



MINUTES

CHARLOTTE COUNTY MARINE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Thursday, October 9, 2025

9:30 a.m.

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

1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance– **Chair Darden** called the meeting to order at 9:30 am.
2. Roll Call - Upon the roll being called it was determined a quorum was present.
Sign-In Sheets attached.
3. Chairman's Comments
 - a. Reminders to All Members, and Staff, Visitors: - Please sign in on the sheet provided. State your name and organization when addressing the committee to assist with minutes. Silence cell phones and keep conversations to a whisper, as the recording system captures all sounds.
4. Changes to the Agenda –
The minutes from the September 11, 2025, meeting have not yet been completed.
5. Citizen Comments on Agenda Items –
Chuck Witzke with the Beuna Vista MSBU spoke on a meeting yesterday and discusses dredging, beach sand, community services, money and a grant for \$150K.
6. Regular Business
 - a. The minutes from the September 11, 2025, regular meeting have not been completed.
 - b. Charlotte County Sheriff's Office and City of Punta Gorda Police Dept. – Marine Updates

Charlotte County Sheriff's Office

Sgt. McRae presented the derelict vessels report. He announced that the boat lift installation is scheduled for October 22, 2025, and provided an update on the vessel located at Laishley. He noted that the Marine Advisory Committee will be funding the motors and reported that quotes are currently being obtained, and Waterfest.

Ms. Ginsberg asked Sgt. McRae about the boat in the mangroves. **Deputy Nelson**, from the Marine Division explained the owner passed away and the owner's wife has been working with their office and FWC. He noted that the boat is still afloat.

Mr. MacIntosh spoke about the situation in Chad Cove involving the individual who was recently arrested, and a discussion followed.

Ms. Gassett-Shoemaker commented on the process previously shared and asked about the vessel in South Gulf Cove, specifically whether a placard had been placed on it. **Sgt. McRae** stated that the vessel is an FWC case, and he was not aware whether a placard had been posted. He explained the procedure used for derelict vessels, and discussion ensued.

Mr. Hyde asked about the Manta sailboat, which is also an FWC case, and inquired whether the Punta Gorda Police Department has any involvement with that vessel.

City of Punta Gorda Police Department

Cpl. A. Russell spoke with **Mr. Hyde** regarding the Manta sailboat. They located the owner in Tennessee and explained the actions taken, including placing a sticker on the boat with contact information. He also reported that a 25-foot section of dock is struck in the Peace River; they are coordinating with FWC and have placed a danger buoy near it.

Mr. Hickey stated that someone had been on the boat with the engine running and had attempted to lift the marker but was unsuccessful. He noted that the dock section is now completely submerged, and a discussion followed with **Cpl. Russell**.

Mr. Russell asked whether the boat should be traced like firearms; discussion followed with Officer Russell, Mr. Hyde, Mr. Vigne, and Mr. McKinnon.

c. Derelict Vessel Report – Liz Eastes



Liz Eastes not present.

d. Water Quality Assessment Program – Richard Whitman/Brandon Moody

Mr. Schutz, CEO of Heal Our Harbor, presented the study results, summarized the project, and introduced Dr. Whitman, Mr. McCague, noted Ms. Karen McCague's absence, and introduced Mr. Moody and Ms. Betsy.

Mr. McCague reported on the development program, 18 months of water sampling, related equipment, and provided a slide presentation and explained everything throughout the slide show.

Mr. Russell asked whether sediment testing had been conducted; Mr. McCague stated Dr. Whitman would address this.

Dr. Whitman reported on testing methods, participating companies, and fecal-matter data from 2018–2024, including Sunrise Waterway impacts, Peace River discharge, and sampling before, during, and after Hurricanes Debby and Helene, with findings on oxygen levels, watercolor, salinity, and DNA source identification.

Mr. Moody discussed state testing results, fecal-matter sources, bacterial findings in two watersheds, and sampling across Charlotte County.

Mr. Hicky asked about implications for the septic-to-sewer project and homeowner costs; discussion followed with Mr. Moody.

Mr. Russell requested clarification on the three sample-color categories (pink, green, yellow) and discussed them with Mr. Moody.

Mr. Hyde asked about non-septic sources of bacterial contamination; discussion followed with Dr. Whitman, Chair Darden, Mr. Moody, and Mr. Russell.

e. FY25/26 Fiscal Reports/Grants – Debbie Thibideau



Mrs. Thibideau presented her report; discussion followed.

Mr. McIntosh reported on the Learn to Sail funding request made with Ms. Thibideau and noted it is proceeding.

Mr. Hyde conferred with Ms. Thibideau regarding pump-out boat funding and reimbursement.

Chair Darden reviewed FY24 open items with Ms. Thibideau; discussion followed.

f. MSBU Update – Matt Logan



Mr. Logan introduced Mr. Benjamin, presented his report, and noted he can revise its layout at the members' request.

Mr. Russell requested information on hot-spot locations, waterway maps, and contract and planning details; discussion followed with Chair Darden and Mr. Logan.

Mr. Hickey asked when barges will be in Alligator Creek; Mr. Logan stated he will address this next month.

g. Community Services Update – Tina Powell



Ms. Powell presented her report; discussion followed with Chair Darden regarding the Placida Boat Ramp and the permit.

7. New Business –
None.

8. Old Business -
Chair Darden outlined the dredging process.

9. Citizens Comments –
Mr. Witzke discussed the beach complex boat ramp, related grants, and county funding; discussion followed with Ms. Powell.

10. Member Discussion –
Chair Darden announced that Mr. Hickey will resign effective December 31.

10. Member Discussion –


Chair Darden announced that Mr. Hickey will resign effective December 31.

