

CITY OF CORAL GABLES WATERWAY ADVISORY BOARD
427 BILTMORE WAY – 2nd FLOOR
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 2, 2020 - 5:30 P.M.

VIRTUAL ZOOM MEETING

- MEETING MINUTES -

MEMBERS	District	M 19	J 19	S 19	O 19	N 19	D 19	J 20	F 20	M 20	S 20	APPOINTED BY:
Lisette Stancioff	1	E	P	P	P	P	E	P	P	P	P	Raul Valdes-Fauli
Carla Isaías	3	-	P	P	E	P	E	P	P	P	P	Jorge L. Fors
Juan A. Galan Jr	3	E	E	P	E	E	E	P	P	P	P	Patricia Keon
Manny Chamizo	2	P	P	P	P	E	P	P	P	P	P	Vince Lago
Mario Lamar	4	P	P	A	A	E	E	P	P	E	P	Michael Mena
Douglas Yoder	CR	E	E	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	Peter Iglesias
Bertham Goldsmith	7	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	E	E	P	Commission-As-A-Whole
John Swain	2	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	Commission-As-A-Whole
Andria Codina Miyares	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	P	P	E	P	Board-As-A-Whole

P – Present
E – Excused Absence
A – Absent
(-) – No Appointment

(*) – No Meeting

STAFF:

Jorge Acevedo, Utilities Division Director/Board Secretary
Pilar Wiese, Recording Secretary
Velier Zaccheo, Marine Patrol
Maj. Brian Lawrence, CGPD

GUESTS:

None

CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order at 5:45 p.m. The roll was taken and a quorum was present.

MEETING MINUTES APPROVAL:

A motion was made to “Approve the minutes of March 4, 2020.” The motion was seconded, voted upon and adopted unanimously.

PRESENTATIONS/DISCUSSIONS:

- Discussion to add a pedestrian underpass as part of LeJeune Bridge project took place.

Mr. Swain reported meeting with Vice Mayor Lago and Commisioner Mena regarding a project to include a pedestrian underpass on LeJeune Bridge for safety and area improvement. He said both Commission members liked the idea. The county was previously contemplating replacing the existing bridge and now it has accelerated the schedule for the bridge's replacement. Mr. Swain is concerned that the bridge design will be done without any pedestrian underpass. He asked board members to write to their appointing Commisioners for their support.

Mr. Galan said that during the project presentation the county is not considering a pedestrian underpass so this undertaking should be a City project, perhaps lead by the Parks Department. He stated that the design from the county should consider the underpass with ADA requirements and bike path access so people can cross safely under the bridge without stopping traffic on LeJeune Road. Members agreed that the area needs much attention as it is currently very unattractive, but it has a lot of potential.

Discussion was held regarding the construction project starting date and traffic interruption to access the park and the traffic circle. The County expects to start the project in Summer 2021, with traffic interruption of about three to four months during construction. Members also discussed the selected steel bridge instead of concrete bridge as it is faster to be installed, as well as the additional bridge clearance and that it should have an arch.

Mr. Yoder commented that LeJeune Road is a state road and this should be a FDOT project so they will be doing the contracting. He said this Board should recommend the City to engage the county and the state to plan for this walkway underneath the bridge even if the City would design and contract it after the fact.

Mr. Galan said that board should recommend the City to undertake this as a park project and connect the east and west areas with a passage for easier and safer access; to recommend the county to build this bridge with a higher clearance to allow future water rides to end with the same clearance it now has. The county should not miss this opportunity to build a lasting bridge with the right elevation.

There is a concern that boaters in the summer might not be able to use their vessels during the construction period. Hours of construction should be restricted on the waterways and should be conducted at night to minimize traffic disruptions. Adequate notice should be provided to all waterway property owners so they are aware of closures during construction.

A motion was made, “For the City to engage the County and the State to plan for this walkway underneath the bridge even if the City would design and construct it after the fact.” The motion was seconded, voted upon and adopted unanimously.

A motion was made, “For the City to undertake this park project and connect the east and west areas with a passage way for easier and safer access.” The motion was seconded, voted upon and adopted unanimously.

A motion was made, “To recommend the County to build the bridge to a higher clearance, at least 2 ft. over of what it is now.” The motion was seconded, voted upon and adopted unanimously.

A motion was made, “To the maximum extend possible, hours of construction on the waterways should be at night, on weekdays, minimizing interference with boat traffic on the waterways due to construction and to provide adequate notice to all waterway property owners so that they are aware when the waterways will be closed for construction.” The motion was seconded, voted upon and adopted unanimously.

Re-routing traffic during construction of the bridge is another concern. Mr. Galan said this issue was brought up at the county meeting and is being considered. He said the county is planning to re-route traffic to 57th Ave, hoping to avoid detours on Granada or Hardee Rd. Although these bridges have weight restrictions, heavy traffic will cause deterioration. Mr. Galan added that the county discussed having police presence to detour traffic from Cocoplum Circle and surrounding areas to 57th Ave and to US1. This will be a big diversion of traffic and it will be difficult for drivers to follow that route and not to take Granada and Hardee Road as alternate routes.

Members asked Jorge Acevedo to inquire about what is being done to make sure that any detours going across that bridge are not going in some way impair the structural integrity of bridges.

Mr. John Swain was asked to be the designated person for the project on behalf of the Board.

- Mr. Acevedo reported that after few months of negotiations with FIU, the scope of work was approved to start the Water Quality project for this coming fiscal year. FIU is conducting a study on tide and sedimentation. The project is budgeted for next two fiscal years. Analysis will show nutrients and other pollutants coming from septic tanks into the waterways. The idea is to collect as much data as possible and to figure out where the pollutants are coming from, storm drainage from the golf course or from septic tanks.

Mr. Yoder said there was a discussion at the County Commission meeting about septic tank contributions to condition of Biscayne Bay. Before spending a lot of money to do something about septic tanks you have to have a reasonable idea of what are you going to get in return. What may be happening in Biscayne Bay is probably due to the warm waters which may have a triggering factor, causing the fish to die and then creating the algee bloom.

- Mr. Galan commented that he had seen more boat traffic than normal lately. He has a concern about marine patrolling over the weekends. Major Lawrence reported that there was unusual activity lately as a paddle boater was missing and there was a search for him. The incident was on Key Biscayne area but CG Marine Patrol participated on that search. Also, a sea plane overturned and marine patrol responded to the incident. They also monitored Tropical Storm Laura and they were concerned with vessels and sail boats coming to dock in the mangrove area. It has been a busy time for them but assured members that marine patrol does schedule coverage during the weekends and will pass on their concerns.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting adjourned at 6:45PM

NEXT MEETING:

Wednesday, October 7, 2020 at 5:30 p.m.