

City Commission Workshop
October 11, 2022
4:30 p.m.

ELECTED OFFICIALS PRESENT:

Alan Johnson, Mayor
Chris Graus, Vice Mayor, Commissioner, District 1
Ward Friszolowski, Commissioner, District 3
Mark Grill, Commissioner, District 2
Melinda Pletcher, Commissioner, District 4

STAFF PRESENT:

Alex Rey, City Manager
Andrew Dickman, City Attorney
Amber LaRowe, City Clerk
Jennifer McMahon, Chief Operating Officer

Mayor Johnson called the workshop to order at 4:34 p.m. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

1. DISCUSSION AND PRESENTATION

a. Waterways Ordinance

Alex Rey, City Manager, introduced the topic, the need for revisions to the Code, and the plans for public feedback.

Jennifer McMahon, Chief Operating Officer, made a presentation to the Commission. This presentation is made a part of the record.

The presentation discussed:

- Items being kept in the Code
 - Section 94-1: Locations of swimming, skin diving, and wading prohibitions
 - Section 94-2: Diving/jumping from bridges prohibited
 - Section 94-3: Locations of prohibited fishing
 - Section 94-32: Prohibition of watercraft storage
 - Staff to check and see if this is also located in the beaches ordinance
 - Section 94-33: Public property restrictions
 - NEW: Egan Park & Don CeSar Ramps close 10:00 PM to 5:00 AM (closing 1-hour earlier)
 - Staff considering the addition of the 11th Avenue fishing pier to the list of public property with restrictions in this Section

Mrs. McMahon questioned the Commission on how the City should regulate private businesses using public property, like the boat ramps, for their personal business gain. A discussion was had regarding businesses registering with the City if they want to use the boat ramps for their business.

- Section 94-34: Careless operation of watercraft

Commissioner Grill asked for clarification on the City's Code definition of watercraft versus what the Fish and Wildlife Commission (FWC) and/or Coast Guard defines as a watercraft/vessel. Rita Bishop, Special Assistant to the City Manager, stated that the Coast Guard determined that stand-up paddleboards are vessels when they

are operating beyond the narrow confines of a surfing, swimming, or bathing area. Commissioner Grill questioned if the City should redefine to match. Staff will review definitions for watercraft and bring them back to the Commission.

- Section 94, Article IV: Water taxis
- Items being replaced
 - Section 94-31: Human habitation; sanitation
 - Local governments are prohibited from regulating the anchoring of vessels with certain exceptions
 - State regulations on anchoring & mooring were highlighted
 - Section 94-36: Zones of restricted operation
 - Designated zones of restricted watercraft operation and depiction on the maps
 - Currently two zones; staff proposes one zone
 - No watercrafts allowed except for designated channels for commercial watercraft - allowed with a permit and will be marked appropriately
 - Speeds of watercrafts
 - Current regulations vs. proposed

Discussion ensued regarding the proposed maps with a request made to make a small change between Brightwater and Boca Ciega Isle.

Commissioner Pletcher requested consideration for the seagrass areas.

Staff will continue to work on this Section.

- Items being deleted
 - Article III – Beaches
 - Will be own Chapter in City Code
- New items and items being moved from other chapters
 - Section 54-4: Unlawful discharge of spear guns
 - Staff to find out if there is a “lawful” discharge of spear guns
 - Egan Park and don CeSar Ramps close one hour earlier; currently 11:00 p.m. proposed closing at 10:00 p.m.
 - Add language regarding securing, tying, mooring, anchoring, and discharging passengers at the 11th Avenue fishing pier (currently only has language for the 7th Avenue fishing pier)
- Miscellaneous cleanup
 - “Police Department” will be changed to “Pinellas County Sheriff’s Office”
 - If the Code section states that it requires City Manager approval, it will now say “City Manager or his/her designee”
 - Remove specific department names

Commission continued to discuss speed and safety zones. A piling designation for safety zones was discussed with Commissioner Pletcher opposed to that idea. Speed signage was discussed as another option as long as it is legible.

Mayor Johnson adjourned the meeting at 5:44 p.m.

MINUTES APPROVED: OCTOBER 25, 2022



AMBER LAROWE
CITY CLERK



ALAN JOHNSON
MAYOR