January 11, 2011
Milton, Florida

The Marine Advisory Committee met on the above date with the following members present: Chairman Jeff Marker and members Rick Harris and Wayne Hawthorne. Also present were the County Administrator, Hunter Walker; Public Works Director, Avis Whitfield; County Engineer, Roger Blaylock and Marine Extension Agent, Chris Verlinde. Chairman Marker called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

The minutes of the November 2, 2010 meeting were approved.

BOATS DOCKED AT PUBLIC PIERS

Mr. Walker advised the Committee that the Board of County Commissioners will vote on January 13th to approve advertising a public hearing on an ordinance dealing with vehicles or property abandoned on county property.

BRIDGE RUBBLE REEF DEPLOYMENT

Mr. Marker advised the Committee that the Gulf Breeze bridge rubble is being deployed in the near shore reef site about 4.5 miles east of the pass. Some of the lighter weight material will be placed on top of the barge. The heavier material will not be placed on top of the barge because they do not want to crush the barge or do damage to the marine life. He also noted that our Interlocal Agreement is official between Santa Rosa and Escambia County. Mr. Walker advised that Escambia County is the only one with a permit to deploy the material and for the past fifteen years we have placed material in their permitted site and we have never had an Interlocal Agreement but it sets forth certain things such as when a marine resource officer checks their material they will also check our material and it gives them a provision to recoup their costs and it is assumed that costs would be reimbursable through the Boat Registration Fees.

Mr. Marker said that Escambia County applied for a grant last spring and was approved by FWC but no money was available at that time to fund the grant. However, Escambia County recently received the money and he inquired if Santa Rosa County had also received money for its application which had also been approved but not funded. Ms. Verlinde said she was not aware of the money being provided to fund the grants but will check into the matter. Mr. Marker said that in the event this money is now available the Committee should move to authorize Ms. Verlinde to move forward with it if an RFP is needed so there will be no need to wait until the next meeting for approval. There being no objection Mr. Marker approved the action.

Mr. Marker provided a graphic showing the Casino Beach Reef Site planned for Escambia County (see attached) and suggested that the Committee show their support for deployment of material to this site. Rick Harris made a motion to support seconded by Wayne Hawthorne and it was unanimously approved. Mr. Walker said that he will send an email to Robert Turpin.

PROJECTS / ISSUES UPDATES

Mr. Whitfield updated the Committee regarding the Sandy Landing Boat ramp. He provided back up material (see attached) and advised the Committee that the County will purchase 21 acres at a price of $6,550 per acre and it has been approved by the Board of County Commissioners. The County Attorney is working on the agreement with the property owner. He also included a ballpark figure of what the cost will be including parking and the ramp in the amount of $285,950. He noted it is a very rough figure but will become more accurate as the site plan is developed. This is just an idea of the funds that will come out of the Boater Registration Fees. Mr. Marker asked if all the funds would be from the Boater Registration Fees. Mr. Whitfield replied that typically this is where the funds would come from.

Mr. Whitfield also noted that it will cost around $200,000 to build a parking lot on property located adjacent to the Live Oak Boat ramp and noted that the County Commission has not approved the purchase of property at that location (see attached).

Mr. Marker noted that in his opinion it would not be advisable to use all the funding in the Boater Improvement Fund. Mr. Whitfield commented that this process will not happen overnight and the fund would have an opportunity to grow before all the money is expended. Mr. Harris noted that we collect about $70,000 to $80,000 per year and this is a perfect opportunity to do what the constituents want and Live Oak is the better location with its deep water launching site. Mr. Hawthorne agreed with Mr. Harris that there is no need to sit on the money and both projects should go forward. Mr. Marker noted that there is no question that this Committee supports both projects but would prefer that the Commissioners partially fund both projects with Recreation funds.

Mr. Walker said that Ms. Verlinde reminded him that grants may be available for the improvements on the properties. Mr. Whitfield noted that the community around the Sandy Landing boat ramp is pushing hard for this project to get started and Mr. Blaylock noted that the only hold up is access to the equipment to cut survey lines which is in use at this time but will be available to be mobilized in February.

Mr. Marker said that the Committee supports the project but also notes that his reservation is on how to pay for them. He noted that he supports both projects but not the funding method. He would recommend again using a 50/50 match from Recreation Funds and Boater Improvement Funds. He also approves adding another ramp to the Live Oak site while improvements are being made at that site.

Mr. Harris said he is in favor of going forward with both projects even if all the money has to come from the Boater Registration Funds.

Mr. Whitfield noted that there is an item on the Commissioners' next agenda for approval to repair a seawall at the Bal Alex park but it is a small project which should not cost more than $7,000 or $8,000. Marquis Basin has not been completed but the funding has been approved. The only other item ongoing at this time is that Engineering is trying to obtain approval for us to place bedding stone at the end of the Oriole Beach ramp where there is a bit of a drop off.

Mr. Marker asked what would happen with these type projects if we use all of the funds in the Boater Improvement Fund. Mr. Walker explained that those types of expenditures are typically relatively small and labor is done by staff. Recreation funds can be used if necessary for low costs repairs.

Mr. Walker reminded the committee that we have not heard from the Live Oak community regarding the waterfront lot and this issue has not been finalized. Mr. Blaylock noted that the amount of each parking space is estimated to cost about $15,000. Mr. Marker asked if the DEP requirements are driving the costs and limiting the number of parking spaces. Mr. Blaylock said there are several factors such as the holding pond, the drop off, the requirement for buffers and set backs.

OTHER BUSINESS

No new business.

NEXT MEETING DATE

The next meeting is scheduled for February 1, 2011 at 5:00 p.m. ADJOURNMENT There being no further business to come before the Committee at this time, the meeting adjourned at 5:40 p.m.