

# **Town of Melbourne Beach**

## **TOWN COMMISSION WORKSHOP AUGUST 23, 2023 MEETING IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE SPECIAL TOWN COMMISSION MEETING MASNY ROOM – 507 OCEAN AVENUE**

### **MINUTES**

#### **Commission Members:**

Mayor Wyatt Hoover  
Vice Mayor Joyce Barton  
Commissioner Sherri Quarrie  
Commissioner Corey Runte  
Commissioner Marivi Walker

#### **Staff Members:**

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro  
Town Clerk Amber Brown

#### **1. Call to Order**

Mayor Wyatt Hoover called the meeting to order at 6:13 p.m.

#### **2. Roll Call**

Town Clerk Amber Brown conducted roll call

#### **Commission Members Present**

Mayor Wyatt Hoover  
Vice Mayor Joyce Barton  
Commissioner Sherri Quarrie  
Commissioner Corey Runte  
Commissioner Marivi Walker

#### **Staff Members Present**

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro  
Finance Manager Jennifer Kerr  
Building Official Robert Bitgood  
Police Chief Melanie Griswold  
Fire Chief Gavin Brown  
Public Works Director Tom Davis  
Town Clerk Amber Brown

### **3. Pledge of Allegiance and Moment of Silence**

Mayor Wyatt Hoover led the Pledge of Allegiance during the meeting immediately prior to this one.

### **4. Public Comments**

After being acknowledged by the Mayor, members of the public should state their name and address for the record. The Commission encourages citizens to prepare their comments in advance. Each individual will have three (3) minutes to address the Commission on any topic(s) related to Town business, not on the Agenda.

### **5. New Business**

#### **A. Discussion on the Sixth Ave boat ramp concept drawing**

Commissioner Corey Runte spoke about the background of this agenda item.

Mayor Wyatt Hoover spoke about the Atkinson's water meter on the south side is by the road and gets run over frequently, so if there is something that can be done to protect it. Due to the amount of storms and upkeep, he recommends scrapping the paddleboard and kayak rack, and also the gazebo. Replace the gazebo with a sand area with chairs and trees. Make the seawalls on the north and south sides match in height and location. The north side is set back by several feet. The dock on the south side was intended to be close to the water, but those docks get destroyed quickly. Another idea is if anyone needs to tie their boat up temporarily install a cleat on the seawall, or put a piling a few feet out.

Commissioner Corey Runte spoke about how the gazebo would be a great idea and would be used all the time. The gazebo at Fifth Ave is used all the time and has not been an issue with maintenance or hurricanes. The paddleboard/kayak rack would be a great amenity. Agrees the seawall should be in line with the rest of the seawall. Spoke about a product for docks that allows water to flow through it and has stood up during hurricanes. A short dock is an important part of this project to safely launch, but it is important to be mindful of the neighbors.

Commissioner Sherri Quarrie spoke about the esthetics. The gazebo and swing could be put on one side. The paddleboard/kayak rack has always been a concern that people will leave their board locked up.

Vice Mayor Joyce Barton spoke about being in favor of the paddleboard/kayak rack. Did not think it would be a locking rack, but just a rack to place your board while you pack up or unload. Likes the idea of the sandy area, but also likes the idea of the gazebo. Thinks it would be important to have some type of dock to get on and off a boat. Agrees with having the seawalls in line.

Commissioner Marivi Walker is in favor of the dock, likes the sandy seating area, but also likes the gazebo but is concerned about large groups gathering and disturbing the neighbors.

Commissioner Corey Runte spoke about a dock for boats needs to be east to west.

**Mike Kalajian**  
**524 Sunset**

*Mike Kalajian spoke about a dock installed properly, meaning drilling the pilings down through the rock, will last. A dock to launch a boat should be east to west. Spoke about having a dock start on the ramp and then going out into the water. The length depends on how the ramp is redone. Spoke about a dock 15 feet past the end of the ramp. The length of the dock will be visible whether it is 5 feet or 20 feet.*

Commissioner Sherri Quarrie asked for an accurate image showing the dock.

Mayor Wyatt Hoover spoke about the dock concerns are privacy or people not using the dock appropriately. The majority are in favor of the paddleboard/kayak rack.

**Billy Stephens**  
**1508 Pine**

*Billy Stephens spoke about the beautification of the boat ramp is great, but make sure it is a win-win for everyone. It could backfire with the Town losing control of the ramp. How much is it going to cost? 90% of people go there to watch the sunset, then fishing/paddleboarding/kayaking, and lastly launching boats. The boat ramp is listed online as a kayak launch. Very nervous about putting in a dock. Anyone would be able to turn around and see into his backyard. A different idea is a very short dock only long enough to nose the front of a boat to then a pole to tie the back of a boat to rather than having a full dock. Likes the idea of the sandy area with chairs. The biggest issues are the dock and what is it going to do to the Town. If it is truly a neighborhood dock it should only be for Melbourne Beach residents.*

**Allison Stephens**  
**1508 Pine**

*Allison Stephens spoke about Melbourne Beach does not need a big dock. If you have a large boat drive the 10 minutes to Front Street.*

Commissioner Corey Runte spoke about an easy solution to keeping it residents only is making the parking by Town parking sticker only. Agrees the Town would not want a grant with restrictions.

