

City of Jacksonville

*117 W. Duval Street
Jacksonville, FL 32202*



Meeting Minutes

Thursday, April 11, 2024

1:00 PM

**Council Chamber
1st Floor, City Hall**

Jacksonville Waterways Commission

*CM Jimmy Peluso, Chair
CM Mike Gay, Vice Chair
CM Tyrone Clark-Murray
CM Ken Amaro, Alternate
Jon Michael Barker - Excused
Robert Birtalan
Lane Burnett - Excused
Representative Kiyon Michael - Excused
Mark Devereaux
Andrew Fraden
Marc Hardesty
Richard Hartley
Richard J. Redick
Jill Haskell - General Public Rep.
Jack Meeks, Ex-Officio - Absent
Adam Hoyles, Ex-Officio*

*Rebecca Bolton & Vanessa Galan, Legislative Assistants
Shannon MacGillis, Office of General Counsel
Dr. Gerard Pinto, Jacksonville University
Eamon Webb, Council Research
Jim Suber, Waterways Coordinator*

Meeting Convened: 1:00 PM Meeting Adjourned: 1:24 PM

1. Call To Order

2. Roll Call

Present 11 - Chair Jimmy Peluso, Vice Chair Mike Gay, Council Member Tyrona Clark-Murray, Commissioner Robert Birtalan, Commissioner Andrew Fraden, Commissioner Richard Hartley, Commissioner Jill Haskell, Commissioner Marc Hardesty, Commissioner Richard Redick, Commissioner Mark Devereaux, and Ex-Officio Adam Hoyles

Excused 3 - Commissioner Jon Michael Barker, Commissioner Lane Burnett, and Commissioner Rep. Kiyon Michael

Absent 1 - Ex-Officio Jack Meeks

3. Pledge of Allegiance

4. Approval of Minutes

5. St. Johns River Status Report on Water Quality & Manatees

Contact:

Dr. Gerard Pinto, JU

Dr. Gerry Pinto explained that salinity in the river had dropped to normal levels as a result of dry weather to this point in the year. He stated water temperature was up to roughly 70 degrees. The water level is a half inch above normal, and no new toxic algae blooms had been reported since the last meeting. Manatees are "back in town," with 27 manatees reported and no new manatee deaths (two total for the year) since the last meeting. He noted that there would be a press release on the Manatee Protection Plan, potentially on May 17th.

6. Public Comment

John Nooney spoke about the importance of public access to waterways. He said that he feels as though efforts to increase public access to waterways are beginning to be successful; he added that he attended a Northeast Florida Regional Council meeting and that there is money in their budget for waterways projects and that there is a FEMA repetitive-loss house on Pottsburg Creek that would be an ideal site for a point of public access.

7. New Business

8. Old Business

a. St. Johns River Shoaling Task Force Update

Contact:

CM Gay

Council Member Gay stated that there could potentially be a meeting held on April 25th to discuss the shoaling issue. He stated that he had discussed a proposal with the Office of the General Counsel and the Legislative Services Division and that he would want Gregory Grant, JSEB Administrator, to be present as well to facilitate the involvement of small businesses in the project. He stated that the Jacksonville University study would be cheaper than the study proposed by the Army Corps of Engineers but that there were still many questions and variables that needed to be addressed at the April 25th meeting. He stated that he had reached out to Duval County's Congressional representatives to hopefully get their support for the project.

Council Member Gay asked Jill Enz, Chief of Natural and Marine Resources, whether she had any updates on the markers that would demonstrate to vessels where it was unsafe to navigate; Ms. Enz stated that the Florida Department of Environmental Protection permit for the markers had been approved but that the administration was still waiting on permit approvals from Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission and the Coast Guard. Council Member Gay asked whether there was any way to speed up these permits, as the absence of these markers is a safety threat to navigators, and Ms. Enz stated that the administration would follow up on these permits.

Commissioner Hardesty stated that he was surprised at the Coast Guard's involvement, as they had previously said that the shoaling issue was outside of the navigational channel and not within their jurisdiction, and Captain Suber clarified that the Coast Guard was only involved insofar as these markers needed Coast Guard approval. Captain Suber added that the process had been slowed down by Coast Guard management's being out of the office and stated that he could follow up with the local office to receive a status on the permit. Chair Peluso noted that the markers are already made and ready to be installed once the permits are approved and encouraged Captain Suber to follow up with the Coast Guard's local office.

b. River Accord Task Force Update - Next Meeting, Friday, April 19, 2024, at 10 AM

Contact:

CM Peluso

Chair Peluso referred to the draft Memorandum of Agreement for a Second St. Johns River Accord, explaining that the goals included in the Second River Accord would fall under the following categories: 1) water quality, 2) water supply, 3) septic system phase out, 4) strengthening our tributaries, 5) river access and recreation, and 6) resilience and flood protection.

Commissioner Redick noted that there had been national efforts to strengthen the "Blue Economy" (including the states of Alaska and Maine including money in their budget for their "Blue Economies") and stated that economic considerations should be included in the River Accord as well. Chair Peluso stated that he would make note of this addition.

Chair Peluso stated that the next River Accord Task Force meeting would be on April 19th at 10:00 AM in the Lynwood Roberts Room.

c. Derelict Vessel Task Force Update - Next Meeting, Monday, May 13, 2024, at 10:00 AM

Contact:

CM Peluso & Commissioner Barker

Shannon MacGillis of the Office of the General Counsel explained that she had been working on a complete re-write of Section 388 of the Ordinance Code, with accurate details about this re-write included in the minutes from the April 3rd Derelict Vessel Task Force meeting. She stated that the Office of the General Counsel was ensuring that the City has provided proper Constitutional notice and explanations of the changes before moving forward with these changes.

Chair Peluso thanked Ms. MacGillis for her work and noted that this work is proactive and not reactive, as local government often is.

9. Adjournment

Pursuant to the American with Disabilities Act, accommodations for persons with disabilities are available upon request. Please allow 1-2 business days notification to process; last minute requests will be accepted; but may not be possible to fulfill. Please contact Disabled Services Division at: V 904-255-5466, TTY-904-255-5476, or email your request to KaraT@coj.net.

Minutes:

Eamon Webb

EWebb@coj.net

(904) 255-5140

Posted: 4/15/2024, 12:00 PM