

# City of Clearwater

*Main Library - Council Chambers  
100 N. Osceola Avenue  
Clearwater, FL 33755*



## Meeting Minutes

**Wednesday, March 11, 2020**

**8:00 AM**

**Main Library - Council Chambers**

## **Marine Advisory Board**

## Roll Call

**Present** 4 - Chair Edward O'Brien Jr., Board Member Michael Grohman, Board Member Kevin Laughlin, and Board Member Michael Mack

**Absent** 3 - Board Member Wade Carlisle, Board Member Christina Joseph, and Ex Officio Phil Henderson

**Also Present** - Ed Chesney, P.E. – Marine & Aviation Department Director, Michael MacDonald - Marine & Aviation Operations Manager, Patricia O. Sullivan – Board Reporter

Awaiting approval

### 1. Call To Order

*The Chair called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. at the Main Library.*

To provide continuity for research, items are in agenda order although not necessarily discussed in that order.

### 2. Approval of Minutes

2.1 Approve the September 11, 2019 Marine Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

**Member Grohman moved to approve the minutes of the September 11, 2019 Marine Advisory Board meeting as submitted in written summation. The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously.**

**3. Citizens to be Heard Regarding Items Not on the Agenda:** None.

### 4. New Business Items

4.1 Election of Officers

**Member Laughlin moved to reappoint Edward O'Brien Jr. as Chair. The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously.**

**Member Laughlin moved to reappoint Michael Grohman as Vice Chair. The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously.**

4.2 Discuss the February 2020 - Clearwater Marina Market Rent Study Update

Last updated in July 2016, this report compares Clearwater's marina rates for commercial, recreational and transient wet slips against comparable markets.

*Marine & Aviation Department Director Ed Chesney reviewed the February 2020 Appraisal Report Clearwater Marina Market Rent Study. Transient and recreational slip rates averaged 10% lower than local rates while Clearwater's superior location generated high recreational slip occupancy.*

*The City Manager was authorized to increase rates 10% annually; Mr. Chesney recommended a 3% increase, or approximately \$5/month for recreational slips. Recreational boaters did not pay for water; that utility cost continued to increase.*

*Discussion ensued with comments that Clearwater was the only local marina deep enough for sailboats which most local marinas did not accept, sailboats did not use fuel, Dunedin Marina tenants paid a large dredging surcharge, and private marina commercial rates at John's Pass were double Clearwater's.*

*In response to a concern that annual marina parking rates had doubled, Mr. Chesney said the parking system had increased all beach parking rates; parking revenues funded beach improvements.*

**Member Grohman moved to recommend approval of a 3% increase to recreation marina rates. The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously.**

*Mr. Chesney said the study update had not concluded that Clearwater's commercial slip rates were below market; true market rate was difficult to determine as the industry based rates on vessel length while Clearwater based rates on vessel occupancy, since 1993. Clearwater commercial rates were increased 10% during each of the past 2 years. With 50 commercial slips, Clearwater Marina had the largest local fleet. While a private marina at John's Pass would not release its rates, according to hearsay, its commercial boat tenants paid thousands of dollars a month.*

*Mr. Chesney said commercial tenants were required to secure commercial licenses. Tiered commercial slip rates were based on maximum passenger occupancy. The City began charging commercial tenants for their metered water use 2 years ago. Rate increases impacted smaller businesses most. Some fishing boat business buyers had replaced small boats with larger ones and were offering sightseeing instead of fishing. He recommended rate increases of 5% for smaller fishing boats and 10% for larger commercial vessels. Commercial slips had a 20-year waiting list; some jumped the line by purchasing businesses with commercial slips. No commercial tenants had left the marina due to high rates.*

*In response to a concern that another rate increase may be unreasonable, Mr. Cheney said repairs to the aging marina were expensive. The marina was at the most popular location on the beach and featured significant foot traffic, multiple amenities and the lowest local commercial slip rates. He did not think it made sense to suppress rates below market.*

*Discussion ensued re aggregate costs, slip sizes and locations, the burden of rate increases on businesses and the upsurge in trash disposal. A visibility surcharge was recommended for slips abutting Coronado Drive.*

