



Jacksonville Waterways Commission Lynette Self, Chair

The monthly meeting of the Jacksonville Waterways Commission was called to order on Thursday, May 11, 2006, 9:03 a.m., in the City Council Chambers by the Vice Chair, Council Member Sharon Copeland.

The minutes for the April 6, 2006 Commission meeting and subsequent special Commission meeting on April 18, 2006 were approved.

Mr. Mike Kogan made a presentation on the Kayak Fishing Tournament. Now in its third year, the Kayak Fishing Tournament is a charity event that caters to local kayak fishermen in Jacksonville. There are 90 sponsors and the proceeds from the tournament go to Daniel and the St. Johns Riverkeeper. Jacksonville's is the largest kayak fishing tournament in the country.

The Commission next turned its attention to the matter of abandoned boats. The St. Johns Riverkeeper, Neil Armingeon, brought a number of speakers along to address the issue of abandoned boats in the Trout River. The speakers raised a number of concerns: boaters having no lights; boats not tethered are slamming into other boats; older, abandoned boats sinking and emitting gasoline into the river. The speakers felt that the Northside is not getting any help in trying to alleviate the situation. JSO Sgt. Suber said that JSO has no authority in the matter. He said that the Florida Wildlife Conservation Commission has a program to remove abandoned vessels but has no money in its current budget to act. It was observed that the Trout River situation is a serious issue because the abandoned vessels have created hazardous conditions. A major issue is where to take the vessels if they are removed. Greg Radlinski, Assistant General Counsel, Office of General Counsel, said that the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission's law enforcement division is the body that determines whether or not a vessel is abandoned. The state can remove abandoned boats. The fund can reimburse the City for expenses incurred in removing an abandoned vessel. The state's derelict vessels recovery fund has been lacking funds for years. Another speaker, a marina owner, said that many

of the problems stem from the hurricanes. The U.S. Coast Guard and Florida Fish & Wildlife come by on a nearly monthly basis, take a look around and then leave, repeatedly asking the same questions and compiling the same information and doing nothing. A third speaker called for "preventive care." The speaker cited the fact that most of the boats in question in the Trout River lack proper lights and have no sanitary facilities. A number of homeless people are living on the abandoned boats. There are cases where abandoned boats hit the docks of private homes on the river. Commissioner Bryan observed that homeowners couldn't get insurance for docks that are hit by abandoned boats; the repairs must come out of the homeowners' pockets. The last speaker, who lives on the Trout River, spoke of the debris, solvents and fuel from abandoned vessels that ended up on riverfront homeowners' property.

Dr. Quinton White made a presentation on Jacksonville University's Waterfront Development plans. Dr. White referred to the materials in a JU packet that was distributed. The materials described JU's building plans for development on the university's waterfront property that included residence halls, offices, and complexes focusing on the St. Johns River. Two components of the complex focusing on the river are the Jacksonville University Marine Center and the St. Johns River Aquatic and Coastal Environmental Field Studies Center.

On the Manatee Update, Dr. White reported on two manatee fatalities for the month of April, one in White Shell Bay and the other at the Arlington River Boat Ramp. Dr. White indicated that JU's trackers are seeing an increase in the numbers of manatees. Spring and fall are when peak numbers of manatees are seen either coming to or leaving the area. Dr. White reported on his recent look at boat traffic patterns at Goodby's Creek. He reported an astonishing amount of boat traffic, attributing that traffic to Hooters and the Florida Tackle & Gun Club. Most of the traffic was west of the bridge (San Jose Boulevard). Margo Moehring of the Planning & Development Department discussed proposed changes in areas of the Comprehensive Plan that relate to the Manatee Protection Plan.

Dan Cronrath, Recreation Planner with the Parks, Recreation, Entertainment & Conservation Department provided the Commission with the FIND update. Mr. Cronrath reported that the Public Works Department was meeting with the contractor regarding concerns and issues raised about the boat ramp at Goodby's Creek. Commissioner Bailey

expressed his concern about opening the ramp before the proposed dredging at Goodby's. Commissioner Bailey was concerned that proceeding to open the boat ramp before completion of the proposed dredging project could jeopardize our permit should the boat ramp opening result in manatee fatalities. Commissioner Bryan commented that the problems with work done at Stinson Park underscore the need for more supervision and oversight of contractors' work.

On Pending Legislation, the Commission recommended **deferral** of **Ord 2005-1132**, Amend Ord Code, Changing Manatee Protection Motorboat Speed Zones from Year-Round to Seasonal. The Commission recommended **approval** of **Ord 2006-399**, Approp \$573,050 from Rental of City Facilities Acct to fund (1) FY 04/05 Budget Shortfall (\$88,516) (2)Constn of Drydock for Vessel Jean Ribault (\$100,000) (3)Further Constrn of Drydock for Vessel Blackbeard(\$15,000) (4) Replacement of Rescue Vessel on Vessel Blackbeard (\$60,000) (5) FY 05/06 Budget Shortfall due to escalating fuel & oil costs (\$200,000), (6) carry forward acct for fuel contingency (\$36,484) & (7) increase in reserves (\$73,050). **Recommendation for approval with recommendation for an amendment to delete reference to "construction" of drydock and replace with "put in drydock."** The Commission recommended **approval** of **Reso 2006-557**, Auth Application to FIND for 2006 Waterways Assistance Progs Grants for Waterways-Related Projs, **as an emergency, as amended**. The amendment would add a Whereas clause that includes the Jacksonville Waterways Commission .

In New Business, Margo Moehring, Planning & Development Department, discussed pending legislation **Ord 2006-452**, an ordinance amendment amending Chapter 656, Part 3, Subpart L (Mayport Village Zoning Overlay and District Regulations). Questions were raised and discussion focused on the impact of the legislation on Naval Station Mayport. The overlay provides for a ceiling of 50 feet in the construction of new buildings. It was reported that the base has no problem with this change.

In New Business, Mr. John Nooney implored the Commission to exhaust all efforts in preventing the dismantling of the remnants of the old Fuller Warren Bridge.

The next scheduled meeting of the Jacksonville Waterways Commission is June 1, 2006.

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