

**MINUTES OF THE MARINE ADVISORY BOARD  
100 NORTH ANDREWS AVENUE  
8<sup>TH</sup> FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM  
FORT LAUDERDALE, FLORIDA  
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 2012 – 6:00 P.M.**

<u>Board Members</u>	Attendance	Cumulative Attendance May 2012 - April 2013	
		<u>Present</u>	<u>Absent</u>
Barry Flanigan, Chair	P	4	0
James Harrison, Vice Chair	P	3	1
F. St. George Guardabassi	P	4	0
Chad Moss	A	2	2
Norbert McLaughlin	P	4	0
Jim Welch	P	4	0
Robert Dean	A	2	2
John Holmes	P	3	1
Bob Ross	P	4	0
Joe Cain	A	2	2
Tom Tapp	P	4	0
Herb Rassing	P	4	0
Frank Herhold	P	3	1
Lisa Scott-Founds	A	2	2
Zane Brisson	P	3	1

As of this date, there are 15 appointed members to the Board, which means 8 would constitute a quorum.

It was noted that a quorum was present for the meeting.

**Staff**

Andrew Cuba, Manager of Marine Facilities  
Jonathan Luscomb, Supervisor of Marine Facilities  
Levend Ekendiz, Intracoastal Facilities Dockmaster  
Matt Domke, Downtown Facilities Dockmaster  
Sgt. Kevin Shults, Marine Police Staff  
Phil Thornburg, Director of Parks and Recreation  
Brigitte Chiappetta, Recording Secretary, Prototype, Inc.

**Communications to City Commission**

**Motion** made by Mr. Tapp, seconded by Mr. Guardabassi, to recommend that the consultants involved in the design process of the development of Las Olas

Marina communicate directly with City Marine Staff, specifically with regard to seagrass mitigation. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

**I. Call to Order / Roll Call**

Chair Flanigan called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m. and roll was called.

**II. Approval of Minutes – July 17, 2012**

Mr. Tapp noted a correction on p.4, paragraph 4: the correct name of the individual who had addressed the Board is Steve Bertone.

**Motion** made by Mr. Ross, seconded by Mr. Tapp, to approve the July 17, 2012 minutes as amended. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

**III. Statement of Quorum**

It was noted that a quorum was present at the meeting.

**IV. Waterway Crime & Boating Safety Report**

Sgt. Shults advised that in District 1, power cords were stolen from a vessel and two larcenies of engines have occurred. There were also five electronics thefts, four of which took place in Bahia Mar. He noted that the security video system currently in place at Bahia Mar is not sufficient for the facility, and it is in the process of upgrading to a more extensive system.

Mr. Holmes asked to know the appropriate office to call if pollutants are observed in a City canal. Sgt. Shults said the Marine Police are notified via 911 or through the non-emergency number; once they have taken an initial report, they alert the Coast Guard or the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP).

**V. Permit Application – Private Use of Public Property – Sec. 8-144: 715 Cordova Road / William Jubb Corbet, Jr., and Joan K. Corbet**

Margaret Corbet, representing the Applicant, explained that the request included neither construction or variance. Chair Flanigan added that it is necessary to apply for a new permit when a property changes ownership.

There being no further questions from the Board at this time, Chair Flanigan opened the public hearing. As there were no members of the public wishing to speak on this Item, the Chair closed the public hearing and returned the discussion to the Board.

**Motion** made by Mr. Ross, seconded by Mr. Rissing, to approve as stated. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

Mr. Cuba stated that the permit would be good for five years, with automatic renewal provided there is no transfer of ownership.

## **VI. Discussion – Jet Pack Usage at George English Park**

Mr. Cuba recalled that at the July 17 meeting, he had been asked to arrange a discussion of the jet pack concession at George English Park. He introduced Phil Thornburg, Director of Parks and Recreation, and recognized Benjamin Olive and Ben Smith of RocketMan, Inc.

Mr. Olive explained that RocketMan has been operating at George English Park since May 2012 with the permission of Parks and Recreation. The concession purchases a monthly permit to operate within Fort Lauderdale. Since May, RocketMan has successfully “flown” over 1000 participants at this location, renting the equipment for 20 to 30 minutes per customer. Pursuant to their agreement with the City, there is no on-site advertising.

