

**OFFICE OF THE CITY COUNCIL**

**RESEARCH DIVISION**

117 WEST DUVAL STREET, SUITE 425

4TH FLOOR, CITY HALL

JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA 32202

904-255-5200

**JACKSONVILLE WATERWAYS COMMISSION**

**DERELICT VESSELS & FLOATING STRUCTURES COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

**Virtual Meeting**

**September 3, 2020**

**10:30 a.m.**

**In attendance:** Commissioner Lindsey Brock, Commissioner Mark Devereaux, Commissioner, Commissioner Hardesty, Commissioner Brockelman, Adam Hoyles

Brian Burket – Parks Department; Capt. Jim Suber – Waterways Coordinator

**Also**: Susan Grandin – Office of General Counsel; Jessica Smith – Legislative Services Division

**Meeting Convened**: 10:32 a.m.

Minutes were approved by unanimous consent from the last meeting.

Discussion of Local Legislation to Regulate Floating Structures and Enforcement of Derelict Vessels:

The discussion started with a focus on floating structures. Susan Grandin went over the drafted ordinance and the changes that have been made since the last meeting. Ms. Grandin went over Chapter 34, *Ordinance Code*, (Neighborhoods Department) because the regulations will go through the Neighborhoods Department. She explained that the Environmental Quality Division has a boat and it can be used for floating structure enforcement and giving citations. The Jacksonville Sheriff’s Office can be used as backup and can also report the floating structures. This will make sure that the protocol is followed when going on someone’s property.

Commissioner Brock talked about citizen reporting and what the State does currently. He recommended having a space where citizens can call a number to report floating structures. Brian Moser said it would take some time, but most waterways issues already go through 630-CITY number, and maybe it could be tied in better through ITD. Adam Hoyles says that on the FWC website it says that there are no derelict vessels in Jacksonville. Mr. Hoyles suggested that the reporting could be done on the MyJax app. Ms. Grandin said that FWC has told her the website needs to be updated. Officer Goody said that the website only shows active cases through FWC or JSO. Brian Burket said you need to query the FWC website for the derelict vessels to appear.

Commissioner Brock made a motion to recommend the legislation with the technical amendment.

Ms. Grandin said that the derelict vessels regulations use the protocol from FWC, then derelict vessels are enforced through uniform boating regulations. Ms. Grandin said this would be a separate piece of legislation which would make it uniform funding for derelict vessels from the State. There would be a certain amount of money appropriated to the Neighborhoods Department for derelict vessels and by following the FWC it could be reimbursed by the State.

Commissioner Brock asked if there is anything that could speed up the grant process. Brian Burket said the legislation on the City’s side is where the slow down occurs, maybe if the Mayor was in charge of the appropriation it would speed up the process.

Ms. Grandin asked how much is a good ask for the appropriation for derelict vessel removal. Mr. Burket said the amount can be a wide range. Mr. Burket said that $100,000 would be sufficient amount and Jim Suber agreed with that number. Mr. Brock asked if $150,000 would be better because this would cover both floating structures and derelict vessels and floating structures are not reimbursed. Ms. Grandin explained that CM DeFoor did put $200,000 into the budget for this year through legislation for floating structures. Mr. Brock said that $100,000 sounds appropriate. Mr. Birlatan asked about how long it takes to receive funds. Mr. Brock said that the lag time is on the City’s side so that the grant agreements could be signed immediately. Mr. Burket said that it takes about one month from FWC and 3 or more months from the City so this legislation would dramatically speed up the funding process.

Ms. Grandin said that you still have to go through the due process of finding the owner of the structure or vessel which extends the timeline. Officer Goody explained the issues with towing because it is not worth it for the towing company. Mr. Hoyles stressed the environmental impact of boats left in the water and that the speed of removal should be much faster even if it costs the City more money which won’t be reimbursed.

Ms. Grandin said the enforcement side with the State Attorney’s office is very important. David Johnston, State Attorney’s Office, said he will get with Officer Goody to have a full training for younger attorneys so they have knowledge for future prosecution.

The topic of Fisherman’s Marina was shortly detailed by Matt Kershner of DEP and there will be a longer presentation at the full Waterways Commission. Mr. Kershner gave an update on the notice of violation given to the company about the removal and that the company has 21 days to respond. He detailed the process with moving forward with the corrective action. Mr. Hoyles asked if this action will do anything to remove the derelict vessel. Mr. Johnston said the funds received can go towards any corrective action. Jim Meyer, DEP, talked in more detail about the corrective action that would take place if the company does not respond to the order.

**Meeting adjourned:** 11:52 a.m.

Minutes: Richard Distel, Council Research Division

rdistel@coj.net (904) 255-5140

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