



CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE

**MEETING MINUTES  
CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE  
100 NORTH ANDREWS AVENUE  
COMMISSION CONFERENCE ROOM – EIGHTH FLOOR  
FORT LAUDERDALE, FLORIDA  
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 5, 2019 – 6:00 P.M.**

**Cumulative Attendance  
May 2019 – April 2020**

Grant Henderson, Chair	P	6	1
Ed Strobel, Vice Chair (dep. 7:23)	P	6	1
Cliff Berry II	A	4	3
Robyn Chiarelli	P	2	0
James Harrison	P	2	2
Rose Ann Lovell	P	7	1
Kitty McGowan (arr. 6:05)	P	4	3
Ted Morley	P	2	0
Norbert McLaughlin	P	8	0
Curtis Parker	A	3	4
Rossana Petreccia	P	5	2
Roy Sea	A	6	1
Randy Sweers	P	2	4
Bill Walker (arr. 6:06)	P	6	1

As of this date, there are 14 appointed members to the Board, which means 8 would constitute a quorum.

**Staff**

Andrew Cuba, Manager of Marine Facilities  
Jonathan Luscomb, Marine Facilities Supervisor  
Lawrence Teich, Environmental Resources Supervisor  
Officer Laurie Arthur, Fort Lauderdale Police Department  
Brigitte Chiappetta, Recording Secretary, Prototype, Inc.

**Communications to City Commission**

None.

**I. Call to Order / Roll Call**

Chair Henderson called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

**II. Approval of Minutes – October 3, 2019 & November 7, 2019**

**Motion** made by Mr. Morley, seconded by Ms. Chiarelli, to approve the October 3, 2019 minutes. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

**Motion** made by Vice Chair Strobel, seconded by Mr. Morley, to approve the November 7, 2019 minutes. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

### **III. Statement of Quorum**

It was noted a quorum was present at the meeting.

### **IV. Waterway Crime & Boating Safety Report**

Officer Laurie Arthur of the Fort Lauderdale Police Department reported the following Marine Unit activity from November 2019:

- 0 burglaries
- 85 warnings
- 11 citations
- 28 safety inspections
- 2 accidents
- 12 reports, including 5 informational reports
- 1 fire, possibly arson
- 1 stolen yacht found in Broward County

Officer Arthur advised that she and Sergeant Todd Mills of the Marine Unit met with members of a joint task force in Miami to discuss the burglaries that have occurred in recent months.

### **V. Discussion – Water Quality Update / Larry Teich**

Larry Teich, Environmental Supervisor for the City of Fort Lauderdale, explained that he oversees the City's pollutant and discharge elimination system, as well as environmental sampling and inspections. Since 2016, there have been no major sewer line breaks in the City's sanitary sewer system, and sanitary sewer overflows (SSOs) have been reduced from millions of gallons to approximately 100,000 gallons on an annual basis. There were no SSOs in November 2019.

Mr. Teich continued that SSOs are now smaller than before, reflecting normal sewer backups and clogs in the system. Infiltration and intrusion (I&I) has also been addressed by a sewer lining project that has been underway over the last five years, with approximately \$5 million budgeted per year for this purpose. This project prevents water from intruding into pipes, which reduces the amount of fresh water being treated at the water treatment plant.

The City is under a Consent Order from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) to undertake roughly \$500,000 in capital improvement projects. They

also passed a \$200 million bond to implement infrastructure improvements to the sewer system. These include an asset management program, which identifies infrastructure and communicates between operations and regulatory agencies so it can be replaced in a timely manner.

All of Broward County is currently under a total maximum daily load (TMDL) allocation for fecal coliform bacteria, which dates back to 2012. The north fork of the New River was designated the highest priority for this allocation. The City plans to walk through all water management areas within Broward County to address this issue.

At present, there is only one area in Fort Lauderdale permitting live-aboard vessels under Code, which is the Isle of Venice/Hendricks Isle area. Pump-out facilities are available at multiple City locations at no charge, and a sewage tugboat may be called upon for assistance if needed. It is possible that some Parks Bond funds may be allocated to Cooley's Landing to upgrade both the marina and the pump-out facilities.

Vice Chair Strobel expressed concern that no entity at any marina is regularly checking live-aboard vessels to ensure appropriate frequency of pump-outs by maintaining a log or other tracking measure. He added that the Board has previously discussed how to ensure vessels anchored at Lake Sylvia are pumping out waste. Vice Chair Strobel noted that in other marine regions of the country, such as the Florida Keys and the Great Lakes, a no-discharge system is required. He continued that it is also typical for vessels to discharge "gray water," which is also an environmental concern.