Mr. Rissing asked if any accidents have been reported on the site. Mr. Olive replied that there was one incident in which an individual “banged their knee” on some equipment. He pointed out that because the concession’s technology is very new, all participants are considered to be beginners. Flight instructors, who are specifically certified by the manufacturer, provide an intensive overview of the process for customers; these instructors also control the units’ power. If there appears to be danger or the participant does not seem to know what to do, the instructor lowers them into the water.

Mr. Olive continued that participants are provided with headphones, through which the instructor may communicate with them. RocketMan keeps a Jet Ski on standby in the event that an accident may occur, and at least two staff members, including the instructor, are always present to assist the participants in the water if necessary.

Mr. Rissing commented that the Board had discussed the safety of the concession at their July meeting, and asked if there was any potential for danger of which the Board should be made aware. Mr. Olive reiterated that the technology is very new, and that most customers remain “bobbing in the water” throughout the experience. He stated again that power to the units is always controlled by the instructor.

Mr. Cuba showed the Board members a brief video of the concession in operation.

Mr. Olive explained that the instructor controls the device's power via remote. The maximum height the jet pack may achieve is 30 ft. in the air. The customer controls direction by leaning right or left. He added that the City is insured on RocketMan's insurance policy, and is named on the waiver as a released party.

Mr. Tapp recalled that the Board's previous discussion of the concession had addressed a potential conflict between RocketMan and boaters using the basin at George English Park. He advised that this was a concern for the Board, as their primary interest is in marine uses, including families that may be using the docks.

Mr. Olive said in his experience, the public has been "wildly supportive" of the concession, thanking members of RocketMan for assisting them with their vessels or moving the concession out of their way. He pointed out that the only object that obstructs any use of the dock is the concession's stand, which is moved to the grass as soon as customers leave the dock for the water. The public is always given priority.

Mr. McLaughlin stated that he had visited George English Park during the recent Labor Day weekend, and confirmed that Mr. Olive's description was "99% correct." He asserted that the concession had in no way interfered with boating at the location, and individuals had been supportive of the operation. He noted, however, that the stand is not moved from the dock, and no jet skis or safety vessels were present during the time he observed the concession in action.

Mr. Guardabassi asked if the City had received any complaints regarding RocketMan. Chair Flanigan said the only complaint had come from the individual who addressed the Board at their July 17 meeting.

Mr. Herhold commented that the City appears to exercise a certain amount of control over the operation through the permitting and insurance requirements. He noted that he had seen a similar concession operating in the bay of the Middle River, south of the Sunrise Bridge, and asked if this business met similar requirements. Mr. Cuba clarified that this concession was not operating from a City park, but from a vessel.

Mr. Olive stated that George English Park is one of only a few sites in south Florida where RocketMan can be offered to the public: part of their success is based on their ability to operate within a confined environment. He expressed concern that a competitor, which operates on the ocean, may provide a negative view of this type of concession. He added that there is also a competitor who briefly docks at George English Park, and asserted that he would like to ensure the City is aware this business was not affiliated with RocketMan.

Mr. Welch said his only concern with RocketMan was that the operation is located in a boat launching area. He advised that he had seen what appeared to be items left on the ramp or the driveway which may belong to the concession, and explained that he did not want the public to feel they could not use the ramp where RocketMan operated. Mr. Olive assured the Board that he would ensure this would not happen.

Mr. Thornburg said he had not received any complaints regarding the concession. He stated that the proprietors have addressed any issues as they arose, and that there were no problems with the operation in his opinion.

Mr. Tapp asked if RocketMan would be moved to another location on a particularly busy weekend or during a special event. Mr. Olive said this is primarily a matter of communication between Parks and Recreation and RocketMan to ensure that all parties understand there will be more boaters on the water at a particular time. At present, RocketMan moves the concession to Key Largo during heavier boating days through the week; they typically return to Fort Lauderdale during the weekend. Mr. McLaughlin asserted that the basin at George English Park is large enough to accommodate both boaters and the concession, and encouraged the business to remain in Fort Lauderdale whenever possible.

