

City of Clearwater

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



Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, June 9, 2021

8:00 AM

Main Library - Council Chambers

Marine Advisory Board

Roll Call

Present 5 - Chair Edward O'Brien Jr., Vice Chair Michael Grohman, Board Member Wade Carlisle, Board Member Maranda Douglas, and Ex Officio Phil Henderson

Absent 3 - Board Member Kevin Laughlin, Board Member Michael Mack, and Board Member Christina Joseph

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 Approval of March 10, 2021 Marine Advisory Board Meeting Minutes.

Member Grohman moved to approve the minutes of the March 10, 2021 Marine Advisory Board meeting as submitted in written summation. The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously. Ex Officio Member Henderson did not vote.

3. Citizens to be Heard Regarding Items Not on the Agenda

Courtney Ross said he was a waterfront business owner for many years; parking was a serious problem at the Clearwater Harbor Marina because of the Imagine Clearwater lot closure. He said the last 2 years had been tough for boat owners especially with ongoing construction. He said construction should have been limited to one parking lot at a time. He expressed concern that the downtown marina's floating docks could detach during a 10-foot surge because the tall pilings had been cut down. He said numerous derelict vessels abandoned in Clearwater Harbor posed a danger; some were not anchored properly.

Marine & Aviation Department Director Ed Chesney said the downtown marina parking situation was not ideal. The Imagine Clearwater project had ceded control of the entire site to the contractor. The parking lots were closed early for underground utility work and to relocate a lift station. A temporary sidewalk was built and a handicapped drop off zone added. A shuttle service now offers rides to from the top of the hill and marina. The goal was to open parking as soon as possible, even with temporary pavement.

4. New Business Items

4.1 Request for Qualifications (RFQ) 24-21 Beach Marina Replacement Project Update

Mr. Chesney said today was the deadline for the City's RFQ (Request for Qualifications) for the Beach Marina replacement project's design work. A link to the applications was sent to members. Soon a committee will review the submissions, select a candidate, and present it to the City Council for approval.

Mr. Chesney said staff will provide the winning design team with all analysis compiled over the last decade including the feasibility study, submerged lands and depth surveys, seawall evaluation, footprint layouts to be considered, utility information, design criteria, etc. Early design work for water and sewer connections was done. Approximately 90% of design and permitting will be completed by next summer; the final 10% will be accomplished during construction. When the design is at 30%, staff will issue an RFP (Request for Proposals) for a Construction Manager at Risk. A guaranteed maximum price will be determined within the next year.

In response to questions, Mr. Chesney said the marina, constructed when vessels were narrower, had significant wasted space. The design team will present alternatives re the arrangement and number of slips. The commercial footprint will be maintained. The center of the marina provided opportunities for additional recreational slips. During the first phase of construction, utilities will be installed behind the seawall before seawall repairs are made. Construction work on utilities will impact the marina.

In response to a question, Mr. Chesney said most commercial operators wanted to have their slip on Coronado Drive for the exposure but most large commercial boats probably will remain in the current locations, smaller fishing boats will be assigned to slips where they best fit. Staff will schedule public meetings and design charettes for tenants and others impacted. Complete designs will be presented to the board and major stakeholders for input.

It was recommended that BeachWalk be extended into the marina via a boardwalk over the water to widen the sidewalk and provide space for vendor kiosks. It was stated a ticketing machine could not substitute for current practices; commercial operator representatives attract customers via dockside walkups. It was noted that large boats needed landside assistance for support space and to onload/offload materials.

Mr. Chesney said the marina would feature floating docks; a fixed boardwalk could be expensive. The County permitted open air ticket booths but not attached gift shops. The designers will be challenged to

identify ticket booth locations and supply truck parking.

4.2 PSTA / Forward Pinellas Waterborne Transportation Presentation

The PowerPoint presentation was given to the Clearwater City Council on May 17, 2021. A Countywide Ferry Transportation Service will have a big presence in Clearwater.

Mr. Chesney said the County's only viable ferry system is in Clearwater. Clearwater Ferry's routes could be expanded beyond Downtown Clearwater, Clearwater Beach, and the Dunedin Marina to John's Pass. Locating waterfront property for landings on the Intracoastal between Clearwater and Madeira Beach would be difficult. A PSTA ferry system would require a number of destinations and a reliable schedule. The new marina will reserve a handicapped accessible ferry landing designed and paid for by PSTA. If the waterborne transportation plan evolves, PSTA could apply for federal transportation funds. Ferries cost \$4 - \$5 million each but last many years. A ferry service would have to be self-supporting. The TDC (Tourist Development Council) may contribute tourism dollars toward the service.

Mr. Chesney said Clearwater Ferry could operate under the PSTA umbrella. The Jolley Trolley, an independent non-profit, expanded its routes to Tarpon Springs when it went under PSTA control.

Concern was expressed that Clearwater Ferry received government subsidies, ferry service could not operate during inclement weather, the business model for a commuter ferry between St. Petersburg and Tampa was unsuccessful, other options would cost less, and downtown Clearwater had little activity to attract beach visitors. It was thought that riding the Jolley Trolley to John's Pass would be quicker than by ferry due to the Intracoastal's numerous no wake zones. It was indicated money earned by the Jolley Trolley's charter and shuttle services paid for its equipment but ferries could not be used for private parties. It was felt that ferries would not be a viable local transportation system.

In response to questions, Mr. Chesney said if the plan is approved after many studies, multiple ferries would be built; a 10-20 year commitment would be necessary for landing sites. Ferries would not be identical. Low infrastructure along the Intracoastal would limit the ferries' heights. Service to Tarpon Springs may be possible.

5. Old Business Items

Marine & Aviation Operations Manager Michael MacDonald said a field study had compared fuel discounts. The marina based its retail price on actual purchase costs. Tour boat operators paid the CMA (Comparative Market Analysis) cost less discount. More fishing boats were fuel dock

customers.

It was suggested that by adopting multi-level rates, the marina could attract all marina fishing boats and with fixed fuel costs, boost profits by increasing sales.

Mr. Chesney said running the fuel dock was expensive; one mishap would have serious financial consequences. Operations must meet multiple regulations. Fuel profits were invested in the marina to cover operational costs. If fuel profits decreased, other fees would have to increase to keep the lights on. Customers such as the Pinellas County Sheriff, Clearwater Police Department, Clearwater Fire Department, CMA (Clearwater Marine Aquarium) all depended on the marina's fuel service.

In response to a question, Mr. Chesney said fuel delivery was usually at night when the marina parking lot was empty as the fuel tanks are located underground in the parking lot. Daytime fuel deliveries were nearly impossible due to all the foot and vehicle traffic in the lot. When the marina runs low on fuel during weekends, a premium is charged for fuel delivery outside the normal schedule. The daily price of fuel fluctuates. Mr. MacDonald does a good job maintaining price adjustments.

In response to a question, Mr. MacDonald said the older, temporarily out of service fuel pump used by the larger fishing boats was too expensive to repair. Fuel pumps by the Starlite dock were costly to maintain. Mr. Chesney said the marina's new design will determine the best location for fuel dispensing.

6. Director's Report

At the September 8 Marine Advisory Board meeting, Mr. Chesney will discuss the submissions and selection process for the Beach Marina replacement project's design work.

7. Board Members to be Heard: None.

8. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 a.m.

Chair - Marine Advisory Board

Attest:

Board Reporter