

**MINUTES
HARBOR COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY
ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
AUGUST 10, 2016 - 5:30 PM
DESTIN CITY HALL BOARDROOM**

1. CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Buckingham called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. on Wednesday, August 10, 2016 in the Destin City Hall Board Room.

2. ROLL CALL:

| <u>Members Present</u> | <u>Members Absent</u> | <u>Staff Present</u> |
|------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Mike Buckingham | Casey Jones | Deputy City Clerk Kim Montgomery |
| James Green | | Steve Schmidt, Interim Comm. Dev. Dir |
| Sandy Trammell | | |
| Mike Raim | | |
| Jan Best | | |
| Tom Case | | |

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: July 13, 2016

On a motion by Committee member Raim, seconded by Committee member Trammell, the members voted 6-0 to approve the minutes of the July 13, 2016

4. OLD BUSINESS:

- **Status on Recommendations to the CRA**

The Interim Community Development Director explained that in regards to their recommendation for the moratorium on Food Trucks the City Council will hear for first reading ordinance 16-19-LC on August 15. He also explained the process for Ordinance 16-12-LC regarding the Festive Market Place boundary lines for open containers. He also informed them that their request to petition the FDOT to delay the reduction of the speed limit to 25 mph in Harbor District for a period of 3 months in order to evaluate how well the pedestrian cross walks are used failed to get passed by City Council however the alternate motion to send a letter to FDOT to petition for the reduction of the speed limit in the Harbor District passed.

5. NEW BUSINESS:

- **Work Shop - Rental vessels in the Harbor District**

According to the Chairman, they are here tonight to discuss and come up with solutions on how to work through the concerns that everyone has regarding livery vessels and how to get a handle on the current issues in and around the harbor.

The Interim Community Development Director explained that staff has received push back from the citizens, Councilmembers, and Advisory Committee members too and staff realizes that they are

having a difficult time in getting a handle on the situation, for various reasons, and is looking into creating a full time Harbor Master to help staff get control. Pointing out that staff has been charged to come up with some sort of resolution to control the problem in a way that is fair for everyone and this is the first effort to get everyone involved together for input.

The Chairman stated that since the committee has already discussed this he would like to give the people in the audience a chance to voice their concerns or ideas and reminded them all that they each have 5-minutes to speak.

→**Brandon Rooks, 102 Harbor Lane – Marler Property**

Suggests a third party tram/shuttle system to have in place to shuttle people to and from the different businesses on the harbor. He also suggests the shuttles pick their customers up at their hotel or condo to help alleviate the traffic congestion as well as parking. He feels that the potential is there and it can happen. Committee member Trammell asked him if he already has a shuttle and according to Mr. Rooks, he does not have one yet, but proposes that either the condos provide the service, the pontoon companies provide them, or he could open a business and provide the service.

→**Ed Rogers, 500 Harbor Blvd**

After attending a couple of meetings, he realizes that Council and the committee members do not understand their business and the complexities of the issues they encounter at all. What he would like to see is a committee created and made up of several pontoon and wave runner business owners to meet, discuss and come up with better solutions; pointing out that he feels they would come up with a better plan than what the committee members could. He said that what they don't want is a well-intended idea put upon them that doesn't work and frustrates everyone. He feels that now that their season is over, with the exception of Labor Day weekend, they now have time to sit down, discuss, and come up with ideas to present to this committee for direction.

For clarification, Committee member Best informed him that they have been discussing these issues for almost 3-years now and no one would listen to them and is why they started pushing this during high season; to try to get their attention to the current problems and not ignore them any longer. She also pointed out that parking is not just the only problem; it's also about quality of life and this committee wants a solution before next season.

Committee member Green explained that in regards to the Harbor Master position, it's not just about policing the Jet Ski and Pontoon boats businesses; it's about regulating everything that has to do with the harbor district.

