

**Miami River Commission's
Economic Development & Commerce Subcommittee
February 15, 2024**

Miami River Commission's (MRC) Economic Development & Commerce Subcommittee Chairman Philip Everingham convened a public meeting on February 15, 2024, 1407 NW 7 ST, at 10:30 AM. The sign in sheet is attached.

I) Discuss Status of Miami-Dade County's Manatee Protection Plan Review Committee's Recommended Revisions to Miami-Dade County's Manatee Protection Plan

A few copies of the following documents were distributed for review and discussion:

- 1) Memo Version of Miami-Dade County's Manatee Protection Plan Review Committee's Recommended Revisions to Miami-Dade County's Manatee Protection Plan (2010 after \$1,000,000 in data, analysis, and 2 years of public meetings - never considered by the Board of County Commissioners)
- 2) Track Changed Version of Miami-Dade County's Manatee Protection Plan Review Committee's Recommended Revisions to Miami-Dade County's Manatee Protection Plan (2010 - never considered by the Board of County Commissioners)
- 3) Miami Dade County "Report on the County's Marina Capacity and Long Term Plans for Addressing Shortages in Marina Capacity" (2016)

Rockell Alhale, Miami Dade County Department of Environmental Resource Management (DERM), stated they have been working on a new set of proposed draft revisions to the Manatee Protection Plan, which will be ready for release and public input in 2 months, followed by County Commission consideration before the end of 2024.

Attendees discussed the Memo Version of Miami-Dade County's Manatee Protection Plan Review Committee's Recommended Revisions to Miami-Dade County's Manatee Protection Plan Motion 22 recommending the creation of a "Manatee Protection Fund, \$5,000,000 per year, 10% for public Education, 40% for increased law enforcement and 50% for environmental restoration or mooring modification projects benefiting manatees." If the Manatee Protection Fund had been implemented when recommended in 2010, it would have already generated \$70 million for the protection of Manatees. Attendees noted the Committee's Motion #1 recommends increasing fines for violations of the idle no wake speed zone, which should be supplemented with additional marine patrol resources. The documents recommendations also include increasing the number of allowable boat slips at some County owned marinas such as Black Point, Oleta, and Rickenbacker Marinas.

Attendees noted a significant number of Manatee fatalities are not caused by vessels, docked vessels do not generate any threat to manatees, and enforcing the Miami River's idle no wake speed zone is the best way to protect the Manatees from potential harm from vessels. Attendees noted boat slips on the Miami River are needed to protect the increasing number of registered vessels during Hurricanes. Transitory slips provide an opportunity for a vessel to dock and turn off their engines for hours of their outing, therefore reducing potential harm for manatees. Orin Black suggested considering it has been over 20 years since the Manatee Protection Plan was adopted, upcoming revisions should allow for 1,000 new boat slips.

Philip Everingham, Chairman of the MRC's Economic Development & Commerce subcommittee, suggested the MRC recommend the Board of County Commissioners adopt the Miami-Dade County Manatee Protection Plan Review Committee's recommended revisions to Miami-Dade County's Manatee Protection Plan as a starting point, in addition to the following revisions:

- 1) The regulations for Transitory Slips in Miami-Dade County should be the same as Broward County and West Palm Beach County. FIND gave funding for transitory docks allowed an installed in FT Lauderdale and West Palm Beach, yet the Miami-Dade County Manatee Protection Plan doesn't currently allow for them.**
- 2) Existing boatyards need to be encouraged to thrive or there is a risk we will lose them. The very limited number of slips a boatyard may have has been capped for over 20 years. Therefore need to create a process to consider increased slips (without a transfer of slips) at boatyards.**
- 3) The City of Miami's few remaining parcels zoned D3 and D1 with Port Miami River Land Use require job generating marine industrial businesses, yet the Manatee Protection Plan doesn't allow enough boat slips for a successful marine industrial business to survive, therefore several of the few remaining sites with this marine industrial land use and zoning are vacant which is not in the best interest of the property owners rights nor potential marine industrial businesses which generate good jobs which pay well above the County average. Therefore allow the few remaining properties with Port Miami River Land Use and Zoning designations more flexibility in order to allow them to operate successful marine industrial businesses.**

II) Discuss Miami-Dade County Tax Appraiser's Implementation of the "Working Waterfronts" Approved Referendum

The Working Waterfront referendum passed many years ago, but the FL Legislature didn't adopt enabling legislation. Therefore, each county property appraiser is applying it as a constitutional officer. Miami Dade County applies the working waterfront legislation only to the land of the permitted marine industrial business, but surprisingly does not apply it to the marine industrial businesses necessary small office structure located on the same marine industrial business folio.

MRC EDC Subcommittee Chairman Everingham suggested the MRC recommend the Miami-Dade County Tax Appraiser include a Marine Industrial Business' necessary office structure in the same "Working Waterfronts" assessment classification which they currently assign to only the land of the same working waterfront folio.

III) New Business

Scott Canning, Aqua Super Power, stated his company builds, owns and operates level 3 superfast smart chargers for electric vessels in marinas, boatyards, restaurants, etc. They are seeking 15-20 year location deals, where Aqua Super Power pays for everything and eventually charges users for power. Mr. Canning stated Mercury and Yamaha are starting to manufacture electric engines now, joining smaller startup companies. In addition, Mr. Canning expressed a desire to provide an electric Water Taxi service on the Miami River. Mr. Canning noted electric engines reduce carbon emissions and fuel spills.

The public meeting adjourned.

Miami River Commission Economic Development and Commerce Subcommittee's

Public Meeting

February 15, 2024 – 10:30 AM

1407 NW 7 ST, Arts and Crafts Boardroom (facing Miami River)

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