11. Next Meetings

- The next pre-agenda meeting will be held Thursday, November 6, 2025, at 9:30 a.m. in the Large Conference Room of the E. Jay Carlson Community Development Building (18400 Murdock Circle, Port Charlotte).
- The next regular meeting will be held Thursday, November 13, 2025, at 9:30 a.m. in Room B-106 in Building B of 18500 Murdock Circle, Port Charlotte.

12. Adjournment at 11:06 a.m.

Submitted by Kimberly Sargent, recording secretary
Community Development Department



Jim Darden, Chair

12/11/25

Date

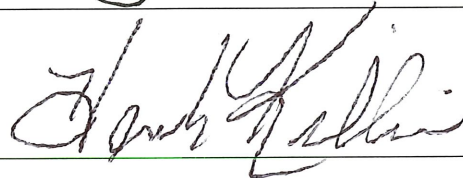
Sign-In Sheet
MARINE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEMBERS - Agenda
October 9, 2025

PLEASE SIGN NEXT TO NAME ON SHEET

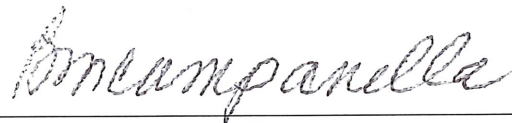
Jim Darden, Chair
Member-at-Large



Hank Killion, Vice-Chair
Member-at-Large



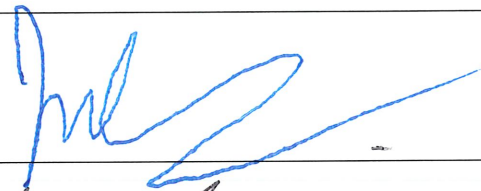
Betty Campanella, Secretary
America's Boating Club - Peace River



Robert Eckert
U.S.C.G.A. Flotilla 87 Englewood



Jenna Ginsberg
South Gulf Cove Yacht Club



Robert Magliozzi
Member-at-Large



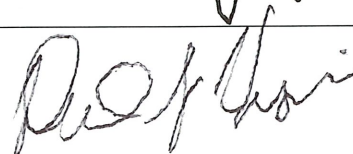
Richard Russell
Member-at-Large



Robert Hickey
Punta Gorda Boaters Alliance



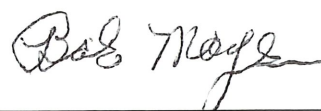
Dave Vigne
Pirate Harbor Yacht Club



Richard Sluzewski
Punta Gorda Boat Club



Bob Mayes
Punta Gorda Isles Fishing Club



PLEASE SIGN NEXT TO NAME ON SHEET

Mike McIntosh
Punta Gorda Sailing Club



Michael Walsh
Harbor Heights Yacht Club

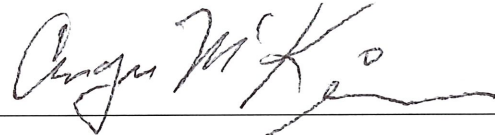
Laura Gassett-Shoemaker
U.S.C.G.A. Flotilla 99 Cape Haze



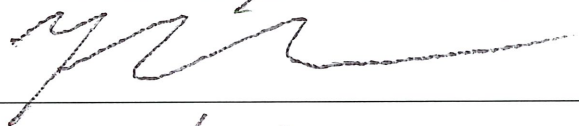
Jim Pase
Isles Yacht Club

Vacant
Burnt Store Isles Boat Club

Angus McKinnon
U.S.C.G.A. Flotilla 98 Charlotte Harbor



Zach Gloer
Charlotte Harbor Yacht Club



Noel Hyde
City of Punta Gorda



Ralph Lombardo
Member-at-Large

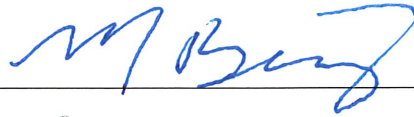


Vacant
Port Charlotte Yacht Club


Sign-In Sheet
MARINE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
STAFF - Agenda
October 9, 2025

PLEASE SIGN NEXT TO NAME ON SHEET

Michael Benjamin, Dredging Project
Manager



Debbie Thibideau, Grants Analyst
Budget & Administrative Services

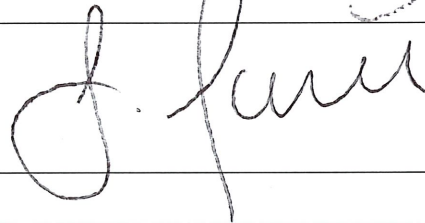


Liz Eastes, Marine Environmental
Specialist

Matthew Logan, Projects Manager
Engineering



Tina Powell, Parks & Natural
Resources Manager Liaison



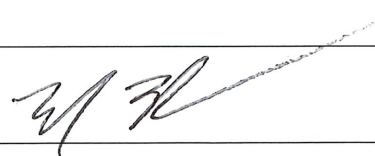
Robert Campbell (Eric), Signing and
Marking Coordinator, Public Works

Matthew McElroy, Deputy Chief
Charlotte County Fire and EMS

Chris Mott, Battalion Chief
Charlotte County Fire and EMS

Janette S. Knowlton, County Attorney
Office of the County Attorney

Brandon Moody, Charlotte County



October 9, 2025

NAME	AFFILIATION
K. McRae	Charlotte Co Sheriff
R. Nelson	Charlotte Co Sheriff
A. Russell	Punta Gorda Police
J Tuttle	Charlotte county Fire / EMS
M. McElroy	CCFEMS
Chuck Witzke	Buena Vista MSBU
David Schunk	Heal over Harbor
Richard Whitman	" "
James McCague	PG HOIT
Steph R. Dutzke	
Mary McMurray	FDEP