Commissioner Sherri Quarrie spoke about how the boat ramp was originally to assist the Fire Department, so what they need should be the first thing to address. Make it functional for the Fire Department beyond that the boat ramp should be more focused towards paddleboards/kayaks.

**Andy Atkinson**  
**1602 Pine St**

*Andy Atkinson spoke about agreeing with Billy Stephens. Not in favor of any dock. The spirit of that access is for fire rescue. The more legitimate the boat ramp is made the more people it will bring to the area. The intrusion of people hanging out loitering and being in the neighbor's backyards. At the most a three-foot dock only to step on and off a boat.*

**Alison Dennington**  
**413 Surf Rd**

*Alison Dennington spoke about being against a dock. Speaks with people that launch there and no one is from Melbourne Beach. Are there any rules or restrictions on what can be launched there? If you accept grant money usually there are very strict rules with it including not being able to restrict who can access it. A dock would allow more people and boats to go there. Liability and cost including to rebuild it. If it is even legal to restrict access the State might put out a preemption. In favor of beautifying it. It is one thing to have neighbors with docks it's another for a public dock where anyone can go to see directly in your backyard.*

Mayor Wyatt Hoover spoke about the depth of the water is what restricts what length of boats can launch there. The restriction on residents would only be related to the parking spaces, not to the use of the ramp. The Town wants grants with the contingency that they do not require everyone to have access to the parking.

**Karen Miller Ferrante**  
**701 Riverside**

*Karen Miller Ferrante spoke about how a gazebo might turn into a party atmosphere. Too much improvement can bring problems.*

**Bryan Troy**  
**509 Hibiscus**

*Bryan Troy spoke about no one will drive over the bridge to use that ramp, and if a boat is 20 feet or more you have to physically push a boat off the trailer, plus there are maybe 4 parking spaces for trucks and trailers. To come here from Palm Bay you would drive past three ramps. What is being proposed right now is to make it useable for boaters. We are not adding parking, so no additional people can use it. If the dock is just for fire rescue then put up a gate and lock it.*

Mayor Wyatt Hoover asked what would be the minimum footprint to assist boaters in launching, but not grossly invade the privacy of the neighbors.

Commissioner Corey Runte spoke about this item was brought up because the entire boat ramp was destroyed and shut down after the last hurricane. Public Works was able to make temporary repairs to reopen it, but the ramp needs to be permanently fixed. Priority one is to make it safe and fix it. While doing that beautify it.

**Lephiew Dennington**  
**413 Surf**

*Lephiew Dennington spoke about launching his boat there. Be careful what you ask for. You give a little bit and push for a little more. It's a canoe and kayak ramp. Make small steps and then see how it affects things.*

**Tina Coppock**  
**505 Avenue B**

*Tina Coppock asked if any of these improvements kick in ADA requirements. With the rack what happens if a storm comes and those things go flying?*

Mayor Wyatt Hoover spoke about the ADA aspect which is something that will need to be looked into. The rack would only be for temporary use not for storage.

**Ali Dennington**  
**413 Surf**

*Ali Dennington spoke about Commissioner Runte saying it is unsafe, if that is true if someone sues tomorrow now the Town is liable. If it truly is unsafe have an emergency meeting and figure out what is the bare minimum to make it safe to protect the Town's liability. Does the Town currently have liability insurance and what will the increase be after all of the improvements?*

Commissioner Corey Runte spoke about the Town does have liability insurance, and this is to improve the safety and beautification of the boat ramp.

Mayor Wyatt Hoover spoke about the Town currently has liability insurance, and this is just the beginning of the project, so no the Town does not have an estimate on any insurance increases.

**Bryan Troy**  
**509 Hibiscus**

*Bryan Troy asked if there are any plans to dredge the boat ramp. If not there is no way to launch larger boats, and you are not making it bigger.*

**Allison Stephens**  
**1508 Pine**

*Allison Stephens asked if there are setback requirements related to the gazebo.*

**Alison Dennington**  
**413 Surf Rd**

*Alison Dennington spoke about how the Town doesn't have to follow the setbacks, doesn't mean it shouldn't.*

**Mike Kalajian**  
**524 Sunset**

*Mike Kalajian spoke about how any dock no matter the length will disrupt privacy. Fix the ramp and seawall to make the conditions safer.*

Mayor Wyatt Hoover spoke about leaving the gazebo and the dock to be determined and moving forward with the remaining items of fixing the seawall, protecting the water meter, and repairing the ramp.

