

## MINUTES OF THE CAUSEWAY AND COASTAL WATERWAY COMMITTEE

Dunedin Community Center  
May 14, 2024

**Members Present:** Kathleen Sands Martin (Secretary), Al Crossman, Jill Gunn (Chair), Rob Kearton (Vice-Chair), Nancy Schmidt, Jim Hughes, Phil Wirth, Ron Matuska, Harry Mattheus, Tom Parson, Dave Birkenhauer, and Glen Steinke.

**Unexcused:** NA

**City Staff:** Natalie Gass, Sustainability Coordinator; Heather Bonner, Sr. Administrative Assistant

**Guest:** Beth Reynolds, Honeymoon Island; John Tomnga, City Commission; Judy Chiswell, FWC; and Brian Ferguson, FWC

**This item will be left on the report as a reminder.** Reviewed the “unexcused” attendance policy. If a member cannot attend a meeting it will be recorded as unexcused. Reminding everyone that if someone misses consecutive three meetings or 50%, they may be removed from the committee. Lanie stated that it should not be a concern for this committee.

**CALL TO ORDER: Meeting called to order at 8:00 by Chair Jill Gunn**

### 1. ADMINISTRATIVE

- a. **Approval of Minutes** – Chair Gunn announced the agenda item and asked if anyone had any additions, deletions, or corrections to the minutes. Hearing none, Chair Gunn asked for a motion.

**MOTION:** Motion was made by Nancy and seconded by Dave to approve the March 13, 2024, minutes.

**VOTE:** Motion carried unanimously.

### 2. OLD BUSINESS

- a. NA.

### 3. NEW BUSINESS

- a. FWC Presentation
  - i. An in-depth discussion was held regarding jet skis and the disruption they cause. Three times a year people arrive from around the state and launch with no permits. Not enough room to park and with all the vehicles are causes major disruption. Need better coordination with the Pinellas County Sheriff’s office. Discussion was held on limiting the number of permits.

- ii. Glen mentioned the vendors selling products on the causeway. Jill informed everyone that prior chair of the committee would emphasize that access to the Causeway was first come first served. Signs on the causeway states no boats; should say no vessels. Jet skis are a vessel as is kayak and paddleboards.
  - iii. If there are dogs on the causeway the FWC cannot ticket due to having no jurisdiction. Communication between FWC and Pinellas County Sheriff's office needs to improve. Jill Gunn was personally reaching out to the Sheriff to inquire about this issue.
  - iv. Discussed the groups who have jet ski events: Sea Riders, Florida Ski Riders and Boat Setters – they all rent jet skis and drop off. No permits are needed to launch off the causeway and this causes more people to visit Dunedin Causeway. November is the next Florida ski group event. The FB page for the Dunedin Causeway is very popular. Request Lanie to research the owner of the page to monitor information that is being posted and invite to meeting.
- b. Honeymoon Island Presentation
- i. No vessels signs and need to put up near swimming area.
  - ii. Governor opening all state parks within the state Friday 5/24 – 5/27 Free admission.
  - iii. Oyster Bay restoration 2015 Tampa Bay Watch by toll booths. Sea Wall crumbling. TBW has a fulltime oyster bed team. Rick from TBW believes this area would be great having volunteers at Honeymoon Island to assist in training/picking up oysters at local restaurants (they have a list of the restaurants). TBW provides buckets to the restaurants; they also provide the washing and drying.

#### 4. AREA REPORTS

- a. **Causeway** – Dave Birkenhauer – Put signs where people can see them. Suggested putting signage on the ground. Roadway in excellent condition using a course material to fill.
- b. **Boating Report** – Nancy Schmidt – Traffic in channel is overwhelming. Control speed in channel.
- c. **Storm Water Report** – Tom Parson – Rate study completed. Raising rate. \$300,000 grant received.
- d. **CEQS Report** – Phil Wirth - New members and discussed Hurricane information.
- e. **Public Safety Report** – Jim Hughes – Wheely poppers in the downtown area, very dangerous (young teenagers), with no helmet wearing. Fine is \$100.00.
- f. **Concessionaire Report** – Glen Steinke - May 19<sup>th</sup> triathlon. Bridge is scheduled to be replaced 2028- 2031. It will be the higher-level bridge. 42ft catamaran at low tide stuck, if something is not done HURRICANE Pass will close.

Pinellas County Sheriff's Dept cannot enforce city ordinance. Glen stated that the PCSD uses his security footage. Bathrooms close at 9:00PM. Young people always trying to get into bathrooms. Sheriff's office called. Vince Gizzi recommended that the closing time be changed to 10:00pm.

**Open Floor - NA**

**Next Meeting:**

a) June 11, 2024 at 8:00 am

b) Future Topics:

Request Lanie to review ordinance permitting number of jet skis on causeway.

**Adjourn Meeting:** Meeting adjourned at 9:37 am