Mr. Harrison asked how pump-out stations are inspected. Mr. Teich replied that stations that do not work are typically reported to the marina. Mr. Cuba clarified that when the City learns of a facility that is not working, they prepare a work order and address the situation as quickly as possible. Pump-out facilities are available throughout the Las Olas Marina, Cooley's Landing, the south side of the New River, Marshall Point, Smoker Park, and the 15<sup>th</sup> Street Boat Ramp.

Mr. McLaughlin requested additional information on the quality of water in Fort Lauderdale. Mr. Teich stated that FDEP has found all of Broward County is affected by fecal coliform bacteria. There are plans to educate the population in order to reduce inputs. He pointed out that some of these bacteria come from animals as well as humans, and the tropical climate is conducive to the breeding of bacteria. The City's stormwater systems come from every area of the City and discharge their water into the rivers. As more development occurs, the less pervious area is available. Pollution retardant boxes are being installed on catch basins in the stormwater system.

With regard to construction site runoff, Mr. Teich continued that any development larger in size than one acre may be inspected by his Department. Some cities require use of a pit to prevent construction runoff into water systems. Since the 1970s, Broward County has actively monitored water quality on all its waterways through sampling. The County also regularly tests the water for coliform and e coli bacteria at select locations.

Mr. Graves asked if the City's infrastructure is sufficient to address ongoing development. Mr. Teich replied that before a project is constructed, developers must determine the impact it will have on water and wastewater treatment facilities and ensure that existing infrastructure is sufficient to support it. This is more difficult with regard to I&I, as filtration systems must be designed to prevent the intrusion of groundwater or other freshwater.

## **VI. Presentation – Tri-Rail Coastal Link, New River Bridge Feasibility Study – Update**

Larry Merritt, representing the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), Howard Newman and Leo Villalobos of HDR Engineering, and David Mairena of the Corradino Group, consultants, provided a second presentation of alternatives for the proposed Tri-Rail Coastal Link.

Mr. Newman explained that the feasibility study for the New River Bridge was directed by the Florida Legislature and considers potential solutions to maritime navigation issues on that waterway, as well as how to move the project forward into different phases of development. They also hope to identify potential funding sources and define next steps for implementation. The study will be delivered to the Florida Legislature by January 2020.

The subject area includes a freight crossing on the New River, which is used by Brightline as well as freight service. This contributes to more closings of the bridge, which the study hopes to address. The team has continued analyzing costs for the four alternatives presented at the November 2019 Marine Advisory Board (MAB) meeting, and continues to meet with a number of agencies, including the Marine Industries Association of South Florida (MIASF).

The first alternative is a low-level bascule bridge, which would provide 21 ft. clearance from the bottom of the bridge structure to mean high water. This is 15 to 18 ft. higher than the existing bascule bridge. The bridge would extend approximately 400 ft. in either direction on both banks.

Pros and cons for the low-level include:

- No impact to Broward Boulevard or the existing Brightline station
- Maximizing the use of existing tracks
- 21 ft. vertical clearance is consistent with the Andrews Avenue Bridge
- Minimal visual and noise impacts
- Closure of Himmarshee St. and SW 5<sup>th</sup> Street
- Impacts to 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue businesses and nearby historic areas

A new boat analysis would be conducted as part of the project development and environmental (PD&E) study.

The mid-level alternative would provide 56.5 ft. clearance from the river and would elevate the existing Brightline station platform by 55 ft. The bridge would span approximately 1.3 mile, with a 2.5 mile overall impact for the tracks. No crossings to the north or south sides would be impacted, although SW 7<sup>th</sup> Street would be closed.

Pros and cons for the mid-level bridge include:

- Improved clearance for vessels with higher masts
- Cross-street passenger rail traffic from SW 7<sup>th</sup> Street north to Andrews Avenue would be elevated, improving traffic operations and safety at those crossings
- Significant impact to existing Brightline station
- Temporary construction impacts along SW 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue
- Additional aerial impacts associated with noise
- Visual, noise, and vibration impacts on cultural resources

Mr. Newman noted that in order to minimize right-of-way impact, bascule hinges would be placed on opposite sides of the bank. Because the bascule would be elevated, some freight track and river closures would be required during construction and testing. If the bridge is part of a federal and state project, it will include Tri-Rail traffic.

The high-level fixed bridge alternative would provide 80 ft. of clearance from the bottom of the structure to mean high water. The bridge length would increase to roughly 1.5 miles, with walls that would affect SW 9<sup>th</sup> Street. Track impacts would extend for approximately 2.5 miles.