→**Sherry Andrews - Seachase Watersports 314 Harbor Blvd.**

Informed the members that she thinks that the counts are flawed because when she got her notice for her Business Tax Receipt renewal, there was 7-wave runners listed and she does not rent them out; adding that she has pontoon boats only and provides either a kayak or a paddle board for each rental. She explained that if she went by what the city says she rents, she should provide 150-parking spaces when in reality, she only needs 65. Adding that hearing the talk about this around the boardwalk, was the first time that she has ever heard that that the committee has had any issues about anything and would like to have time to provide input before any decisions are made.

Committee member Green asked for an explanation regarding the units. According to the

Community Development Director, units are based on the vessel as far as parking is concerned, a 12-passenger pontoon boat is based on 1-space per 4-passengers therefore; they would need 3-spaces and a 14-passenger would need 4-spaces per pontoon boat. He pointed out that currently, there are no provisions in the code for kayaks and paddle boards.

→**Mr. Darryl Shelton 18 Norriego Road**

Spoke of an incident that happened this past summer with the rental the house next door to him and how his dock was used by not only the guest but the company that rented the pontoon boat out to them without any regard to his private property.

→**Guy Tadlock, 502 Norriego Road**

Feels that proof of insurance should be one of the main requirements and if they also add good guidelines into the rules and enforce them equally, as well as requiring identifying rental information on the boats then they should see some improvements in the problems.

→**Mike Abadie, 530 Harbor Blvd**

Spoke of how the laws are already on the books and if he or anyone is found to have more boats than what they have in parking spaces then issue a stop work order on them so they cannot do business until they bring their business back into compliance. He pointed out that enforcement starts with the landlords, then the business owners showing proof of insurance.

The Chairman stated that everything that he has mentioned, they have already discussed and what he would like to see is that he and his colleagues meet and come up with solutions and bring them back before this board.

Committee member Green asked for a few ideas in order to raise funds for the City in order to fund the necessary positions. According to Mr. Abadie, he is agreeable with raising the millage rate as well as hiking the business tax receipt fees for every landowner and business owner on the harbor.

For clarification purposes, the Interim Community Development Director pointed out that they do not have the ability to issue stop work orders on businesses that is only enforceable for construction without a permit; adding that also, they can only issue a Code Violation against the property owner and not the business operator.

→**David Schuessler, Holiday Isle Improvement Association**

Pointed out that it seems that the ones that are causing the problems and not following the rules of the codes are not present here tonight. He also mentioned how down in Monroe County in the Keys, wave runners and jet skis are not allowed to be operated without a licensed guide that takes them out of the harbor to run and brings them back in.

→**Charles DuPlantis**

Feels that charging a fee for each slip in the harbor would help fund the positions needed to enforce the codes and added that it should be done across the board fairly for everyone and not just the Jet Ski, Wave Runner and pontoon businesses should have to.

The Chairman clarified that is exactly what he said at the beginning of the workshop and never specified any certain group

→**John Stevens - 102 Bay Court** stated that the information that was discussed was good information and asked that the members provide to them what they would like to see implemented so that when they get together to have their discussions, they can use them to add to their ideas and also to let them know a date of when they would like to have everything put together to come back and present everything.

→**Tracy McGraw - 410 Ridgewood Circle** spoke of how the members of the committee are all volunteers that represent the community and do not get paid for it. He suggested that if the people don't like what is being proposed by the committee members or what's happening down on the harbor, or see a business that is not running by the rules, then do something about it. Report the ones that they know are not being honest because those people are only taking away from the honest businesses. He spoke of the importance of the demographics for the city and how some of the businesses need to be cleaned up as well as the surrounding areas to draw the right kind of crowds to the city. He spoke of how if there is anyone doesn't believe that the harbor is out of control, then they are kidding themselves, and how they sure don't want to be on national news and sued because someone died or got hurt real bad from operating a vessel that they shouldn't have been; similar to what happened to Panama City last year when the two teens were parasailing and got slammed into a condominium.

Committee member Best made the motion that to commission a task force that operates on a 30-day basis to bring back recommendations to help solve the current issues that they have with the industry. Committee member Green provided the second for sake of discussion.

