

# City of Marco Island Florida

*51 Bald Eagle Drive  
Marco Island, Florida  
cityofmarcoisland.com*



## Meeting Minutes - Final

Wednesday, November 18, 2020

9:00 AM

Community Room

**Beach and Coastal Resources Advisory Committee**

**(1) CALL TO ORDER**

**(2) ROLL CALL**

**Present:** 3 - Member Aronin, Member Bonica and Vice-Chair Eastman

**(3) PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**(4) APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

*Chair Lamb requested for Member Aronin's name to be added to the agenda and a correction to the public comments time.*

**(5) APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

[ID 20-1128](#) Approval of Beach and Coastal Resources Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes of September 16, 2020

**(6) STAFF COMMUNICATIONS**

*Daniel Smith has no information for the Beach and Coastal Resources Advisory Committee members.*

*Chair Lamb questioned regarding updated information on the violation police report and requested it be sent out by email.*

*Daniel Smith mentioned that at the magistrate meeting there were three violations discussed. Some of the violations were for working on the beach during sea turtle nesting season.*

*Vice-Chair Eastman requested if they are able to send the police reports once completed to the Committee members so they can be up to date.*

*Daniel Smith stated that the police reports are only done in preparation for the Magistrate meetings and a lot of times they only get them a couple days before the meeting and at times based on the information, they might have settled it beforehand.*

**(7) PUBLIC COMMENT (TIME CERTAIN 10:00 A.M.)**

*Ed Nold shared his concerns with Beach and Coastal Resources Advisory Committee regarding vehicles on the beach. He believes there are too many vehicles on the beach and is recommending allowing only construction or emergency vehicles. He mentioned that he would like to encourage all owners to support all Sea Turtle guidelines. If sea turtles are nesting later, extend ordinance later. If nesting is done by Oct 3rd, ordinance restrictions should not continue until Oct 31st. Work with the people and more communication needed with homeowners. Recommends email lists, send voice mails to condo owners. For 9pm curfew when does it stop? 5am? 6am? no information and time for lights out.*

*Brad Cornell policy director with Audubon Western Everglades added some comments on the Burrowing Owl program. He mentioned that the starter burrow program is an important research objective to determine how they can stabilize the population of all the Burrowing Owl in Marco Island even if the island builds out and is loosing vacant lots. Regarding Gopher tortoise surveys, Nancy Richie is overseeing biologist Brittany Piersma's work*

*We should be thinking education and deterrence in our ordinances to protect our listed species. Rules need to be enforced. If we don't enforce then we're not saying that we intend to protect these species.*

*Nancy Richie with Island Environmental and Marine Services shared information with the Beach and Coastal Resources Advisory Committee on the Gopher Tortoise survey. She mentioned that it is very important for Marco Island as she has relocated countless tortoises of the Island and the only recipient site for them is in Glades County. All tortoises don't need to be removed for construction. Relocating coastal tortoises to higher latitude inland sites is not ideal and has resulted in high mortality. Protecting gopher tortoises protects an entire ecosystem. Other species use their burrows. FWC currently requires that gopher tortoises have acres when relocated. Need help with contacting homeowners for gopher tortoise survey currently being conducted by Brittany Piersma. This study will give more information to help determine if gopher tortoises can be relocated closer to Marco or even in Marco. Marco gopher tortoises are densely populated but they are healthy. There are fees to remove gopher tortoises. Marco land owners and communities such as Cape Coral have expressed interest in having a conservation easement to be an FWC approved recipient site. See MyFWC.com gopher tortoise guidelines for additional information. Lykes Brothers is recipient site in Glades County. Southwest Florida communities would like to have recipient sites but the minimum acres required are much larger than most communities can support. Marco habitat has supported more dense populations than other areas. No sick tortoises here. If FWC would allow more tortoises per acre that would open up more doors for recipient sites closer to Marco. Do we have land on Marco or at least in Collier County that could be used if restrictions were not as stringent? Nathaniel O'Donnell suggested Safe Harbor for Gopher tortoises. Brittany Piersma suggested we have a wildlife corridor for listed species to roam on the island. Tortoises relocated to a higher latitude, with a colder, different climate, with different soil get stressed, pace, don't eat, and may die. Marco burrowing owls and gopher tortoises have acclimated to being part of a dense population. There is Rookery Bay, Conservation Collier land and other conservation land close to Marco that could be used as recipient sites if FWC guidelines could be relaxed*

*Dan Smith brought up that the city of Marco is working on Phase Two of the comprehensive plan to be discussed at City Council to plan for land use, conservation and transportation for the next 20 years. Conservation and an open space element will be part of the plan and citizens input is needed.*

