider including a rest area or floatation area for swimmers for safety purposes.

Jeff Marker stated that there is no recommendation to present to the Commissioners at this point and recommended that the Sanctuary Committee coordinate their efforts with Dan Wakley.

STAFF UPDATES

Mr. Walker said that the defendant failed to appear for his hearing and a warrant has been issued for his arrest. No progress is expected on recovering the Symphonia. Mr. Wakley said state grant funding is available but the state has only been using it for removal of large vessels.

Christina Verlinde said that BIF grants are due in April. Marker asked if the grant can be used for restoration purposes. Verlinde replied that it is primarily for boating access, boating education, economic uses and derelict vessel removal and channel markers. Harris asked if it can be used for river marking. Verlinde replied yes. Walker stated that it is better to use the grant money for dredging and other projects that require the larger sums of money.

Roger Blaylock said that we are involved with the testing required by DOT for permit submission on the Mulatt dredging project.

Avis Whitfield reported that RIP RAP has been added and other improvements made to the Oriole Beach ramp.

Wakley suggested that Mr. Whitfield and Mr. Blaylock make their recommendations for BFI grant projects and check with the City of Gulf Breeze and the City of Milton to see if they have projects that may need BFI grant funding. Walker said he will check with both cities.

Walker noted that Mr. Kimbrough has resigned from the committee and Commissioner Salter will appoint John Griffing at the next Commission meeting.

Rick Harris said that he is interested in going to the next Waterway Advisory Group meeting in Cedar Key on May 21st and 22nd. Marker said that he may also be interested in attending the meeting.

OTHER BUSINESS

No new business.

NEXT MEETING DATE

The next meeting is scheduled for April 7, 2009 at 5:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Committee at this time, the meeting adjourned at 6:10 p.m.