Mr. Welch asked if tickets were sold at the park or offsite. Mr. Olive said this is primarily done through the company's website, or through a call center based in Chicago. Participants must be 18 or older, with a weight limit of 300 lbs.

Mr. McLaughlin advised that the jet ski should be kept at a very low speed within the basin. Mr. Olive said there had been consideration of discontinuing the use of the jet ski; however, they had ultimately decided that it should be left at the dock so it could be used as a safety precaution if necessary.

Chair Flanigan thanked the representatives of RocketMan for attending tonight's meeting.

## **VII. Discussion – City of Fort Lauderdale Visioning – MAB Recommendations**

Mr. Cuba noted that the Board members were provided with a handout listing the top recommendations made with regard to the City's visioning process.

Chair Flanigan noted that the first item on the list was the redevelopment of the Las Olas Marina. He pointed out, however, that this redevelopment, first discussed by the Board approximately one year ago, does not seem to be the same project currently being proposed by consultants. Chair Flanigan said he was concerned that the proposal was being presented at public meetings with

the use of sketches that neither the Board nor Marine Facilities Staff had reviewed. At the most recent Beach Redevelopment Board (BRB) meeting, he noted, a modified sketch was shown that took the marina from 6000 lineal ft. of dockage to 3300 lineal ft.

The Marine Advisory Board has received over 20 letters of support for the project they had originally approved, including letters from Show Management, the Marine Industries Association of South Florida (MIASF), neighborhood associations, and other stakeholders in the City's marine industry. Chair Flanigan stated that City Staff has not been involved in the development of the concepts or mitigation issues currently being presented.

He advised that the concept approved by the Board had been presented to the BRB and the Central Beach Alliance, and the concerns of these entities had been heard, including a desire not to see public funds used on additional large buildings in the area for restaurant and retail use. Members of these groups had preferred to see a large marina. Chair Flanigan expressed concern that these groups could lose trust in the MAB as a result of being shown new and different plans for the redevelopment.

Mr. Guardabassi asked why the plans for the marina were significantly smaller. Chair Flanigan said the consultants had shown the Beach Redevelopment Board a seagrass mitigation plan that would have been located inside the marina; fortunately, a consultant recently retained by the City to address dredging the Intracoastal Waterway had corrected some of the misstatements made regarding mitigation. Chair Flanigan pointed out that mitigation can be extremely expensive and is likely to be handled at the City and County Commission levels.

He continued that at the time the presentation to the BRB was being made, the City Manager had authorized a feasibility study for the marina at its originally proposed size of more than 6000 lineal ft. He pointed out that this concept gained the approval of Show Management in part because the City would be uniquely able to bring mega- and super-yachts together for the Boat Show and showcase them on the north side of the bridge.

Mr. Thornburg observed that there are multiple consultants working on plans for different areas of the beach. He advised that he could look into the issue of plans not being shared with all advisory bodies.

Mr. Cuba said Staff was brought into the initial processes of the redevelopment concept, and has attended meetings since that time which have featured revised concepts. He noted that a public workshop will be held in two weeks to further discuss the plans.

Chair Flanigan said when redevelopment concepts were first presented to the MAB, they had included plans to place floating docks on the north end of the existing marina; however, the consultants had apparently not been aware that floating docks were already located there for day dockage. More recent concepts have shown proposals that would require modification of the City's submerged land lease. He concluded that he would like to see Mr. Cuba and Mr. Luscomb be more closely involved with the redevelopment project.

Mr. Thornburg said he was not certain this could be achieved, as the consultant has been placed in charge of the proposed redevelopment at this point. The City Manager and City Commission are responsible for retaining the consultant, and the Beach CRA is responsible for overseeing the consultant's activities.

Mr. Cuba recalled that the consultant had initially spent time working with the Board; different plans have been produced since that time. Chair Flanigan stated that Marine Advisory Board members seem to have greater expertise than the consultants with regard to the development and mitigation of the marina, and should remain involved in the project.

Mr. Tapp commented that a project manager or engineer from the City is often assigned to work closely with consultants on projects such as the marina redevelopment. Mr. Thornburg explained that at this point the project is still in its conceptual stages, which was the reason no individual from the City has been assigned to it at this point.

