



Jacksonville Waterways Commission

Jim Love, Chair

JACKSONVILLE WATERWAYS COMMISSION ARTIFICIAL REEF SUBCOMMITTEE
Wednesday, October 3, 2012
City Council Conference Room A
9:30 a.m.

In attendance: Commissioners Scott Shine (Chairman); Council Member Lori Boyer; Waterways Coordinator Captain Jim Suber; Assistant General Counsel Kristina Nelson; Kelley Boree, Director, Parks & Recreation Department; Elizabeth Palmer, Parks & Recreation; Jody McDaniel, Planning Department; Vince Seibold, Betsy Deuerling, Environmental Quality Division; Dr. Quinton White, Jacksonville University; Joe Kistel, Executive Director, Think It Sink It Reef It (TISIRI); Bev Lawrence, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; Ed Kalakaukis, Mike Murphy, Chuck Darner, Jacksonville Offshore Fishing Club; John Nooney, Lisandro Rosales, Recreational Fishing Alliance; Gary P. Jones; Max Marbut, *Financial News & Daily Record*; James Nealis, Executive Council Assistant (Boyer); Jessica Stephens, Legislative Assistant; John J. Jackson, Council Research Division.

The Chair asked Jody McDaniel, Planning & Development Department, to apprise the Subcommittee on the project to deploy artificial reefs in the St. Johns River at sites in San Marco. Ms. McDaniel reported that the permitting process is underway. Correspondence from the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers raised concerns pertaining to the deployment and monitoring of the reefs, the potential impact on any endangered species in the river, to cite two. Ms. Daniels is addressing those issues in the Request for Information forms that she expects to be completed soon. She has been working with Dr. Quinton White Jacksonville University and other stakeholders to complete the permitting process.

The Subcommittee next turned its attention to the issues regarding fishing in San Marco on a small stretch of River Road. The issues were brought to the attention of the Subcommittee (and Waterways Commission itself) by Council Member Lori Boyer. She described the River Road Park as having no amenities, no sanitary facilities and too few garbage containers. The park attracts a large number of anglers who fish from the bulkhead. The people that come to fish leave garbage and debris on the grounds when they leave, they take the few parking spaces that are available to area residents, often relieve themselves on the private property of residents whose homes abut the park and, on occasion, have been belligerent. Council Member Boyer indicated that it was not her intention to propose that fishing be barred from the park because she is supportive of efforts to encourage public access to our waterways; a problem exists, however, and she says that she does not know how to go about resolving the issues. The Subcommittee and

attendees discussed the matter at length. One suggestion was to have the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission officers at Epping Forest visit the park from time to time to ascertain whether or not the anglers have fishing licenses. Another suggestion was to have the Recreational Fishing Alliance and others visit the site, distribute pamphlets and reach out to the numerous individuals fishing at the park. The idea of building a fishing pier at the park was raised. As to why the influx of the large numbers of people who come to the park to fish, it was suggested that economy of late has encouraged people to fish to put food on their tables. The sheer popularity of the park as a good site for fishing has been a factor. Though the park rules stipulate park hours as dusk to dawn, there are people there in the evening hours, as well, shrimping. Captain Suber indicated that the kinds of problems that are associated with River Road Park are problems that are to be found at all public access sites where people can fish. The problems escalate during shrimping season. The Chairman, Commissioner Shine, said that he would get in touch with the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission to see if they can lend a hand with enforcement of rules at the site. Council Member Boyer reiterated her hope that the meeting would not end with anyone thinking that we are against "5-gallon" fishermen or fishing.

The next item on the Subcommittee agenda was the next steps to facilitate the inshore reef deployment at the two San Marco sites. Jody McDaniel indicated that surplus concrete and reef balls were the materials that would be deployed. Lisandro Rosales raised the prospects of approaching the Florida Department of Transportation to see if FDOT would be willing to donate the rubble from the department's Overland Bridge Project, on I-95, south of the Fuller Warren Bridge, a 2+ mile stretch. The Chair reminded the Subcommittee that at a Waterways Commission meeting, Kathy Barco, then Chair of the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission (and still a member), indicated that she felt that the construction industry would be willing to donate the kind of clean concrete that the artificial reef projects require; Council Member Boyer will contact Commissioner Barco on the matter.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:31 a.m.

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Posted: 1:00 PM