

LYNETTE SELF, CHAIR
OFFICE (904) 630-1392
FAX (904) 630-2906
E-MAIL: LSelf@coj.net



117 W. Duval Street, Suite 425
4TH Floor, City Hall
Jacksonville, FL 32202

**JACKSONVILLE
WATERWAYS
COMMISSION**

JACKSONVILLE WATERWAYS COMMISSION
January 8, 2004
9:00 a.m.

The monthly meeting of the Jacksonville Waterways Commission was called to order at 9:00 a.m., Thursday, January 8, 2004 in the City Council Chamber, by the Chair, Council Member Lynette Self.

The minutes of the December 4, 2003 meeting of the Commission were approved and the Chair requested that the minutes be posted on the City's website.

Commissioner Gary Anderson reported on a Greenfield Creek (Wonderwood area) meeting that he attended. Council Member Holland had convened the meeting to address issues raised regarding sediment seeping into the creek caused by construction work underway at the Wonderwood Connector. There appeared to be evidence suggesting that the contractor was not doing a particularly good job. The Jacksonville Transportation Authority will be looking into the matter to determine whether or not the contractor has been in compliance with regulations. C/M Holland will schedule another meeting to assess JTA's findings.

The Commission discussed three proposed ordinances: (1) a proposed ordinance establishing a boating safety zone throughout the Cedar River (2) a proposed ordinance establishing a manatee protection zone throughout the Cedar River and (3) a proposed ordinance to change the manatee protection motorboat speed zones from year-round to seasonal. The Commission voted to recommend deferral of all three proposed ordinances. Commissioner Jim Tullis said that we did not need any further restrictions to boaters' access and use of the river. Commissioner Jim Bailey cautioned that we needed to be pro-active to stave off the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Commission coming in and mandating *greater* restrictions. Dr. Quinton White favors the ordinance creating a boating zone because it keeps regulation *local*. With only one sign in the Cedar River,

Waterways Coordinator Steve Nichols wondered how JSO is able to enforce regulations. Sgt Jim Suber said that with adequate signage, the boating zone regulations could be enforced. The Commission voted unanimously on a motion to defer action on the proposed ordinances until JSO and Dr. White could study the area for the proposed zone, assess the signage needs and costs and to determine where specifically the zone would be.

Parks, Recreation & Entertainment Director Bob Baughman reported on FIND grant proposals. He will come back when specific legislation is drafted and proposed. The FIND subcommittee will meet again and the Commission can weigh the subcommittee's recommendations at the next Waterways Commission meeting.

The Commission next heard observations and discussion on the Ortega River Boat Yard rezoning issue. A representative for each side of the issue had been invited to make a presentation. Erik Olsen represented the marine industry and business community. Saw the area losing slips and boating opportunity facilities; saw a negative economic impact and a loss of services to boaters if the rezoning was approved. Urged the Commission to get involved with the issue. T.R. Hainline represented the applicant for the rezoning. Said that the issue was not rezoning per se but, rather, private market forces at work. The majority number of the slips would remain open to the public.

Steve Nichols discussed possible changes in larger vessel docking user fees and rates incorporated in Council Resolution 92-1780-255. The proposed changes in the docking fees were made at a time when the City envisioned a cruise ship facility and industry in downtown Jacksonville (the former Daniels Bldg as a terminal). While the likelihood of cruise ship facilities downtown is dim, the rebuilding of downtown and the extensive renovation of the Northbank Riverfront area makes the City docks very attractive for larger vessels (100 feet or more in length). A subcommittee was appointed to assess docking fees. (Commissioner Ed Grey, Chair, Commissioners Bronson Lamb and Jim Tullis).

Steve Nichols gave the Commission an update on the Marine Security Act of 2002. Discussed homeland security concerns and issues.

Sgt. Jim Suber (JSO) explained his department's interest in boatlifts for dry dock storage at Metro Park. Presently, JSO uses Lake Shore Dry Storage. Lake Shore is not always open. In an emergency, it would take three hours to get all of the boats at Lake Shore into action. It has been determined that the best proposed storage site is Metro Park to store boats that are not in the water. Other proposed sites had been considered such as Julington Creek and Blue Cypress Park. The Commission voted in the affirmative on a motion to seek Boater Improvement Fund funds for a downtown JSO boater lift project. (Up to but not to exceed \$50,000 for the design phase. On another vote, the Commission approved a motion to send a resolution to the Governor and Cabinet requiring that when considering permits to build marinas in the County, developers be required to offer to provide a mooring facility for a police boat.

Dr. White gave the Commission his monthly update on manatees. Cited recent press reports on a record number of manatee deaths (though there has been a drop in watercraft related deaths). As the population of the manatees increase, there is likely to be more manatee deaths.

Cynthia Perez of the Army Corps of Engineers gave the Commission an update on joint Eco-System Restoration projects. Apprised the Commission on the status/update on project management plans for Big Fishweir Creek and Hogans Creek. Reports are due in

December, 2004.

The Commission voted to approve/accept Jacksonville University's annual manatee report, provided to the Commission at its previous monthly meeting and to send the report off to Tallahassee.

Todd Sailors briefed the Commission on the zoo cruise service that he has started. A tour boat (currently being constructed in New Orleans) will berth on the Trout River and provide tours on the Trout and St. Johns Rivers. This is a 71 passenger boat, 50 feet long with a 10-25 knot capability. The idea is to pick tourists/visitors up downtown and transport them to the zoo. Mr. Sailors hopes that the boat service will be ready to begin and coincide with the Range of the Jaguars opening at the zoo.

The Commission's next scheduled meeting is Thursday, February 5, 2004.

John J. Jackson
Council Research Division