Chair Flanigan stated it did not make sense for the project to consider reducing its amount of dockage from what presently exists. Mr. Thornburg asked if a representative of the CRA had addressed the Board regarding the project. Chair Flanigan recalled that CRA Director Don Morris had spoken to the MAB at an earlier date.

He continued that the City has Staff members who could deal more effectively with the issue of seagrass mitigation than the consultant would be able to do. Because the economic impact of the marina redevelopment would affect both the County and the City, he asserted that it should be dealt with by the highest level of County and City officials.

Mr. Cuba observed that the public workshop scheduled for September 17 may provide a forum in which the Board can contribute more input on the project. He emphasized that interested members should plan to attend this workshop and offer additional insight on the proposed concepts.

Mr. Herhold pointed out that if the marina's dockage were decreased with redevelopment, it would affect the facility's projected revenue, which is based in part on the lineal feet of dockage available. One potential source of funding for

the project is a revenue bond, which would be affected by the loss of revenue associated with the loss of dockage. Chair Flanigan said if revenue is lost, the project could require secondary bond sourcing.

The Board returned to the list of visioning recommendations. Mr. Cuba stated that the remaining items on the list were as follows:

2. City-wide canal dredging;
3. Maintaining the City's designation as the yachting capital of the world;
4. Establishment of a barge loading/unloading area for commercial interests;
5. New River dockage upgrades/seawall improvements on the north side;
6. Development of City-owned property along the Dania Cutoff canal;
7. Welcome Center for visiting yachts.

Chair Flanigan commented that one concept that had been previously discussed was a Marina Village, which would include the welcome center; however, he noted that it would be difficult to determine what facilities would be included in a Marina Village until the footprint of this development had been identified.

Mr. Cuba urged the members to provide their input on the visioning process through a link on the City's website, as recommended at a previous meeting. He offered to provide this link to the members via email.

**Motion** made by Mr. Rassing, seconded by Mr. Tapp, to approve the seven items as a recommendation for the visioning process, as outlined in Staff's memorandum. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

Chair Flanigan asked Mr. Thornburg if further input from the Board would be necessary with regard to the proposed marina redevelopment. Mr. Thornburg suggested that the Board send a communication to the City Commission expressing their concerns with the process.

**Motion** made by Mr. Tapp, seconded by Mr. Guardabassi, to send a communication to the Commission recommending that the consultants communicate more directly with City Marine Staff in the design process of the development of Las Olas Marina, specifically including seagrass mitigation.

In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

### **VIII. Presentation – City of Fort Lauderdale Junior Sailing Program**

Mr. Luscomb showed the Board a PowerPoint presentation on the City's Junior Sailing Program, which was developed in May 2012. He explained that the goal was to create a pilot outreach program offering inland opportunities for children to learn to sail.



The program is located on the north side of the Las Olas Marina and uses seven vessels equipped with internal flotation, as well as a 14 ft. bottom-inflatable coach boat that can hold 10 to 12 children. A U.S. Sailing instructor leads the program, using lesson plans that are uniform throughout the country.

Children of ages 8-14 may participate in the program. The cost is \$150 for residents and \$200 for non-residents. All summer classes were filled within three weeks of the program's development. Each class lasts for two weeks from 8 a.m.-12 p.m. An afternoon class is being considered in the future. An intermediate class currently runs two days per week.

Beginners' skills for sailors include tying knots, rigging, righting and bailing. All participants must pass a swim test in order to qualify for the program. The children then learn steering, how the parts of the vessels work, and educational games. They also learn life skills such as self-confidence, self-reliance, awareness, and understanding of the forces of nature. On days with inclement weather, participants ride in the coach boat.

Mr. Luscomb described some of the program's activities, showing the students' progress in pictures. He emphasized that the classes can be the first step in a lifetime of boating. Several members of City Staff, including Marine Staff, Mr. Thornburg, Cate McCaffrey, Luis Olivera, Sue McAlister, and many others participated in the program in a variety of ways, from placing boats in the water to designing the curriculum.

Mr. Rassing commended Mr. Luscomb and Marine Staff on their initiative in developing the program, stating that it was a type of outreach that is needed more often. Mr. Luscomb noted that there is consideration of expanding the program to the west, at a different location within Broward County.