According to Committee member Green, he thinks that it would be beneficial to get input regarding the industry. Pointing out that it's not about charging the \$500.00 or putting anyone out of business. It's about making the people adhere to what everyone else has to. He explained that he wants to make it clear that this is not an attack on the pontoon boats and spoke of how there is a big difference between a charter boat pulling out and a pontoon boat pulling out to just be replaced by another pontoon boat. That the aesthetics of the rental business is just as important and with all of them being so close together, and feels that getting industry leadership input would help, pointing out that it's not the only problem down there but, it is one of them.

According to Committee member Trammell, to her it is a sign of growing pains and the city didn't have this problem before the boardwalk and feels that it's a reaction to an action and now we need to figure out how to manage it. She also spoke of how there are people renting out their pontoon boats all along the coastline and feels that none are providing appropriate lessons on operating them as well as the BRBO providing them to their renters. She spoke of how many times she has witnessed jet skis flying through no wake zones and how there are other issues that need to be addressed besides parking. Such as the pollution problems and where the people are using the bathroom. She spoke of how urgent this is and how they need to find solutions soon before the harbor becomes like Tampa, where it's shut down completely.

Committee member Raim spoke of the need to put a limit on the businesses by means of a moratorium. He spoke how he has worked 20 some odd years ago with Gene Smith to try to come up with a solution to the parking problems and how they are still doing it and how back then, City Officials rejected the idea of offsite parking and now, the City is doing the opposite. He spoke of how a study was done a couple years ago on the pontoon/boat/wave runner rental business and over 50% of those

businesses on the harbor had too many then in comparison to their required parking and were in violation. He challenged the business owners to come back with their ideas that could be recommendations to present to the CRA but reminded them that they are only suggestions and the CRA makes the final decisions. He spoke of the need for self-regulation in regards to who they rent to and of an incident that he witnessed this season of a party of 8 or 9 people on a local pontoon boat who were out in the Gulf of Mexico down by the El Matador and how the seas were up and he called in their location because he knew they would be needing help. As well as witnessing people running the rental wave runners and jet skis too fast and too close to his dock at his home residence.

According to Committee member Best, the reasoning behind her motion is for them to get their selves together, nominate their own chairman and involve this committee in their discussions. The Interim Community Development Director cautioned the audience regarding the Sunshine Law and how they would need to send their input and ideas to him and he would distribute to the Committee members to discuss at their next meeting and how important it is for them to not be a conduit for their information to City Council.

The Chairman asked the audience to get together and come up with their list of issues and concerns to present to them next month so that they can as a whole, make a recommendation to the CRA for solutions, adding that he and this committee do not want to delay this anymore and wants a solution before the season starts back up in the spring.

The motion passes unanimously 6-0.

The Interim Community Development Director stated that what he has so far is the following:

- parking
- safety
- proof of insurance
- copy of state/livery license
- lease agreements (proprietary information protected)
- craft identification

Adding that there is another of other issues that they are working on as well and not just the issues they discussed tonight; such as outdoor seating, food truck/trailer vendors, portable buildings, etc.

According to Committee member Best, she would also like the length of time for compliance and assessing daily fines until the business is brought into compliance to be addressed, pointing out that it needs to be tough. She also would like input on how they feel about moratoriums, and lastly and most important to her is quality of life issues on the harbor.

According to Committee member Trammell the job description of what a Harbor Master does should be provided so that they can address input on what this person should have the authority to do. She would also like to have the winter storage of vessels addressed. Explaining that seeing the vessels parked in parking lots on 98 in the winter months does not look good especially to our winter guests. Another item she would like addressed is what they can do as business owners to help raise the funds to help pay for and build a parking deck.

The Chairman thanked the audience for coming to the meeting and providing the input.

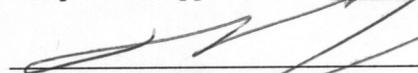
6. **DISCUSSION:**

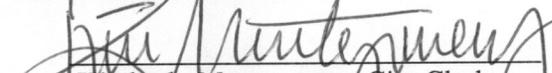
- Committee member Comments

ADJOURNMENT:

Having no further business at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 8:10 PM.

Adopted and approved this 14th day of September 2016.


Mike Buckingham, Chairman


Kimberly Montgomery, City Clerk