



## Beaches and Shores Advisory Committee

Murdock Administration Building, 18500 Murdock Circle,  
Building B, Room B-106, Port Charlotte, FL 33948

<u>Board Members:</u>	<u>District:</u>
Don McCormick, Chair .....	District 2
Nichole Beyer .....	District 3
Patrick Jurek.....	District 1
Wendy Lang.....	District 5
Stas Matias.....	District 4
Jeff Anlauf.....	Member-at-Large
Vacant.....	Member-at-Large

### MINUTES

**November 4, 2021 at 9:00 A.M.**

1. Call to Order:

**Don McCormick** called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

**Don McCormick** asked those in attendance to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Roll Call / Determination of a Quorum

Upon Secretary Bennett calling the roll call, it was determined a quorum was present.

**Stas Matias** and **Pat Jurek** was absent.

4. Approval of Minutes

- o Approve the Minutes from October 7, 2021

**Ms. Lang** made a motion to approve the October 7, 2021 minutes were approved with a unanimous vote.

5. Changes to the Agenda

**Mr. McCormick** introduced the newest board member, **Nichole Beyer**. Nichole gave a brief introduction.

6. Citizen Input on Agenda Items

**Damian Ochab, South Manasota Sandpiper Key Assoc.**, shared his concern for biological debris from the Red Tide on the shorelines. He is asking for the county to create a program that will clean up the public and residential shorelines of the dead fish. Also, he's asking for this to be a regular program in help to deal with the Red Tide.

**Ms. Lang** recommended for this to be added onto the December agenda for discussion.

## 7. New Business

- Betty Staugler – Presentation

**Ms. Staugler** expressed that she took a new position within Florida Sea Grant, it is federally funded through NOAA. Her official title is now NOAA, Harmful Algae Bloom Liaison, it's a national position administrated through Florida Sea Grant. Her role is to be the conduit for information between different NOAA line offices. That are working on Harmful Algae Bloom forecasting as well as satellite remote sensing products. She also works with the Sea Grant state programs, so they have better access to information to better meet their end user needs. In Florida we have some resource in regard to harmful algae bloom forecasting; these are primarily the satellite images that we rely on. Those are developed to help our state agency's figure out where they need to do their sampling efforts because they can see chlorophyll in the water. With the satellite images they are able to direct their sampling efforts and use them to gear up for marking public beaches when we have harmful algae blooms. Also, the forecasting is used for opening and closing of shellfish harvesting. There is training for some of the state agencies on how to access the satellite products, the data and how to use that in their own research projects.

**Mr. McCormick** asked **Ms. Staugler** if Red Tide is an algae?

**Ms. Staugler** answered Red Tide is caused by dinoflagellate which is plant like and contains chlorophyll and that's what unites all plants. So yes, we do considerate it to be an algae.

**Ms. Staugler** gave a brief update on seagrass. Sea Grant started a program called Eyes on seagrass, which is a training of volunteers to snorkel select locations in Charlotte Harbor and Lemon Bay during the months of April and July. We chose those two months because we were concerned about macroalgae, which is the big algae that you can see without putting it under a microscope. They were receiving a lot of reports about increasing macroalgae in abundances. If it is sitting on top of the seagrass it prevents the seagrass from photosynthesizing and can cause harm. Macroalgae abundance tends to peak in the spring when seagrasses are dormant, as the water warms seagrasses start to grow. In a healthy eco-system, we would expect to see it decline in those macroalgae abundances. They started in 2019 just in Charlotte Harbor that was when they discovered the bad macroalgae bloom on the east side of the harbor. In the latest seagrass mapping of the harbor, there was a 23% loss in acreage of seagrass in the upper Charlotte Harbor area. That was for the most part a direct result of the macroalgae occurrence. Lemon Bay was started this year and that too has seen a seagrass loss around 12%. They wanted to start collecting on the ground data what types of seagrass species we have and what the abundances of macroalgae we have and the types that we are dealing with.

**Ms. Lang** asked **Ms. Staugler** are you working with FWC about the fish increase?

**Ms. Staugler** answered yes, they all work very closely together. Part of their sampling effort too is when they go out, they character rise bycatch. With their data they are looking to see how the fish assemblages respond to the changes in the macroalgae.

**Ms. Staugler** addressed **Mr. Ochab's** point on Red Tide and the fish, NOAA has been discussing and are working to see if there is a way to determine a forecast where fish will come onto shore. It is a lot easier to get them out of the water than it is to get them off the shore. She mentioned a few programs in other counties that do get the fish prior to them reaching the shore.

**Nichole Beyer** asked if they have thought about how long it will take the seagrass to come back? **Ms. Staugler** explained that there's nothing to really base this answer on but believes it would be a few years.

**Mr. McCormick** asked if the manatees are any factor in the decrease of the seagrass? **Ms. Staugler** answered the manatees eat the top of the seagrass but do not have the teeth structure to be able to yank the seagrass out of the seafloor.

**Commissioner Deutsch** is this something that we have experienced if we look back historically? **Ms. Staugler** answered to her knowledge we don't know. We know seagrass has been lost in the past because of water quality issues, not so much in Charlotte Harbor, but in Sarasota and Tampa Bay area.

