

Rivers Coalition

Meeting Minutes

Date: April 28, 2011

Called to Order: 11:05

Attendance: Jeff Stukel, Henry Caimotto, Joanne Swann, Mark Perry, George Jones, Jim Harter, Ted Guy, Leon Abood, Phil Tafoya, Greg Gardner, Marge Ketter, Susan Smyth, Louise White, Dennis Buford, John Marshall, Douglas Ashley, Rob Ranieri, Don Kurtz, Jim Moir, Donna Melzer, Michael Towner, Toby Overdorf, Todd Weissing, Paul Gray, Max Quackenbos

Chairman's Comments:

Leon Abood introduced Paul Nicoletti. Paul Nicoletti, the County and the City of Stuart has completed the application to the FWC regarding anchoring outside of the mooring field project. We are tied up now, even though we made it through the FWC board and have been selected as one of 5 locations throughout the state, it looks like we will get bumped out because of a challenge that has been made by 2 residents to the DEP permit that the county needs for its location for the County's mooring field. The County and City has been working on this for over a year. From the City's stand point we believe and continue to believe that the County's operation of a mooring field was a good thing in the long run for the environment. The competing interest that are trying to protect the aquatic preserve and lagoon is saying that the county should not put the mooring field their. This is also an opportunity to monitor the anchors. We understand the competing interest but the pilot program was a good tool to have in our tool bag.

AJ Smith, Florida Yacht Guide on FaceBook; where you can go to find out where to anchor your boat without putting your anchor in the Seagrasses.

Leon Abood, Eve Samples wrote an article after our last meeting regarding getting new younger members. After that article, two little girls decided to setup a lemonade stand to help Save Our Rivers. Leon passed around the pictures of the little girls. They raised \$42.00, parents matched their money and they wrote us a check for \$85.00. We will be going to the schools to present awards to these two fine young women. We will get their parents involved; they would like to start the River Kidz. Our goal is to get them involved and in turn get their parents involved. Let's create more stewards of the environment.

Committee/Task Force Review:

Leon Abood, thank you to Marge Ketter and Ted Guy for their work on the Membership Policy and Organization Process Task Force. Leon read the proposed organizational policy.

Leon Abood, Marge seems to think and I think it is probably a good idea to amend our organizational policy that says that we need 50% plus 1 to establish a quorum, Marge thinks we should change that to 20 or more voting delegates constitutes a quorum and continue the 2/3 positive vote for the quorum to pass any action. Her conclusion was that with 56 total members with an average of 26 attending it would be almost impossible for us to achieve a quorum without it being a really big hassle. Propose to the group that we change our policy to state that we need 20 to establish a quorum. I'd like a motion and a second to that and then we can talk about it.

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Ted Guy, motion, Marge Ketter, seconded. Open to discussion.

John Marshall, I have seen other groups that just put their members that do not attend on an inactive list and then they do not count against a quorum.

Leon Abood, yes, in addition Marge proposed policy change; she suggests that we create a special category.

Rob Ranieri, we are not really solving the problem. That does not change the fact that over ½ of our delegation is not attending. I would think that we should put them on an inactive status.

Max Quackenbos, maybe associate member category.

Marge Ketter, if you all read what I proposed, having so many members is a part of PR and having their support. You don't count them as voting members unless they participate. Most organizations have a definite number.

Leon Abood, lets back track a little bit and think about what Rob said, this is not solving our problem. One of the things we are trying to accomplish is getting more members to attend, including more young people. A lot of the feedback that I have been getting, which will fall under Toby's Membership Committee is to have meetings a night. Perception of the younger community is that we need to change the meetings to a night meeting.

Toby Overdorf, I spoke with the Young Professionals Network and they agreed we need a meeting or two a night, maybe every other month.

Rob Ranieri, St. Lucie County Commissioners changed their meetings for the same reason, most young working individuals do not have time during the day to attend.

Leon Abood, lets back up and tighten up our membership category. How do you feel about creating an associate member status?

Jessica Briske, should there be a certain number of meetings they have to attend to stay on the voting list?

Leon Abood, miss 3 meetings throughout the year.

John Marshall, just as a point of reference if the motion is to reduce the quorum and miss 3 meetings, should be retroactive.

Leon Abood, amend to retroactive.

Leon Abood, the members that do not attend the meetings will be moved to an associate member status we can leave the quorum to 50 plus 1.

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Marge Ketter, no the proposed is to change the quorum to 20.

Leon Abood, I understand that, but they are saying if we change the members to associate members, then we will not need to change the quorum.

Marge Ketter, I think that the quorum should be 20 or more.

Rob Ranieri, if we use a percentage then we can continue to grow or membership with continually amending the policy to a new number. We will be able to maintain the same level of participation; we need to keep it at 50% plus 1.

Leon Abood, lets withdraw the current motion to change the quorum to 20 or more.

Mark Perry, we are talking about voting or not voting, the reality is that we will not be able to get everyone to come to all of our meetings.

Leon Abood, we typically try to get any information to our members that may be considered controversial to them weeks in advance of voting.

John Marshall, we should keep quorum the 50% plus one and move inactive members to an associate members status.

Leon Abood, modify our membership to reduce the number that would be allowed to vote and move them into an associate a category.

John Marshall, so move.

Ted Guy, likes the 20 members to establish a quorum.

Bob Voisinet, it is too complicated.

Douglas Ashley, would like a number for the quorum.

Leon Abood, retract all other motions. Let's establish 20 or more voting delegates for a quorum, reach out to the members that are not coming. Motion made, seconded, John Marshall opposed and wants to follow Roberts Rules of Orders.

Marge Ketter, organizations need to be given the authorization to vote.

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Martin County: St. Lucie Inlet Dredging:

Paul Millar; reviewed Power Point presentation regarding dredging the St. Lucie inlet.

Leon Abood, It is my opinion that we need to manage our inlet locally. But my question is, is this outside of what the Rivers Coalition does?

Ted Guy, we defiantly need local funding. I think it is important to maintain consensus that we defiantly need a permanent source in Martin County to fix the inlet. Extend the sales tax and focus all money on the inlet.

Marge Ketter, the Rivers Coalition should draft the language to restrict the long term funding of the inlet. Martin County can only use the money for the inlet.

Leon Abood, I don't think they will allow us to create the language. We will certainly have a seat at the table.

Mark Perry, the inlet provides the St. Lucie Estuary with biodiversity; let's not forget that federally they are responsible. We need to continue the push to get federal funding.

Leon Abood, consensus that the Rivers Coalition should support the inlet dredging and future related research.

George Jones, the inlet needs to be redesigned.

Leon Abood, The Rivers Coalition supports efforts and initiatives to maintain and improve the St. Lucie inlet for safe navigation and improve environmental conditions of the St. Lucie inlet and Indian River Lagoon. Motion made, seconded and passed.

Legal Update:

Leon Abood, still waiting for the decisions for the appeal.

Ted Guy, two recent decisions by the appellate courts have been made that may help our case.

Committee/Task Force Review:

Leon Abood asked that the Chairs of the committees to meet and come up with recommendations.

WRAC:

Mark Perry, April 7 was the last meeting. Discussed water shortage issues. Lake Okeechobee is at 11.23 ft.

Speakers Bureau:

Todd Weissing, Ted spoke at the South East Nordic Tug Owners.

ROGER:

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Ted Guy, Conference call today.

Water Quality:

Mark Perry, salinity is up in the 20's muck is still an issue.

Martin County Updates:

Paul Millar, C-44 is still online. 3 ½ years from start to finish.