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**JACKSONVILLE
WATERWAYS
COMMISSION**

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September 11, 2003

8:30 a.m.

The monthly meeting of the Jacksonville Waterways Commission was called to order at 8:30 a.m., Thursday, September 11, 2003 in the Council Chamber, by the Chair, Council Member Lynette Self.

Neil Armingeon, the City's River Keeper, made a presentation.

Commented on the Timuquana Road water violations issue raised by Mr. Rod Morris at the previous Waterways Commission meeting. (Mr. Morris contends that silt coming from the FDOT construction project is clogging and destroying Fishing Creek). The River Keeper is proceeding with legal actions against the Florida Department of Transportation, as noted at the

August 7, 2003 Waterways Commission meeting. The River Keeper indicated his expectation of filing a required 60-day notice of intent. The River Keeper said that he had sent a letter to the Mayor regarding water quality violation issues raised by industrial and commercial run-offs into our waterways. The Waterways Commission Chair, Council Member Self, noted that a new Commission sub-committee had been formed to study this issue and that Susie Wiles of the Mayor's Staff would be working with the Committee.

John Pappas (Public Works) and Walt Holgref (Engineering) provided the Commission with an update on the North and South Bank River Walks. The North Bank River Walk, from Pearl Street to the Fuller Warren Bridge, thence to Riverside Park. Work is underway but not all of the contracts have been awarded. The City has not received all of the necessary easement rights, yet. There are delays in acquiring easement rights from Blue Cross/Blue Shield. Use of CSX's river bank for docking will be a

reality once a security fence separating the bank and river walk from CSX headquarters property is built. Other reasons for delays include the need to identify a JEA sewage pipe under the Fuller Warren Bridge that runs from Ortega to the Buckman Treatment Plant (erupting the pipe would be disastrous).

On the Southbank, though the FDOT have approved the plans, conceptual plans for landscaping and parking facilities near the Fuller Warren Bridge (Palm Avenue) have encountered concerns from Baptist Hospital (does not want the public on their property).

Tony Orsini of the Jacksonville Port Authority provided the Commission with an update on the impending arrival of the cruise ships that will be using Jacksonville as a port. Celebrity Cruise Line will be here in 46 days to pick up its first passengers, at the Dames Point facility. On October 27th, the Zenith will set sail for a Caribbean cruise.

John Pappas (Public Works) and Jim Manning (Regulatory and Environmental Services Department) provided the Commission with an update on the Fishing Creek water violations concern. They reported on recent talks with the FDOT. The Timuquana construction project was being put on hold. RESD's role and procedures for processing complaints were explained. The Public Works Department is conducting a survey of siltation in County creeks. RESD will review the survey's results.

The Waterways Commission recommended for approval Ordinance 2003-1023 (appropriating \$155,925 for boat ramp improvements), as amended. The amendment adds an additional \$11,250 needed to complete the design and permit work for the Mandarin Park boat ramp. The Commission recommended for approval Ordinance 2003-1110 concerning a new contract with Jacksonville University for the continued service of Dr. Quinton White.

Bob Baughman, Interim Director of Parks, Recreation & Entertainment provided the Commission with an update on the Mandarin Park Boat Ramp. This project originally was a canoe launch and is now a boat ramp. The City is closing now on the time required to acquire a permit.

Dr. White provided his monthly update on manatees, reporting on the number of manatees sited from aerial surveys. There was a record of manatees reported seen this year as a result of a return of grass beds. There were fewer incidents reported in the Intra Coastal Waterway. There has been an improved compliance with manatee zone requirements.

New Subcommittee assignments were announced (see attached).

Commissioner John Lowe suggested that changes in the Manatee Protection Plan be weighed. A resolution was offered and approved that stipulates that the Duval County Manatee Protection Plan be *seasonal*. From March to December. The Commission voted to recommend this legislation to the City Council.

John J. Jackson
Council Research Division