

City of Jacksonville

1st Floor - Council Chamber
117 W. Duval Street



Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Public Meeting - Wake Zone Committee

Friday, January 22, 2021

10:30 AM

Council Chambers 1st Floor, City Hall

Jacksonville Waterways Commission

CM Al Ferraro, Chair

CM Randy White, Vice Chair

CM Aaron Bowman - Excused Early Departure

CM Terrance Freeman, Alternate

Jon Michael Barker

Robert Birtalan - Virtual Attendance

Lindsey Brock - Excused Absence

Lane Burnett

State Rep. Cord Byrd - Excused Absence

Mark Devereaux - Excused Absence

Marc Hardesty

Jill D. Haskell

Raymond S. Pringle, Jr.

Marshall Adkison, Ex-Officio

Adam Hoyles, Ex-Officio

Vonya Balogh & Jessica Smith, Legislative Assistants

Susan Grandin, Asst. General Counsel

Dr. Quinton White, Jacksonville University

Dr. Gerard Pinto, Jacksonville University

Richard Distel, Research Assistant

Jim Suber, Waterways Coordinator

If a person decides to appeal any decision made by the Council with respect to any matter considered at such meeting, such person will need a record of the proceedings, and for such purpose, such person may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made, which record includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based.

RULE 4.505 DISRUPTION OF MEETING

No member of the audience shall applaud nor make any noise or remarks that are audible to the Committee that would indicate approval or disapproval of anything being discussed. Any disregard of this rule may result in removal by the Sergeant at Arms.

REQUEST TO SPEAK:

1. Fill out a speaker card.
2. Sign it if you are going to speak.
3. Read the rules on the back of the card.
4. Place card in tray.

PARKING: If you park in the Library Garage (Entry on Duval St, W of Main St), please see the Legislative Assistant for ticket validation.

MEETING TIME: 10:30 A.M. – 12:30 P.M.

Physical Location: Council Chambers

City Hall

117 W. Duval Street

Jacksonville, Florida 32202

(If attending virtually, please join the meeting by 10:15 A.M.)

Meeting ID: 995 9187 7759

Meeting Password: 796706

Council Members, City staff and the public may attend the meeting at the physical location- Council Chambers, but CDC guidelines will be adhered to due to COVID-19. A mandatory mask requirement is in place for all public buildings pursuant to the COJ Emergency Executive Proclamation 2020-005, as extended.

The public will be encouraged to share general comments with individual council members by email or telephone. Public hearings and public participation are required by state statute for specific legislation. We will conduct these hearings as required by state law. CCMeeting01262021@coj.net is the designated email for general comments to be including as a part of this meeting.

Meeting Convened: 10:42 A.M. Meeting Adjourned: 11:33 A.M.

Attendance:

Commissioners Jill Haskell and Marc Hardesty (Zoom); Council Member Aaron Bowman (Zoom); Waterways Coordinator Jim Suber

Also: Susan Grandin, Office of General Counsel; Pete Goody, JSO Marine Unit; Colleen Hampsey, Council Research

- 1. Call To Order**
- 2. Roll Call**

3. New Business - Discussion of Wake Zone Issues

Chair Haskell welcomed the group, called for introductions, and said the purpose of the meeting was to discuss boating safety regulations.

Chair Haskell reviewed the PowerPoint about the subcommittee's recommendations on potential slow speed/minimum wake zone sites. Any local ordinances approved by the Waterways Commission and City Council would then also have to be approved by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.

Four of the six locations were disqualified for not meeting certain criteria: St Johns River at Mayport Boat ramp (inclusive of Morningstar and Ft George Island Marinas); Arlington River from mouth of Arlington to Pottsburg Creek/Atlantic Blvd Bridge; Waters surrounding Reed Island; Trout River at Dinsmore Boat Ramp.

Two locations were determined to have the need, and meet the criteria for more safety regulations: Ft George River from the Kingsley Plantation to the A1A bridge; and the Ortega River, from the Grande Ave Bridge to Lake Shore Dry Storage. The Ortega River location was described as disorganized, congested, vulnerable, un-enforced and lacking sufficient marking. The Ortega River Landing reports over \$100,000 in floating dock damage in the past 36 months from wave action; Liveboards experience severe rocking at all hours of the day and night; alcohol related incident that hit bridge and ran onto shore last year; large boats have reportedly crashed into concrete docks because of wakes from passing vessels.

Marina operators, boat owners and homeowners in the area are asking for more signage and more enforcement.

The Ft. George location was described as dangerous, congested, unpredictable and needing at least seasonal restrictions. Specific issues in that area include: Operator safety issues; Alcohol a common factor Vessel damage occurring; Collisions between vessels and fixed objects are common; Jet Ski falls cited.

It was suggested that there should be restricted speed areas to ensure safety, either year round or seasonally. Commissioner Hardesty said he is surprised there haven't been fatalities from some of the unsafe boating speeds he has witnessed there. Mr. Hardesty said that boat wakes can be dangerous for boats tied together with people/kids swimming around them, and can also accelerate shore erosion. He also said that common sense is not enough for everyone to slow down, and that speed restrictions should be in place all year, not seasonally.

CM Bowman agreed that seasonal speed restrictions would be too confusing, and he commented on the language associated with boating that may not be uniformly understood (how slow is slow speed). Jim Suber, Waterways Coordinator, said more 'slow speed' signage is needed to communicate with the public, and suggested using the same verbiage used in state laws, such as "slow speed zones". Officer Goody, JSO, said that signage helps with enforcement.

Commissioner Haskell said she will compile all of the items from the meeting's

discussion to present to the full commission. Erin Johnson, Jacksonville Marine Association offered assistance with public communication regarding slow speed zone changes. Susan Grandin, OGC, said that a map should be produced that shows the location of where new signs would be placed.

CM Bowman asked who is responsible for any signs in disrepair. Jim Suber said it depends on the location, some are City, some are state and some are federal signs.

4. Public Comment

Stanley Scott tried to offer public comment but there was a technology issue that prohibited him from doing so.

5. Adjournment

Pursuant to the American with Disabilities Act, accommodations for persons with disabilities are available upon request. Please allow 1-2 business days notification to process; last minute requests will be accepted; but may not be possible to fulfill. Please contact Disabled Services Division at: V 904-255-5466, TTY-904-255-5476, or email your request to KaraT@coj.net.

Rollcall

Minutes: Colleen Hampsey, Council Research
CHampsey@coj.net 904.255.5151
Posted: 1.25.2021 5:00 pm