

Rivers Coalition

Meeting Minutes: October 23, 2019

Mark Perry called the meeting to order at 6:00 am and led the flag salute.

Members In attendance: 58 people, Mark Perry (FOS), Charles Grande (Pres. Council of H.I.), Jim Moir (Marine Resources Council), Darrell Brand (Palm Cove Yacht Club), Dan Merritt (Seagate HOA), Joanne Swann and Jow Sawyer (St. Lucie Sailing Club), Alex Gillen (Friends of The Everglades), Brittany Bearden (MC Farm Bureau), Jim Harter (Stuart Flyrodders), Greg Braun (Guardians of Martin County), Annie Potts (TC Rowing Club), Paul Gray (Audubon of FL), Walter and Bobbi Deemer (League of Women's Voter of MC), Ric Hall (River Warriors), Allen Hershkowitz (Sailfish Point POA), Nic Mader (Dolphin Ecology Project), Shari Anker (St Lucie Conservation Alliance), Linda Grand (Am. Assn of University Women), Jim Skeoch, Cheryl Bryson, Diane Edwards (Venture Three Community), Hilarie Davis (US Sailing Center of MC), Rip Fisher (Sailfish Point Yacht Club), Marcy Pitkin (TC Unitarian Universalist Church), Marty Baum (Indian Riverkeeper), Robert and Rosanne Ryba (Joe's Point HOA), Drew Martin (Sierra Club-Loxahatchee Group), Jeanette Hartzell (League of Women Voters SLC), Regina Wood (MC Native Plant Society), Allie Preston (Bullsugar.org)

Non-members: Merritt Matheson (Stuart City Council), Ben Hogarth (City of Stuart), Jacqui Thurlow-Lippisch (SFWMD), Katie Bowes (Martin County), John Haddox (Brian Mast), Patrick Dayan (St Lucie County), Kevin Hinkle and Matthew Anderson (St Lucie Audubon), Blake Faulkner, Pat LaBalbo (Savannah Club), Tom and Joan Bausch, Nancy Scott (Environmental Studies Center), Dick and Carol Tuschick, Mike Knepper, Carl Stewart, Douglas Ashley, Becky Harris, Linda Miller

Chairman's Comments: Mark asked RC members to stand and introduce themselves.

Reminder of date change of next RC meeting to Wednesday November 20 11:00 am.

Due to LOSOM meeting on Thursday Nov 21.

Current Action Items: New Member Application of Sierra Club-Loxahatchee Group represented by Drew Martin. Charles Grande-1st, Alex Gillen-2nd, unanimously voted in.

Drew Martin stood to speak of Sierra Club's recent work: involved in many lawsuits.

Recent suit of Palm Beach County to protect the headwaters of the Loxahatchee River, they won.

Also sued Palm Beach County re: rock mining-they won.

Mark praised the Stuart Sunrise Rotary for the recent Water Panel that was well attended and well presented.

Special Presentation: Topic: Florida Consumptive Water Use Permits by Alex Gillen of Friends of the Everglades. PPT can be seen on RC webpage - www.riverscoalition.org. Video can be seen on RC YouTube channel.

Martin County Report:

Katie Bowes is presenting for Dianne Hughes who is out on medical leave until January 2020.

Martin County Commissioners are in Wash DC for The Everglades Caucus getting 200 million for CERP.

County received a large grant to do vulnerability resiliency plans by gathering data/elevation certificates and land use permits to project the impact of climate change and sea level rise and its impact on neighborhoods. Will use this plan as a mapping tool to drive future capital improvement projects.

Future community meeting St Lucie BMAP Nov 5th at Blake Library 9-11 to develop mitigation strategy.

Gov De Santis wants BMAOP updated in a year. This will provide guidelines for stakeholder's allocation in nutrient load reduction.

Rivers Coalition

Meeting Minutes: October 23, 2019

Go to the following websites for water quality updates: www.martin.fl.us; www.martin.floridahealth.gov; www.dep.state.fl.us and www.reportalagalbloom.com.