Pros and cons for the high-level fixed bridge include:

- Closure of SW 9<sup>th</sup> Street
- The tallest vessels would still need to lower masts for clearance
- Temporary construction impacts similar to those associated with the mid-level bridge
- Mid- and high-level bridges would be above the boat storage structure

The tunnel alternative would extend approximately 1.3 mile from south of SW 7<sup>th</sup> Street to north of the Andrews Avenue crossing. Placement of underground track would relieve cross traffic and improve safety. There would be some impacts to 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue, including reconstruction of the crossing. Freight tracks would need to be re-graded. Tunnel tracks would be 63 ft. below the existing tracks, with the bottom of the tunnel 12 ft. beneath the tracks. Floodgates would be installed at the portals.

Construction of the tunnel could be accomplished using different techniques. For standard track dimensions, a boring machine would be used with approximately 40 ft. bore; as the track approaches the Brightline station, however, it would need to open for the existing center platform. A “cut and cover” method is proposed from south of

Himmarshee Street to north of 6<sup>th</sup> Street. Utilities would need to be maintained during construction, and four crossings would be impacted.

Pros and cons of the tunnel alternative include:

- Only freight tracks will continue to cross the river and require bridge openings
- Cost estimates would need to accommodate two temporary crossings
- Underground passenger service would also require life safety accommodations, federal spacing requirements, fire suppression, emergency access, and ventilation systems in addition to standard operations and maintenance costs

Mr. McLaughlin asked if a study has been conducted to determine the impacts of different bridge levels on bridge openings. He pointed out that if Tri-Rail service is added, this would likely double the number of trains using the bridge. Mr. Newman reiterated that the next phase of the project would include a boat survey and study, as the most recent study was from 2011 and its information is now dated.

Mr. Newman continued that the feasibility study includes criteria related to corridors, length of tracks and structures, and number of street closures within the finished construction period. The longest structure limits would be part of the tunnel alternative, while the low-level alternative includes the most street closures once construction is complete. The mid- and high-level bridge alternatives have essentially the same constructability issues, including construction duration. The greatest impacts to businesses would occur with the low-level and tunnel alternatives. Right-of-way acquisition is being analyzed in conjunction with the tunnel alternative. The low-level alternative would have the fewest right-of-way impacts. Only the high-level and tunnel alternatives would open the river sufficiently to reduce impacts to maritime operations.

Mr. Newman reviewed potential high-level planning, construction, and contingency costs for the alternatives:

- Low-level bridge bridge: \$100 to \$150 million
- Mid-level bascule bridge: \$350 to \$400 million
- High-level fixed bridge: \$400 to \$450 million
- Tunnel: \$2.7 to \$3.3 billion

These costs do not include right-of-way, operations, or maintenance cost estimates.

The implementation timeline is as follows:

- PD&E: three to four years
- Final design: two to three years
- Right-of-way acquisition: two to three years
- Construction: three to seven years

These time frames would overlap, depending upon phasing. To advance the project into the PD&E phase, FDOT must enter into an agreement with the owner of the corridor to

allow public transportation in that corridor. Another consideration is the need for a local funding source for operations and maintenance costs: in order to be eligible for federal funding, the local operator of the system must demonstrate that they can cover these annual costs. This would start at roughly \$1 million for the low-level bascule bridge and could reach \$8 million per year for the tunnel alternative.

#### **VII. Waiver of Limitations – Benjamin Koppenhoefer / 1749 SE 14<sup>th</sup> Street**

This Item was deferred to a later date.

#### **VIII. Old / New Business**

Mr. Cuba advised that while the January 2020 MAB meeting would fall on Thursday, January 2, he has also reserved the room on January 9 as an alternative. In a show of hands, the Board members elected to move the meeting date to January 9, 2020.

Mr. Cuba continued that three dock waivers recommended by the Board went before the City Commission at their November 19, 2019 meeting. While waivers for properties on Idlewyld Drive and Bayshore Drive were granted, the waiver for a property on 20<sup>th</sup> Avenue was not approved by the Commission.

Ms. McGowan requested additional information on the issue of lost business by waterfront tenants between May and August. Mr. Cuba replied that the City Commission will review a request for financial relief by Anticipation Yachts at its December 19, 2019 meeting. Board members may reach out to their City Commissioners for more information.

#### **IX. Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the Board at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 7:27 p.m.

Any written public comments made 48 hours prior to the meeting regarding items discussed during the proceedings have been attached hereto.

[Minutes prepared by K. McGuire, Prototype, Inc.]