**Andrew Atkinson**  
**1602 Pine St**

*Andrew Atkinson thanked the Commission.*

**Alison Dennington**  
**413 Surf Rd**

*Alison Dennington thanked the Commission for listening and asked to look into a new type of concrete that is way stronger.*

**Billy Stephens**  
**1508 Pine St**

*Billy Stephens spoke about it being helpful if residents meet down at the boat ramp to discuss changes. Get a landscape architect to draw up plans.*

Commissioner Corey Runte spoke about this being phase 1 to get concept drawings. Then after that get input from others such as a landscape architect.

**B. Discussion on the Ocean Ave concept drawings**

Mayor Wyatt Hoover spoke about there being two drawings one from Riverside Dr. to Pine St. and another from Pine St. to the stop light.

Commissioner Sherri Quarrie asked about the amount of parking spaces that are lost in these drawings. Traffic coming from the east would not be able to park with slanted parking spaces. They would have to make a U-turn near a sharp corner.

Commissioner Corey Runte spoke about the background to this item, and the intent was to have a design to present to FDOT so they match it when they redo A1A.

Mayor Wyatt Hoover spoke about the intent to make it a safer more walkable space for people. The lanes are very wide so people feel you can go faster.

Fire Chief Gavin Brown spoke about a few concerns including traffic being gridlocked if there is an accident, being able to make the turn at Riverside Dr., the ability for a fire truck to go around vehicles, and Florida Fire Code states Fire Department access roads must have 20 feet of unobstructed roadway.

Commissioner Sherri Quarrie spoke about having a median that the fire trucks can drive over and not have landscaping in the median.

Mayor Wyatt Hoover spoke about his priority is making it people-oriented not vehicle-oriented. Would it be better if parts of the median did not have a traditional curb and were just median by paint only?

Police Chief Melanie Griswold spoke about if there is a traffic homicide incident the road would be shut down for hours.

Vice Mayor Joyce Barton spoke about how it might be nice to have the wide ends of the median include landscaping.

Commissioner Corey Runte spoke about being in favor of the medians to make it more pedestrian-friendly. You can also use the median area to add bioswales.

Mayor Wyatt Hoover spoke about there being kids everywhere and as long as the roadway is wide and straight it will not be a safe space. The net positive outweighs almost all of the potential negatives pending detailed drawings that can look at egress for specific vehicles.

Commissioner Marivi Walker spoke about what they did on Hickory to slow the traffic down. Keep Ocean Ave our village center, keep it slow, and for pedestrians, bikes, and golf carts.

***Tina Coppock***  
***505 Avenue B***

*Tina Coppock spoke about not caring one way or another, but if there are plants make them short so you can see the smallest vehicles while riding a bike.*

***Lephiew Dennington***  
***413 Surf Rd***

*Lephiew Dennington spoke about being thrown off by the long median, and the parking spaces are only 18 feet but a long truck is 19 feet. Instead of a long median, have little bump outs you have to slow down to go around then vehicles from the east would not have to go all the way around to park. Maybe have fewer parking spots or have some golf cart parking only.*

***Alison Dennington***  
***413 Surf Rd***

*Alison Dennington spoke about an option is a roundabout. Loves the idea of it being more golf cart-friendly. Little kids have no sense of danger, so any type of barrier to separate the park from the parking/road area is good.*

Commissioner Corey Runte spoke about how he doesn't think a roundabout would be a good idea here because people need to know how to use it.

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro spoke about making the road narrower to allow straight pull-in parking. Is there enough space for trucks with trailers or RVs to navigate the corner?

Commissioner Marivi Walker spoke about it being odd to have a bike lane that goes nowhere.

Mayor Wyatt Hoover spoke about scraping the bike lanes which provides an additional 10 feet to work with.

Commissioner Sherri Quarrie spoke about leaving the 35 parking spots in front of the park and having the golf cart parking someplace else.

***Tina Coppock***  
***505 Avenue B***

*Tina Coppock spoke about making the parallel parking golf cart parking instead.*

Commissioner Corey Runte spoke about removing the bike lanes, maintaining the raised median with landscaping to be determined, potentially adding one more break in the median, removing Christmas circle, and adding golf cart parking spots there instead.

Mayor Wyatt Hoover spoke about having the revisions at another workshop.

Commissioner Corey Runte spoke about doing Riverside Dr. repaving and sidewalk first since it was budgeted.

C. Open discussion

Commissioner Corey Runte spoke about loving the covered pavilion where the bocce court is.

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro spoke about the only seating in the shade is in with the kids. Some people would like a seating area that is not in with the kids.

Mayor Wyatt Hoover spoke about putting the pavilion closer to the boardwalk.


Vice Mayor Joyce Barton spoke about liking a seating area that is not in with the kids.

**6. Adjournment**

**Commissioner Corey moved to adjourn; Vice Mayor Joyce Barton seconded; Motion carried 5-0.**

Meeting adjourned at 9:08 p.m.

**ATTEST:**



**Wyatt Hoover, Mayor**



**Amber Brown, Town Clerk**

