

City of Jacksonville

117 W. Duval Street
Jacksonville, FL 32202



Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, November 12, 2025

9:30 AM

Lynwood Roberts Room,
1st Floor, City Hall

Jacksonville Waterways Commission

CM Ken Amaro, Chair

CM Mike Gay, Vice Chair

CM Jimmy Peluso

CM Matt Carlucci, Alternate

Jon Michael Barker

Robert Birtalan - Absent

General Public Rep - Vacant

Representative Kiyon Michael - Excused

Mark Devereaux

Andrew Fraden

Marc Hardesty - Excused

Richard Hartley

General Public Rep - Vacant

Jill Haskell - General Public Rep - Absent

Charles Garrison, Ex-Officio

Adam Hoyles, Ex-Officio

Barbara Ireland Hobson, Legislative Assistant II

Shannon MacGillis & Carla Schell, Office of General Counsel

Dr. Gerard Pinto, Jacksonville University

Brandon Russell, Council Research

Jim Suber, Waterways Coordinator

COUNCIL RULE 4.505 DISRUPTION OF MEETING

Any person who disrupts a regular meeting of the City Council, standing committees, special or select committees, sub-committees or any other public meeting presided over by a City Council Member may be forthwith barred, removed, or otherwise ejected, in the discretion of the presiding officer, from further attendance at that meeting. If necessary, due to the nature of the disruption, the audience may be cleared from the Council Chambers or meeting location in the discretion of the presiding officer.

Any person who refuses to leave the City Council Chamber may be subject to arrest.

Disruption of a meeting includes the following types of behaviors:

- 1) Any form of political campaigning or electioneering regarding a specific candidate or group of candidates in City elections;
- 2) Impeding the orderly progress of the meeting by shouting, yelling, whistling, chanting, singing, dancing, clapping, foot stomping, snapping fingers, cheering, jeering, using artificial noise makers or musical instruments, waving signs of any size, or engaging in any other display of excessive noise, sounds, or movement;
- 3) Displaying or waving signs of any sort, except where used to support the speaker's presentation at the podium, and only where the sign is 21 inches by 21 inches or smaller in size and cannot be displayed in a manner which unreasonably obstructs the view of the dais for any member of the audience, regardless of message;
- 4) Audible noise from cellphones or other electronic devices;
- 5) Consumption of alcohol or controlled substances;
- 6) Making vulgar or offensive remarks or gestures, or using threatening language or gestures, including but not limited to pantomiming discharging a firearm, choking, or throat-cutting;
- 7) Refusing to stop speaking when his or her time has expired or is otherwise directed by the presiding officer to do so due to disruptive behavior as described herein;
- 8) Returning to the meeting after having been removed or ejected, or attempting to do so.

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. Return the card to the Legislative Assistant.

1. **Meeting Convened: 9:30 AM** **Meeting Adjourned: 10:10 AM**

2. **Roll Call**

3. **Pledge of Allegiance**

Chair Ken Amaro called the meeting to order and welcomed attendees. Members introduced themselves and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. **Approval of Minutes**

Approval of the minutes from the October 15, 2025 meeting was moved and seconded. The Commission unanimously approved the minutes via voice vote.

5. **St Johns River Status Report on Water Quality and Manatees**

Dr. Pinto stated that water levels were higher and had lower salinity at all measurement sites due to rainfall. At Mayport, salinity was measured at 21-25 ppt; 3-9 ppt at Dames Point Bridge; 0.6-2 ppt at Jacksonville University, with similar measurements Downtown and at the Buckman Bridge. Water temperatures ranged from 69°F to 71°F. He added that rainfall is roughly 5 inches below normal for this time of year and stated that there have been 40 inches of rainfall so far this year.

He said that mixed algae have been detected at various places. He noted that the blooms at Doctors Lake and Shands Bridge had low levels of toxins, which were the remnants of microcystis algae in the systems. There were no changes in manatee deaths from last month. He said that since the temperature is dropping to the 68-degree point, at which manatees experience stress due to low temperatures. He reported that there have been 89 manatee deaths from watercraft out of a total of 579 deaths statewide. He said they plan to do another aerial survey next week.

CM Peluso asked how long it takes for colder temperatures to lower the water's temperature, thereby impacting the manatees. Dr. Pinto stated that manatees respond to both changes in daylight and temperature, and some begin to migrate after the summer solstice due to the change in sunlight, noting that most migrate out of the area before water temperatures drop significantly.

6. **Public Comment**

John Nooney submitted the record of attendance from the Joint City Council-Duval County School Board meeting as evidence. He stated he was alarmed that OGC was not present at certain citizen boards and commissions. He thanked the Commission for the work that they have been doing.

Carnell Oliver spoke about bills 2025-0857 and 2025-2858, stating he wanted the bills to go through the normal process rather than as emergencies. He asked how much of the money appropriated in those bills would go to administrative costs. He then asked why the JEA franchise fee was not being used to phase out septic tanks.