**Cliff Kewley, citizen**, expressed how the water was always tan, and was told it was tannin and that the quality was very good. He also spoke about mangroves and how he was told they are all good and how they create the tannin. He asked if anyone measures the seasonal or the concentration of the tannin in the water? Because that represents a material reduction in the sun getting through there. Also, is the tannin stratified? Is that something that's part of the study? **Ms. Staugler** replied to clarify tannins, she hears all the time that tannins are the direct result of mangroves; is true, but tannins are produced by all plant matter. In terms of if tannins are monitored, not directly but color is monitored and turbidity. Those are parts of regular monitoring programs.

**Mr. Ochab** asked **Ms. Staugler** if there is anything that the citizens can do to help promote seagrass or to help the seagrass? **Ms. Staugler** answered yes, in terms of seagrass monitoring the public is able to volunteer for. She also encourages people to plant the plants in the right place, using the right type of plants and limiting the amount of fertilizer. Just for people to think about how our actions around our homes impact water quality.

8. Old Business

- **Brandon Moody, Water Quality Manager**

- Water Quality

**Mr. Moody** stated they have had their first meeting of the regional resilience compact that was mostly an organization meeting. The takeaway from the meeting was that they are all making sure that they are communicating with the other regional compacts. To better understand what they went through, what worked and what didn't work and so forth. Also, they are in the various planning stages for water quality summit that's planned for March. It will be open to the public and inform them on what's going on in the county and in the region in terms of the water quality monitoring activities. He also mentioned that the commissioners kindly approved the invitation of advanced water treatment as part of the land expansions to the East Port and Burnt Store water reclamation plants. They are planning for construction to start around October – November of 2022. Water quality monitoring strategy is still on track; 1) they are getting the priced proposals out, 2) getting boots on the ground and 3) collecting samples by spring next year.

**Mr. Ochab** asked **Mr. Moody** about the information board that was discussed at prior meetings. **Mr. Moody** answered they are wanting to input onto the One Charlotte, One Water website page to have a centralized resource for all the different pieces of information of the health of the beaches in Charlotte County. He has not had any conversations about signage at the beach.

- **Stump Pass renourishment project**

**Matt Logan** commented that they have had their preconstruction meeting and has been placed out to bid. They have a tentative schedule to start mobilization November 29<sup>th</sup>. On December 15<sup>th</sup>, a start up for the sand placement on Stump Pass State Park through January 19<sup>th</sup>. On January 19<sup>th</sup> they will start mobilizing down to Palm Island, switch the pipes over from the 19<sup>th</sup> through the 24<sup>th</sup>. Placing sand will start on the 24<sup>th</sup> and the project will finish by April 1<sup>st</sup>.

- **Mitigation reef**

**Mr. Logan** stated this has been completed and they are continuing to monitor; waiting on annual report to come in.

- **Terminal Groin placement on Stump Pass**

**Mr. Logan** commented they are monitoring this. They feel that it has been successful since it's placement in 2017. This is the longest period that we have been able to go in-between dredges with the significantly reduced volume of material to be removed from the pass. With having said that, it is also important to realize that we finished this project in 2017 and less than a month later, Hurricane Irma came by and dumped a good portion of sand back into the channel.

**Mr. Ochab** asked **Mr. Logan** why does sand placement get placed south? When the sand goes from north to south, why isn't it being brought back to the north? **Mr. Logan** replied the permit permits wherever they can put the sand.

- **Sea Turtles**

**Susan Foley-Pieri** commented that sea turtle season officially ended October 31<sup>st</sup>. There are still some nests out on the beach and the permit holders will continue to monitor till all the nests are gone. Ms. Scudera asked for her to hand out some charts on the sea turtle nests. The overall sea turtles have increased since the grafts in 2013. The 2021 numbers are still preliminary final data has yet to be received from the permit holder. There's still no permit holder on LGI so the numbers are lower this because of that, there is still no permit holder.

- **Shore Birds and Sea Birds**

**Ms. Foley-Pieri** stated the number of Least Tern seabird colonies has decreased overtime, although we had 3 different colonies this year. Black Skimmer colonies have increased, in 2021 there was 31 fledged Black Skimmers and 82 fledge Least Terns. Shore Birds nest struggle on the beaches with them being right on the beach with people, dogs, weather, and development.

9. Correspondence and Communication  
None offered.

10. Public Comments  
None offered.

11. Comments by Administrative Staff or Consultants  
None offered.

12. Member Comments

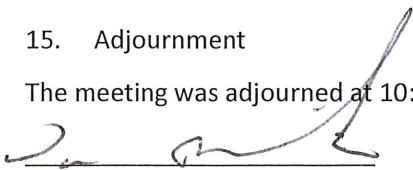
**Mr. Anlauf** asked about how many meetings are members allowed to miss? **Commissioner Deutsch** answered three unexcused absences.

14. Next Meeting

- The next Regular Meeting of the Beaches and Shores Advisory Committee will be **Thursday, December 2, 2021 at 9:00 a.m.** in the Murdock Administration Center, 18500 Murdock Circle, Room B-106 Port Charlotte unless otherwise announced.

15. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10:33 a.m.



Don McCormick, Chair