



CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE

DRAFT

**MINUTES OF THE MARINE ADVISORY BOARD
100 NORTH ANDREWS AVENUE
COMMISSION CONFERENCE ROOM – EIGHTH FLOOR
FORT LAUDERDALE, FLORIDA
THURSDAY, MARCH, 2018 – 6:00 P.M.**

**Cumulative Attendance
May 2017 - April 2018**

Board Members

	<i>Attendance</i>	<u>Present</u>	<u>Absent</u>
F. St. George Guardabassi , Chair	P	8	0
Grant Henderson, Vice Chair	P	7	1
Jimi Batchelor	A	5	3
Cliff Berry II	A	6	2
Zane Brisson	A	5	3
George Cable	P	7	1
Joe Cain	A	4	4
Susan Engle	P	5	0
Richard Graves	P	6	2
Ted Morley	P	6	1
Roy Sea	P	5	3
Ed Strobel	P	8	0
Bill Walker	P	6	2
Jim Welch	P	8	0

As of this date, there are 14 appointed members to the Board, which means 8 would constitute a quorum.

Staff

- Andrew Cuba, Manager of Marine Facilities
- Jonathan Luscomb, Supervisor of Marine Facilities
- Sergeant Todd Mills, Marine Police Staff
- Division Chief Stewart Ahearn, Fort Lauderdale Fire Department
- Michael Mitchel, Recording Secretary, Prototype, Inc.

Communications to City Commission

None.

I. Call to Order / Roll Call

Chair Guardabassi called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and roll was called.

II. Approval of Minutes – February 1, 2018

Motion made by Mr. Strobel, seconded by Mr. Morley, to approve. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

III. Statement of Quorum

It was noted a quorum was present at the meeting.

IV. Waterway Crime & Boating Safety Report / Fire Department Report

Sergeant Todd Mills of the Marine Unit reported the following activity for the month of February 2018:

- 7 citations
- 72 warnings
- 52 safety inspections
- 3 incidents

The Marine Unit expects to receive three replacement boats in 2018.

Division Chief Ahearn reported the following activity from February 2018:

- 21 calls, including 14 distress calls

Staff has completed 500 hours of training with the new metalcraft vessel. Training will continue into the future. The Fire Department is participating in a waterway cleanup effort on Saturday, March 3, 2018, and the Duck Derby is scheduled for March 17, 2018.

The Department continues to work with Broward County to standardize addresses along waterways, which will improve response time. They have met with the City's Budget Advisory Board to review top priorities for the next fiscal year, which include operating the fire boat without a team of dedicated personnel. They hope to find alternate funding sources for this and other priorities.

V. Q & A – Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission – Captain Hodges

Chair Guardabassi introduced Captain Mark Hodges of the Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission (FWC). Capt. Hodges provided handouts on some of the different types of zones in waterways, which are produced by FWC's Boating and Waterway Section. FWC does not create zones: some zones are dictated by biologists in response to the migration of wildlife, such as manatees. Broward County has the highest manatee population in the state of Florida.

Capt. Hodges continued that Boating Safety Zones are typically created by municipalities or counties when slow or idle speeds can contribute to an area's safety. When a municipality establishes a zone, FWC's Waterway Section will review the zone and advise that municipality of what is appropriate for the site's conditions. FWC regulates these zones for consistency, particularly regarding signage.

Capt. Hodges advised that if a municipality wants to establish or change the classification of a zone, this is done through the city itself and then reviewed by FWC's Waterway Management Section to ensure uniformity. Another function of the Waterway Management Section is the installation of public docks and boat ramps, which are usually funded through grants. Signage in these facilities is changed at times by the Waterway Management Section.

Because signage can be scarce in some locations on the waterways, FWC developed a pamphlet to help educate the public. Capt. Hodges advised that several different companies manufacture waterway signs and buoys, and a separate contractor maintains them. FWC ensures that signage erected by municipalities or counties is compliant with state regulations. Cities maintain some signs, while the Coast Guard and FWC maintain others. The Coast Guard is responsible for signs on a federal waterway that serves commercial traffic.