## **IX. Reports**

- **Las Olas Marina Redevelopment Concept**

Mr. Luscomb advised that the economic feasibility of this concept is currently being studied, along with mitigation issues. The scope of work for the project has been sent to three consultants, and bids are expected by the following week. The scope includes identification of features, such as the Dania Canal, that benefit the industry, as well as any potential competition that might be helpful or harmful to the marina. The potential marina design, including lineal feet, and the prices that could be charged are also being studied.

The Beach CRA has retained a consultant to carry out the economic viability study. They are also considering hiring the same mitigation consultant who is

currently working with the City on the Intracoastal Waterway dredging project, using some of the information that has already been produced.

- **ICW Dredging Update**

Mr. Luscomb stated that task orders 6 and 7 have been approved, and six potential mitigation sites have been identified. The next step in the process is testing these sites to determine whether or not they are viable.

He added that the Florida Inland Navigational District (FIND) portion of the project has hit rock while dredging a canal, which means different equipment must be used. This may slow the project by three to four months. However, it allows the City sufficient time to get its permits in place for Intracoastal dredging. He estimated that the City's project would begin in September, which would allow more time to apply to FIND for additional design, permitting, and mitigation funds.

He added that it is hoped the City will hear from FIND in September with regard to the reapplication for the 15<sup>th</sup> Street project. If this is successful, a bid package would be prepared and ready to go out in January 2013. The City would have three years to finish this project.

Chair Flanigan asked if the marina would be dredged deeper than 15 ft. Mr. Luscomb said Bahia Mar would be dredged to 17 ft.; however, the channel becomes shallower as it moves north, so it would be dredged to 15 ft. Chair Flanigan stated that the marina should be dredged to 17 ft. as well, as they hope to be the same depth as the Intracoastal Waterway. Mr. Luscomb said he would look into this further.

- **Commission Agenda Reports**

Mr. Cuba reported that at the City Commission's August 21 meeting, they approved an application for public usage of private property, as well as task orders 6 and 7 for the ICW dredging project. The Boat Show usage agreement for dockage at the Las Olas Marina was also approved.

## **X. Old / New Business**

Mr. Herhold advised that the Florida East Coast (FEC) railway is developing intra-city service on its tracks in addition to existing commercial traffic. A meeting was recently hosted by the Broward Alliance and the MIASF to discuss this plan. It was noted that 75% of the City's boatyards are located to the west of the FEC railway bridge. FEC representatives explained that trains would run on an hourly basis; north and south trains would intersect on the bridge in order to minimize downtime.

He stated that the MIASF had proposed a boat trip up the river, as its leadership was not certain that the FEC had an appropriate concept of the volume and type of boat traffic on the river or the difficulties associated with tides and narrow waterways. The proposal is for a passenger train running from Fort Lauderdale to Miami with four stops, achieving top speeds between 79 and 125 miles per hour, depending upon the location.

Mr. Herhold observed that this is a matter of concern for the marine economy. The proposed completion date for the project is the end of 2014. The FEC is meeting with various public officials, entities, and organizations to discuss the project. Its cost would be approximately \$1 billion and would be financed by FEC.

The Board discussed how this project could be achieved along with other railway projects, including the number of tracks and the amount of time the bridge might be down. Vice Chair Harrison said there have been discussions of improving communication with boaters so they are aware of the bridge's schedule, such as development of an app for communication or manual operation of the bridge. He stated that the Board should work to prevent any impediment of the commercial traffic associated with boats moving up the river.

Chair Flanigan said he felt FEC would be receptive to feedback by the marine industry, which was well-represented at the recent meeting. He encouraged the Board members to remain involved in discussions of this project, and asserted that the marine industry should take the lead with their legislators with respect to this issue.

Mr. Cuba asked if Staff should reach out to FEC to schedule an appearance before the Board. Chair Flanigan suggested that while this step may be premature at the moment, a presentation would be welcome at a later date. Mr. Herhold recommended that they be invited to a meeting no later than November, as the project is "on a fast track." He advised that the MIASF is establishing a committee in relation to the project, and proposed that the MAB participate in this process.

## **XI. Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the Board at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 8:33 p.m.

[Minutes prepared by K. McGuire, Prototype, Inc.]