7. New Business**8. Old Business****Shad Creek Resolution - Status Update**

CM Gay provided an update on the proposed Shad Creek Resolution created by Shannon MacGillis with the Office of General Counsel and urged the Commission members to review for discussion at the next meeting. Chair Amaro asked if the items discussed at the October meeting were applied to the bill and if anything else needed to be added. Ms. MacGillis stated that the resolution explains what the City has done up to this point, noting that, legally, the City has done all it can do, and it remains up to the State to take further action. Chair Amaro asked if they should take action on the resolution at this meeting or defer to the next one. Ms. MacGillis deferred to CM Gay, adding that the resolution was ready for action. CM Gay stated that he would like to give the Commission time to review the resolution, but if there was consensus to take action now, he also supported that.

CM Gay asked what the projected cost would be for additional signs. Brian Burket, from the Parks Department, said the signs have not been priced, but he anticipated the cost to be similar to that of the already installed signs, which were approximately \$30,000. He stated that they would get cost estimates and report back. CM Gay noted that that was a good reason to wait until the next meeting. Chair Amaro then asked what the process would be if Council adopted the resolution. Ms. MacGillis stated that the executed copy would be delivered to the Fish and Wildlife Commission, which will then determine whether to take action.

Mr. Hartley asked if the community had been engaged during the process. CM Gay stated that some residents have been engaged but noted that the FWC would hold the required community meetings should they decide to act. Ms. MacGillis requested that questions be directed to her to avoid Sunshine Law violations.

George Crady Bridge Fishing Pier State Park

CM Gay stated they were still holding meetings to discuss options to address issues with access to the pier.

9. Subcommittees & Task Forces - Updates

FIND Subcommittee - Approval of Recommendations from the October 22, 2025, FIND Subcommittee meeting.

Mr. Burket provided an overview of the projects approved by the FIND Subcommittee. He also provided a brief review of the FIND grant process, explaining that they try to have a mix of design and construction projects each year. He stated that the Downtown Dredging project was one that the Subcommittee approved, which is composed of seven sites along Northbank and Southbank. He noted that the total cost for the project was \$3.355 million; the City will request \$1.525 million in FIND grant dollars for the project. The COJ match would be \$1.83 million. He added that the target depth for the dredging would be -7.2 feet and provided a list of the various sites where dredging will occur.

Mr. Fraden asked where the dredging would go. Mr. Burket stated that typically, they would place them in the Jaxport Dredge Basin, for which Jaxport has provided a letter of support. He added that there is a contractor with an exclusive relationship to the Reed Island site, which would provide significant cost savings if they win the bid. If they win the bid, the dredge material would be sent to Reed Island.

Mr. Burket stated that contaminants were found at the Dinner Cruise dredging site, which would preclude depositing the dredging materials from that site at one of the basins. Instead, he stated it would need to be dewatered and taken to a landfill. He said they may need to conduct an alternative bid process, depending on how the base bid process unfolds, to address the contaminants at the Dinner Cruise site. Chair Amaro asked if he knew the nature of the contaminants. Mr. Burket said that some metals had been detected, presumably from boats that had sunk.

He then explained the second project, the Sisters Creek Dock Extension and Bathhouse. He stated the total cost for the project is over \$6 million, so they would not proceed with a request for the entire project due to caps on FIND grants. Instead, they will split the project into two phases of construction and are requesting funds for the first phase this year. The first phase of construction would include the bathhouse and the beginning of a dock system. He stated that the cost of the first phase would be \$2.75 million, with FIND providing \$1.25 million.

Chair Amaro asked if they would need to build infrastructure, such as a well or septic tank, since there would be a bathhouse with restrooms and showers. Mr. Burket stated that a septic system would be installed, as the location was too remote to connect to central lines, and added that these costs were included in the costs provided to the Commission.

Mr. Burket then said they included the TK Stokes Boat Ramp Bulkhead project so that it could be included among the construction projects. He stated that the project would cost \$275,000, with \$125,000 coming from FIND.

Dr. Pinto noted the pooling of water in a picture of the site and asked if that would be addressed. Mr. Burket said they would include that in the project's scope. Mr. Barker stated that the needs of each of these projects were the primary consideration when selecting them for FIND. He then complimented Mr. Burket and his team for their handling of the projects.

CM Gay noted that the Council District for the TK Stokes project was incorrectly listed on the projects and should be District 2. Chair Amaro asked if the FIND Subcommittee had approved these projects. Mr. Burket confirmed that they had been approved and that he was now seeking approval from the full Commission. Mr. Devereaux inquired about Jacksonville's approach to pursuing FIND grants in comparison to other locations. Mr. Burket stated that each county has their own cap, and because Duval

is consolidated, there is less competition among municipalities for funds.

Approval of the FIND Subcommittee recommended projects was moved and seconded. The Commission approved the recommended projects unanimously.

Shoaling & Artificial Reef Task Force

River Accord Task Force

CM Peluso stated that they should fold up the task force since the Department of Environmental Protection did not want to be a part of it. With regard to the Shoaling and Artificial Reef Task Force, he stated that the entire Duval Delegation was in the Council Chambers if anyone on the Commission would like to speak with them.

10. 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.

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