*Mr. Chesney said tenants would not be guaranteed the same exact slip locations at the new marina. When design work is underway, rental rates likely will be calculated based on slip location and size. The City budgeted \$15 million for the new marina; tenants, through fees and rent, also participate in financing the project. Design plans will cost hundreds of thousands of marina fund dollars. A 10% slip rate increase for larger commercial vessels would align rates toward the market range.*

*Discussion ensued with a concern expressed that the plan should consider that consequences of a pandemic could increase preferences for smaller vessels and a comment that Clearwater slip rates should be uniform with Florida and John's Pass.*

**Member Grohman moved to recommend rate increases for commercial slips be based on cost drivers and operating costs, including improvements. The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously.**

*Mr. Chesney said after the marina began charging the commercial fleet for water, marina water use decreased by half. Solid Waste charges now required similar consideration. On-site restaurants paid the \$3,400/monthly Solid Waste cost for 1 of the site's 2 large compactors which were emptied every day or two. The commercial fleet, especially ones receiving daily truckloads of food and beer, filled the other compactor. He suggested when slip rate increases become effective, a surcharge be established to cover Solid Waste costs for the second large compactor and parking lot trash cans. Costs would be split among Marina building tenants, excluding the restaurants and real estate business, and tiered rates for the commercial fleet; smaller boat rates would approximate \$8.09/month and cover the small amount of trash they produce and help defray compactor cleaning and sanitizing costs. He hoped the marina could recover \$15,000 to \$20,000 of Solid Waste costs annually.*

**Member Laughlin moved to recommend adopting Solid Waste surcharges as presented. The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously.**

#### **4.3 Discuss Capital Improvement Projects Update for Beach Marina**

This update will provide a schedule of CIP plans for the next two budget years, each will begin on October 1st 2020/2021 & 2021/2022.

*Mr. Chesney reviewed the CIP (Capital Improvement Project) schedule. The completed utility assessment reported the electrical system was stressed, electrical panels required updates or replacements, and the new marina required additional breakers. The engineer's report for the seawall inspection currently underway will document necessary repairs and any tie back*

*replacements that may be required. Fifty-year old telephone, cable, sewer and water lines behind the seawall probably required upgrades. Uplands needed to be addressed and a survey of the bottomlands was necessary to determine how far to the south the marina's footprint could be expanded. A depth survey will identify pockets that require dredging. A dock redesign could result in larger slips. All inspections and survey reports will be provided to the design professionals.*

*In response to a suggestion that new seawall should be raised in anticipation of rising sea levels, Mr. Chesney said Engineer recommendations were forthcoming; new seawall will have a more robust cap. Water overflowing lower nearby seawalls would surge behind higher ones.*

*Mr. Chesney said in FY (Fiscal Year) 2020/21, staff will release a RFQ (Request for Qualifications) for a design professional to design and permit the new marina, an approximately one-year task. Design work was estimated to cost 10% of the \$15 million project's budgeted cost. In FY 2023/24, the City will release \$7.5 million for the new marina and an equal amount the following fiscal year. Cost savings and the reserve fund were sufficient to pay design costs before City funds are released. The reserve fund may need to be tapped further if construction costs exceed \$15 million.*

*Mr. Chesney said a second RFQ will be released for a Construction Manager at Risk to work with the design team. Value engineering will be necessary if the design exceeds the budget. Following permitting, a guaranteed maximum price will be established before construction of the 2-year project begins. Construction at the active site, beginning with phased demolition, will be difficult to coordinate; it will be necessary to relocate impacted boats, the kiosk and ice machines without hampering fleet businesses.*

## **5. Old Business Items**

*In response to a concern, Mr. Chesney said the City Council had questioned the Seminole Boat Ramp project's million dollar cost for new restrooms. A lift station was required for any onsite restrooms. Relocating the restrooms to Osceola Avenue would save \$80,000, reduce parking, require patrons to walk 500 feet for access and create gridlock at the boat ramp. Restrooms in flood zones were required to be elevated and ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) accessible via elevator. Restroom construction costs were budgeted; the phased boat ramp project had no cost overruns. The project would be resubmitted to City Council.*

## **6. Director's Report:** None.

## **7. Board Members to be Heard:** None.

**8. Adjourn**

*The meeting adjourned at 9:30 a.m.*

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Chair - Marine Advisory Board

Attest:

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Board Reporter