



**COMMUNITY & ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT**

**Escambia County Central Office Complex  
3363 West Park Place  
Pensacola, FL 32505**

**MARINE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**Approved**

**RESUME OF MEETING MINUTES**

**January 12, 2015 - 5:30 p.m.**

**Members Present:**

Bill Myrick		District 1/Commissioner Wilson Robertson
Cathy Watson		District 1/Commissioner Wilson Robertson
Sidney Clopton		District 2/Commissioner Gene Valentino
Merrick Van Landingham	Chair	District 2/Commissioner Gene Valentino
Eilene Beard		District 3/Commissioner Lumon May
David Dodson		District 4/Commissioner Grover Robinson IV
Kerry Freeland		District 4/Commissioner Grover Robinson IV
Walt Woodfin	Secretary	District 5/Commissioner Steven Barry
Gabe Jackson	Vice Chair	District 5/Commissioner Steven Barry
Ed Fish		County Interim Administrator

**Staff Present**

Leah Cheney Marine Resources Division

**Absent Excused**

Lynn Laird District 3/Commissioner Lumon May

**Absent Unexcused**

**Visitors Present**

Rick O'Connor	Florida Sea Grant
Derrick Williams	Resident (Shrimp boat captain)
Jessie Cassie	Resident

1. **Call to Order:** Meeting called to order at 5:32pm
2. **Attendance:** A quorum is present
3. **Minutes Approval:** Gabe Jackson made the motion to approve both the October and November meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Sidney Clopton. All voted in favor, no one opposed.
4. **Perdido Key Gulf Snorkeling Reef:** Robert Turpin has spoken with the contractor. They are ready to deploy at the first available date.
5. **Perdido River Public Boat Ramp Design/Engineering/Permitting:** FDEP has awarded the contract to Roads Inc. Construction is to begin in January. It was noted by Gabe Jackson that Roads Inc. is a local contractor, with offices in Cantonment.
6. **10836 Lillian Highway Public Boat Ramp:** No change to previous update
7. **Natural Resources Damage Assessment - Oil spill Restoration & Recovery:** It was confirmed that FDEP is only requiring magnetometer scans for snorkeling reefs. All Escambia County reefs are near shore, further and deeper. (no snorkeling reefs)

Merrick Van Landingham stated that he has filed a “Freedom of Information Act” request with the FDEP and after many e-mails has confirmed that the magnetometer scans will not affect Escambia County’s snorkel reefs.

8. **Waterways Access Management:** We are currently awaiting further input from the Escambia County Road Department and others.
9. **Lionfish:** Robert Turpin and Bryan Clark (Escambia County resident, diver and frequent EMAC attendee) are attending a lionfish meeting hosted by the FWC on Tuesday 01/13/2015.

It was noted that four local restaurants are now serving lionfish when available.

10. **Clark Sand Pits:** It was noted that Escambia County owns the Clark Sand Pits.

A stake holder has suggested leasing the proper to a commercial entity to remove liability from Escambia County. Dave Dodson commented that he favors a commercial effort to operate the pits.

Eilene Beard made a motion to send a recommendation to the Board of Commissioners to read as follows:

***“The Escambia Marine Advisory Committee recommends that Robert Turpin and the Marine Resources Division proceed with the due diligence to define the scope and feasibility of leasing all or part of the Clark Sand Pits (owned by Escambia County) for commercial use, including but not limited to scuba diving and snorkeling training.”***

The motion was seconded by Bill Myrick. All voted in favor, no one opposed.

## 11. Old Business:

- Escambia River Logjam: Southern Forest Recyclers is removing the logjam at no cost to Escambia County
- Spearguns at Snorkeling Reefs: SRIA decided to take no action. There will be no change to the present conditions.
- Tug Boat “Ocean Winds”: Escambia County has paid for “PCB” testing. The results were favorable. Robert Turpin had applied for and Escambia County has received the FWC award letter for the Supplemental Funding Grant of \$100,000. The Escambia County Commission has approved the proposal.
- It was discussed among the EMAC, a desire to have improved sharing of information from the MRD to the EMAC members between the meetings.

## 12. New Business:

- **Bill Myrick** has presented his thoughts to the Board of Commissioners, concerning the logjam south of the soon to be constructed Perdido Boat Ramp. It was agreed to add this topic to the March agenda for discussion.
- **Derrick Williams** (shrimp boat captain) commented that he has caught a 11” tiger shrimp in Bayou Chico. He commented that tiger shrimp has been caught in the bays of Panama City, Choctawhatchee, Mobile and Escambia. It seems they are usually caught in or around August and November, when the weather changes.
- **Jessie Casey** asked the support of the EMAC to name the Perdido River Ramp in honor of Commissioner Wilson Robertson, in recognition of his years of service and contributions to Escambia County. It was agreed to add this topic to the March agenda for discussion.

**13. Adjourn:** Walt Woodfin made the motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Gabe Jackson. All voted in favor, no one opposed. The meeting was adjourned at 6:45 pm.