*Adam DiNuovo started seeing birds with swollen joints. Banding cut short because of bacteria caused illness in the colony. Lost 2/3s of the chicks. In his opinion this was caused by human sewage. Ramping up water quality testing is needed. This is also a human health issue as well.. More frequent water quality testing would help determine the source. Adam's colleagues around the country have never seen this large scale septic arthritis disease. Sand spurs may be responsible for the entry point of the disease. They don't have enough information. These were Marco born birds who died.*

*Adam DiNuovo reported that in the month of July & August skimmers chicks started showing swollen joints, unable to walk or fly and eventually died. testing was being done by FWC and no cause has yet to be identified. DiNuovo added that it is in either the food they are being fed or from the water and that more water testing has to be done to identify the source of the bacteria causing the chicks to die.*

*Brad Cornell talked about the Safe Harbor program. AWE, FWC, BACR, came up with a program to incentivise property owners to attract a listed species - burrowing owls - to their property. Drafted by Jared Griffoni and collaborated with the other parties. Property owner is awarded \$250 per year if owls continue to live in what starts out as a starter burrow and then is completed and occupied by burrowing owls. Safe Harbor is so named to protect the land owner so that if they change their mind about having the burrow and owls on their property they won't be penalized.*

## **(8) PRESENTATIONS**

*Andrew Tyler end of sea turtle season summary slide show presentation comparing Marco data to other beaches in Collier, and also comparing this year to other years. Hatchling disorientations in Marco is 3 times any other beach in the county. Hopefully, the revised ordinance will have a positive effect. Check enforcement at other sites vs. Marco to check if these records make a difference. Favored part of beach*

*for nesting is south end of CWA (critical wildlife area) at the north end of island, near where the last tall condos (South Seas) buildings are. Some data is available of where the disorientations occurred.*

## **(9) OLD BUSINESS**

### **a. Final Draft Sea Turtle Ordinance**

*Chair Lamb suggested emailing Tonia Selmeski a list of questions on the Final Draft Sea Turtle Ordinance rather than going over it during the meeting.*

*Vice-Chair Eastman question regarding the use of flashlights he would like to see an approved safety flashlight for safety measures.*

*Member Tyler mentioned that in the last meeting on the public input discussion one of the things member Eastman came up with on the things that where not in compliance with the draft that there would be a period of time where property would have time to bring it up to compliance.*

*Daniel Smith mentioned that the way code reads is any change, or new windows, need to meet the new 15 percent, light transmittance value.*

### **b. Sea Turtle End of Season brief summary**

*None.*

### **c. Gopher Tortoise survey update**

*Brittany Piersma Biologist with Audubon Western Everglades updated the Beach and Coastal Resources Advisory Committee on the Gopher Tortoise survey. She mentioned that they are working on multiple areas this season working with shorebird conservation borrowing owls and gopher tortoises.*

*Vice-Chair Eastman questioned regarding using a drone to look at properties without permission.*

*Brittany Piersma mentioned that a drone will not be feasible because the borrows are deep and lot of the properties are super dense with vegetation.*

### **d Winter beach stewardship update**

## **(10) NEW BUSINESS**

### **a. Winter beach stewardship update**

*Chair Lamb questioned regarding on the schedule for the Winter Shorebird on Marco Island.*

*Brittany Piersma Biologist with Audubon Western Everglades mentioned that it varies on 3 or 4 days a week and 4 hours each day.*

*Chair Lamb mentioned that she believed as part of a discussion for the Winter beach stewardship program with Audubon and the Beach and Coastal Resources Advisory Committee and voted to continue the educational outreach and have included a proposal to the Marco Island Academy to recruit one or two voluntaries students to participate in the stewardship.*

*Adam DiNuovo, Seabird biologist with Audubon Florida updated the Beach and Coastal Resources Advisory Committee on the Black skimmer research he mentioned they banded some birds back in 2017 and on this 2020 summer they returned to Marco Island as adults and raising chicks of their own, so they have started to see an idea of the survival rate of the birds. He also mentioned that some of the Marco island birds are nesting on Carlos Point on Fort Myers Beach and this is important seeing the birds mixing genes to strengthen the overall fitness of the birds.*

## **(11) COMMITTEE COMMUNICATIONS**

### **a. Update on November 7th Beach Clean-up**

*Chair Lamb informed that the November beach clean up was cancelled. And there will be a beach clean up in December at JW Marriott*

### **b. 2021 Beach Clean-up Sponsors**

*Chair Lamb informed that she has passed around the 2021 Beach Clean-up calendar she also mentioned that there is one new sponsor.*

*StarBucks has agreed to clean the beach with the committee.*

## **(12) ADJOURNMENT**

*There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:47 A.M.*

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*Daisy Martinez, Administrative Technician*

NOTE: TWO OR MORE CITY COUNCILORS OR OTHER COMMITTEE MEMBERS MAY BE PRESENT