

**MINUTES
MANCHESTER WATERWAY
MUNICIPAL SERVICE BENEFIT UNIT (MSBU)**

**ADVISORY BOARD REGULAR MEETING
THURSDAY, MAY 7, 2026**

**10:01 a.m. - 10:46 a.m.
Centennial Park Recreation Center
1120 Centennial Blvd, Port Charlotte, Florida**

Members Present: Dennis Peck, Chair
Kevin Peregoy, Vice Chair
Lamont Whims

Members Absent: Leo Beer, Apologies Received

County Staff: Erica Hayes, Community Liaison
Michael Benjamin, Projects Manager

Guests: None

Call to Order / Roll Call:

The meeting was called to order at 10:01 a.m. A roll call was taken, and a quorum was established.

Changes to the Agenda / Motion to Approve Changes:

None

Citizen Input on Agenda Items (3 Minute Limit):

None

Approval of the Minutes:

The February 26, 2026, minutes were unanimously approved as written.

Unfinished Business:

- a. Update: Manchester Waterway Interior/Exterior Dredge Project: Staff provided an update that surveying activities had begun approximately two weeks prior and were expected to be completed by the end of the week. Once surveying is finalized, the consultant will begin preparing design plans and calculating the quantity of material to be removed. Board members expressed appreciation that the project is finally moving forward and discussed existing navigation concerns, particularly in the S-bend and exterior canal areas where shallow conditions continue to impact vessel access.
- b. Bathymetric Survey/Marine Markers: Discussion centered around misplaced and missing navigational markers within the waterway system. Board members voiced frustration regarding markers that had previously been replaced in incorrect locations and emphasized the importance of properly aligning markers with the designated dredge channel. Staff explained that once the dredge survey is completed, the County will be able to utilize the survey alignment data to reposition markers without requiring an additional costly survey specifically for signage. It was further clarified that incorrectly moving markers outside the permitted dredge footprint could create future permitting complications if dredging were needed outside of the authorized area.

New Business:

- a. Financial Reports: The FY26 quarter two actual expenditure and monthly funding reports were provided for review. The 10-year projections report was provided. The Board had no questions at this time.

- b. Future Projects: Staff explained that due to the typical dredging lifecycle of approximately five to seven years, it is important for waterways to begin planning future dredging projects well in advance. Considerable discussion followed regarding a new countywide dredging permit initiative currently being pursued by the County. Staff explained that the goal is to establish a long-term countywide maintenance dredging permit covering previously dredged canals, including both interior and exterior waterways. If approved, the permit could remain valid for up to 20 years and significantly reduce project planning timelines by eliminating the need to secure separate dredging permits for each future maintenance project. Board members expressed strong support for the initiative and noted that reducing permitting delays could shorten project implementation timelines by as much as one year. The Board also discussed future dredging scheduling and the importance of placing placeholder projects within the County's Capital Improvement Program (CIP) to maintain long-term funding stability and ensure future projects remain eligible for budgeting. Following discussion, the Board agreed that it would be beneficial to tentatively plan for a future dredging design phase in Fiscal Year 2030 and construction in Fiscal Year 2031. Staff explained that including placeholder projects in the CIP provides justification for maintaining assessment rates and allows flexibility to delay projects as conditions warrant. A motion was made by Mr. Peregoy and seconded to include a placeholder for a future dredging project consisting of design in Fiscal Year 2030 and construction in Fiscal Year 2031 within the long-term planning projections. The motion passed unanimously

Citizen Input on MSBU items (3 Minute Limit):

None

Advisory Board Open Discussion:

- Discussion addressed the challenges associated with waterways that are not currently part of active MSBUs or that have not historically participated in dredging programs. Staff outlined the petition process required to establish new MSBUs and noted that increased citizen interest may eventually lead additional communities to pursue participation in future dredging programs.
- Staff informed the Board of a recent navigational trimming request near 3232 Christopher Street. The Board reviewed aerial imagery and discussed whether vegetation growth was significantly impeding navigation within the canal. Board members emphasized that trimming activities should only be pursued when vegetation genuinely obstructs navigational access rather than for aesthetic concerns. Staff explained that any future trimming efforts should ideally be coordinated comprehensively throughout the canal system rather than as isolated single site projects due to mobilization costs. The Board agreed to continue monitoring vegetation growth through the rainy season before determining whether additional trimming work would be necessary. Staff also noted that conditions could be further evaluated during the ongoing dredging operations.
- Discussion ensued regarding a recently constructed boat lift and canopy structure near Midway Boulevard that some members believed may extend too far into the canal and create navigational conflicts for passing vessels, particularly at night or during tight turns. Staff explained that boat lift structures are subject to setback and channel clearance requirements and suggested that concerns could be referred to Code Enforcement for review to determine whether the structure complies with County regulations and approved survey requirements. Board members discussed prior permitting approvals and noted concerns regarding structures potentially extending into the navigable channel.

Schedule Meetings / Items for Next Agenda:

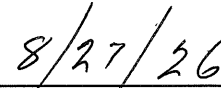
Future meetings are scheduled at 10:00 a.m., at the Centennial Park Recreation Center as follows:

- Thursday, August 27, 2026
- Thursday, November 19, 2026

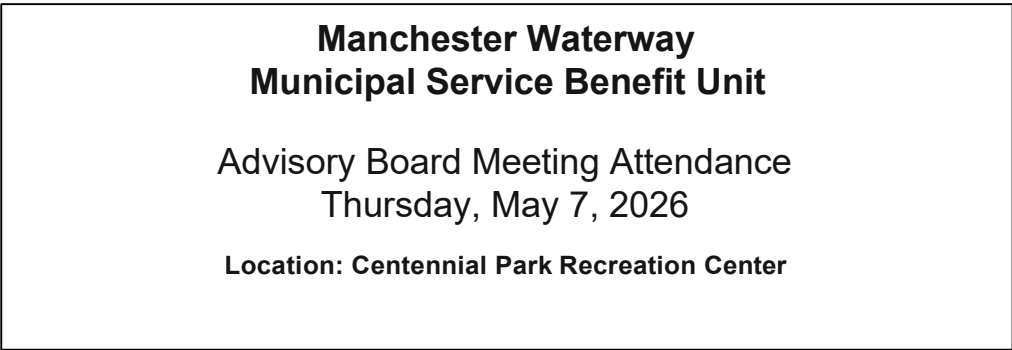
The meeting adjourned at 10:46 a.m.

Submitted by Erica Hayes
Public Works Department


Chair Signature


Date

DRAFT

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