Mr. Strobel asked if it is within the Board's purview to request or require that a homeowner place a light on the end of a private dock. Capt. Hodges replied that depending upon the length of the dock, this decision is usually left to the Army Corps of Engineers. Lights must be fixed rather than flashing and may not impede marine safety or navigation.

Mr. Strobel commented that the lack of knowledge of many boaters on the river is problematic. Capt. Hodges agreed that enforcement of waterway regulations can be challenging. He recommended that homeowners and others affected by wakes take video of any activity that results in damage, as it will be helpful if a civil suit becomes necessary. He also emphasized the importance of education, particularly when a new zone is established. Violators of federally created or enforced wildlife zones may be given a summons to federal court. The Coast Guard works with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) to provide consistent lighting and signage for bridges.

Mr. Walker recalled that he recently attended a harbor safety meeting at Port Everglades, at which it was stated that the Port would be supportive of greater safety and awareness training. He noted that the Coast Guard sponsors a program called Clear Channel which focuses on keeping the entrance to the Port clear for large vessels and ensuring the safety of recreational boaters in that area.

It was noted that some jet ski riders and kayakers may not be aware they are subject to the same restrictions as boaters. Mr. Welch added that not all law enforcement agencies may be aware of waterway regulations, which may result in different agencies providing different instructions for boaters.

Mr. Strobel suggested sending safety booklets to any owner who registers a new boat. Sgt. Mills noted that Marine Unit personnel regularly provide boaters with these booklets.

Mr. Walker recalled that at the recent Broward County Marine Summit, representatives of the Harbor Safety Committee were very supportive of enforcement in waterways where they have jurisdiction. He added that members of the Marine Advisory Board may sign up for notice of upcoming Harbor Safety Committee meetings if they would like to attend. Mr. Cuba advised that the Board may designate one member to attend these meetings, although more than one member may not attend to represent the Board due to the restrictions of the Sunshine Law. Mr. Walker agreed to represent the Board in this capacity.

Chair Guardabassi reported that other topics addressed at the recent Marine Summit included Google Street Views for waterways, fire and Police boats, and dredging. There was also discussion of the amount of time bridges are lowered to accommodate trains. Sgt. Mills recalled there was discussion of establishing a mooring field in the city of Hollywood, although homeowners were not initially receptive to the idea. Capt. Hodges and Sgt. Mills also discussed local laws which prevent state or local agencies from performing safety inspections on boats with safety decals and have made "bow riding" legal.

VI. Reports

None.

VII. Old / New Business

Mr. Walker suggested asking the City Commission to request greater transparency regarding the amount of time bridges are down to accommodate trains. Chair Guardabassi recalled that the previous year, a group of interested parties had met with the City Manager to devise a plan for bridge openings and closures. Mr. Cuba advised that he could request a representative of the railroad make a presentation to the Board at a future meeting. It was also proposed that a representative of the Coast Guard could be invited to a meeting.

Ms. Engle recommended that certain shoal areas outside the Intracoastal Waterway be addressed with regard to dredging. She pointed out that the purpose of dredging was to accommodate larger boats coming into the City. Chair Guardabassi suggested that a representative of the Florida Inland Navigational District (FIND) could be asked to address this concern.

Ms. Engle added that she has been asked to locate the City's original maps related to maintenance dredging with regard to privately owned canals, with little success. She felt these maps would be helpful to members of the community who may be interested in dredging their own canals, as they would show the original depth to which their canals were dredged. She recommended that it be made easier for residents to undertake

dredging near their own homes. Mr. Cuba replied that he would look into this further as well.

VIII. Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Board at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 7:23 p.m.

Any written public comments made 48 hours prior to the meeting regarding items discussed during the proceedings have been attached hereto.

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