City of Stuart Report: Ben Hogarth, Public Liaison, reported on the Public Works Projects converting Septic to Sewer will be 100% by 4th Fiscal Qtr. of next year. By 2020 all of City should be on Sewer.

City is looking to new BMAP for new projects. Project Delivery Team Meeting with USACOE meeting tomorrow in Homestead. City's goal is zero discharges and that the USACOE should release only as last Action "nuclear option" to our area.

St Lucie County Report: Patrick Dayan: In 2018 there was a ½ cent tax for water quality projects. The neighborhoods built in the 1940-1950's are getting retrofitted from septic to sewer.

SLC has three canals in CERP: C-23, C-24, C-25 (Taylor Creek). SLC is involved in two BMAPs for the St Lucie Estuary and IRL.

There is 2.4 million that SLC has towards 1) Tea Hammock-West SLC, 2) Becker Oxbow Reconnection to promote the native fish, 3) Melville Rd-no drainage and on septic now. Will have a 14 acre pond to reduce 71% phosphorus and create a passive recreation area for residents.

Audubon Update: Dr. Paul Gray: Lake O is at 13.5 ft. 25% prediction of a water shortage but that means 75% we won't have shortage. Important to keep water flow to Caloosahatchee.

State Report: State Legislature starts its session Jan 14, 2020. Committees are being formed. Alex Gillen encouraged us to keep the legislature from weakening HR 3324.

SFWMD Report: Jacqui Thurlow-Lippisch rejoiced at being present at the FOS groundbreaking. Reported good news that the EAA leases have been voluntarily terminated by the Fanjul Family. JTL recently visited the EAA and was convinced that more water needs to move south.

SFWMD has other projects further afield such as Biscayne Bay Estuary Restoration brought to their attention by SFWMD governor, Charlie Martinez.

River Coalition Committee Reports:

Speakers Bureau: Dan Merritt said the Speakers Bureau is available for bookings.

River Kidz: Nic Mader reported River Kidz made \$340 for Friends of Everglades by face painting at Dirty River Jam. Hoping to have new 5th grade version RK workbooks out by spring. Coordinating with Martin County Schools to incorporate it into their 5th grade Science Curriculum. Meeting with Christina Radcliffe from Felix A. Williams Elementary next month.

Local Issues & Estuary Water Quality:

Mark Perry stated that the water quality is pretty good. They have 40 water testers at 10 different sites for weekly tests. There will be an oyster deployment soon.

Indian Riverkeeper Update:

Marty Baum is a new grandfather. There are no NIMBYs in water keepers. New woman, Dr. Kapris (sic), water keeper in place. /Fourteen water keepers fighting blue-green algae since Gov. Scott days. Marty's speech can be heard on RC You Tube Channel.

Rivers Coalition

Meeting Minutes: October 23, 2019

Members Comments:

Mark Perry reminded all of FOS Rally for The River Nov 16th at Flagler Park.

Everglades Coalition in Jan 202 on Capitva Island

Mark Perry said that since Kenny Hinkle, Chair of RC Event/Volunteer Committee, has recently been seriously injured; Michelle Weiler has been asked to assume his duties.

Mark asked for volunteers to help with events and chairs for RC meetings.

Walter Deemer brought attention to the cultural shift at SFWMD and USACOE as being best positive thing for a long, long time.

Regina Wood of MC Native Plant Society reported on the Nov 5th lecture at IRSC by Brenda Lyons of Blowing Rock. 2020 program schedule is available.

Alex Gillen, Friends of the Everglades, thanked all for the participation at Dirty River Jam Oct 5th at Tako Tiki in Jensen Beach.

Hilarie Davis of USSCMC reported that they are participation in "Clean Regattas." The Sailing Center has compost bins that return the compost to sand.

Annie Potts reported that George Sharrow, one of the founders of Treasure Coast Rowing Club, recently died. Over \$2,000 was donated to Rivers Coalition in his memory.

Merritt Matheson, City of Stuart, this Monday's regular meeting there will be a 2nd vote on the plastic use ordinance. 1st vote passed 5-0 with 3 workshops since.

Marcy Pitkin reminded us of the billions of plastic one use water bottles used.

.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:38 pm