

BEACH STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE MINUTES

August 17, 2022 - 9:00 A.M.

PRESENT: Dan Rothenberger, Chair
Lenny Stamos, Vice Chair
Michael Welch, Member

EXCUSED: Linda Borgia, Member
Janet Harris, Member

STAFF PRESENT: Mandy Edmunds, Parks Supervisor
Jennifer McMahon, Chief Operating Officer
Ginny Bodkin, Deputy City Clerk

Chair Rothenberger called the meeting to order at 9:10 AM.

1. Changes to the Agenda There were none.
2. Audience Comments

Theresa Schefstad spoke against fishing prohibitions in the beach ordinance.

Betty Rzewnicki commented on tailoring ordinances to our own community, not based on data from others. Enforce what is already in City Codes and be realistic with what the City can handle.

Cindy Perry commented that the Florida Wildlife Commission (FWC) has guidelines published on their website regarding how to care for beach wildlife – including nesting beach birds. It contains scientific data and references.

3. Action Items
 - a. Approval of Minutes 5/18/2022

Member Stamos moved, and Member Welch seconded the approval of the May 18, 2022 minutes as presented; the motion passed unanimously.

4. Items for Discussion

a. Beach Ordinance – Chief Operating Officer Jennifer McMahon reviewed with the Committee some of the updates to the draft ordinance since the two City Commission Workshops. A presentation that included the updates is part of the meeting record.

- Cabanas shall be placed only in designated areas when in use or reserved and brought back each night – and to be enforced. Density limitations shall be 15'x15'.
- The City Commission was in favor of including a list of protected seabirds.
- Adding language to use protective equipment while fueling (i.e. jet skis) on the beach.
- Add language prohibiting Styrofoam on the beach.
- State laws address fishing on the beach; proposed additional language that it would be unlawful to fish in the Gulf after having been warned by a law enforcement official that they are endangering the health and safety of the bathers. Chumming on the beach would be prohibited. Rules and regulations to be followed per permit.

- Residents only could apply for a bike on the beach permit and follow whatever rules and regulations are determined.
- The Commission was in favor of a smoking ban on the beach, adopting the recently passed State Bill, and using enforcement to curtail as much as possible. Other communities and the County adopting the same will help education and promote.
- The micromobility ordinance was passed a few months ago.
- Business on the beach such as yoga classes and cabanas will be considered rentals with fees related and fall under the Recreation Department. Cabanas would require Business Tax Receipts and permits; more is being developed for clarity and specifics.
- Due to supply and demand adding language regarding electric vehicles on the beach and deadlines would be premature. There is a meeting later today with the Sheriff's Office regarding vehicles on the beach; some of the safety equipment they carry must be accessible, so that is under development.

City/Staff responsibilities

- A Beach Manager position has been created (on the beach daily)
- Definition will be added to clarify the responsibilities of Code Enforcement (specific to property – i.e. seabirds, vehicles, cabanas, fueling, etc.) vs. Sheriff's Office, which would handle Styrofoam, fishing, biking, events and the like.

Ms. McMahon asked for Committee questions and discussion. Member Stamos asked for clarification on City vs. Sheriff, opined that litter is already addressed in Codes (Styrofoam no different), and asked for clarification on resident bike passes. He expressed concerns with cabanas and dune encroachment. Member Welch suggested signage to 'Leave Only Footprints on the Beach' (remove everything you bring). He agreed with resident only bicycles and providing literature on regulations. Chair Rothenberger thanked the members of the public who shared their comments and referenced keeping a balance.

The Committee allowed extra public comment. Theresa Schefstad discriminating against fishermen; there are more dangerous activities than fishing.

Cindy Perry spoke regarding protection of black skimmers. She has spoken to residents herself and has seen bicycles heading directly toward the birds. She spoke against bikes on the beach and urged the City to please follow the FWC guidelines.

5. Adjournment – Next meeting November 16, 2022

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:00 AM.

These minutes were approved at the November 16, 2022, Beach Stewardship Committee meeting.