

FLOWER GARDEN BANKS NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY

Sanctuary Advisory Council

Meeting Minutes

February 6, 2008

The regular meeting of the Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary (FGBNMS) Advisory Council was held on Wednesday, February 6, 2008, at 9:00 A.M., at the FGBNMS Headquarters offices in Galveston, Texas. The Council Chair and Vice-Chair were present. The notes of the last meeting were approved.

G.P. Schmahl, Sanctuary Superintendent, began the meeting with a welcome and announcements. He introduced each of the three new Council members: Lori Gernhardt, Rebecca Nadel, and Dale Loughmiller.

Ian MacDonald moved “that meeting notes be posted to the website as a draft noting that they are “unapproved”, that the meeting notes be posted as a shorter version (meeting minutes) while stating that notes are available upon request, and that minutes be sent out by Email for approval, return receipt, with a deadline for response, and that the Council Chair must respond.” The motion was adopted.

G.P. Schmahl reported on the state of the sanctuary in the ‘Sanctuary Update’ report. Topics covered included: Mardi Gras Wrasse publication, FDA advisory on ciguatera, R/V Manta, Gulf of Mexico Initiative.

The Council Chair introduced the guest speaker, Karen Raine, General Counsel for NOAA Law Enforcement. Ms. Raine’s presentation addressed the role and procedures of the Office of General Counsel for Enforcement and Litigation (GCEL).

G.P. Schmahl gave the Enforcement Subcommittee report. Irby Basco moved “that Strategy 1 be removed from the enforcement action plan.” The motion was adopted after debate. Art Melvin moved “that the rest of the strategies in the enforcement action plan be considered as a total package.” The motion was adopted. Ian MacDonald moved “that strategy 6 of the enforcement action plan be amended to include ‘evaluate satellite remote sensing products as potential monitoring tools’.” The motion was adopted. Art Melvin moved “that the Council accept strategies 2, 3, 5, 6, and 7 of the enforcement action plan as written—with strategy 6 as amended—and remove others for outside consideration. The motion was adopted after debate. G.P. Schmahl noted that strategies 8, 9, and 10 will be considered by the Visitor Use Subcommittee.

Frank Wasson resigned as leader of the Education Working Group.

Shelley Dupuy and Kristina Hardwick gave the Education/Outreach Working Group Report. Frank Burek moved “that the Council accept the education/outreach action plan as written.” The motion was adopted.

Art Melvin moved “that the Council thank the Enforcement Working Group and dissolve that working group.” The motion was adopted after debate.

Kristina Hardwick moved “that the Council thank and disband the Education Working Group.” The motion was adopted.

Jennifer Morgan introduced the Sanctuary Advisory Council (SAC) Charter Revision Process and noted the one-year extension that was granted to the FGBNMS Advisory Council. Frank Wasson moved “that the Council form a subcommittee of Council members to work on charter revision along side sanctuary staff.” The motion was adopted after debate. The following members volunteered to serve: Dana Larson, Frank Wasson, Kristina Hardwick, Irby Basco, Art Melvin and Clint Moore. Clint Moore was elected to serve as the chair of the Charter Revision Subcommittee.

Public Comment was given by Ryan Ono, Environmental Defense research associate.

G.P. Schmahl gave a Visitor Use Subcommittee report, presenting each of the proposed strategies in the visitor use action plan. Frank Wasson moved “that the Council accept visitor use strategy 1, alternative 2.” Karen Raine amended alternative 2 by adding ‘owners’ to the statement. The motion was adopted after debate and amendment. John Stout moved “that the Council add a statement to strategy 1 regarding cooperation with Minerals Management Service (MMS) on permitted activities. The motion was adopted. Frank Wasson moved “that the Council adopt visitor use strategy 2 as amended (remove specific recommendations from bullet 3, note use of aggregate vessel length, note vessels in a chartered safety fareway). The motion was adopted. Frank Wasson moved “that the Council adopt strategy 3 as amended (add to bullet 3 ‘including but not limited to divers, researchers, fishers, and boaters’; replace AIS in bullet 4 with ‘best available technology, e.g. AIS’). The motion was adopted. Frank Wasson moved “that the Council adopt strategy 4 as amended (remove bullet 1; keep alternative 2 of bullet 2 adding ‘touching and riding’; add ‘including touching of live corals’ to bullet 3). Frank Burek amended the motion on the floor, moving “that the Council vote bullet-by-bullet.” The motion was adopted. Frank Wasson moved “that the Council remove bullet 1 from strategy 4. The motion was adopted. Frank Wasson moved “that the Council accept bullet 2, alternative 2 as amended previously. The motion was adopted. Irby Basco moved “that the Council accept bullet 3.” The motion was adopted. Clint Moore moved “that the Council add language to bullet 3 of strategy 4 that includes touching of live corals.” The motion was adopted. The motion remaining on the floor to adopt strategy 4 as amended was then adopted. Ian MacDonald “moved to drop bullet 3 from strategy 5.” The motion was adopted after debate. Frank Wasson moved “to drop the bulleted statement (5) on weight restrictions.” The motion was adopted. Ian MacDonald moved “to change bullet 6 of strategy 5 to say ‘sanctuary staff will develop guidelines for proper use of mooring buoys’.” The motion was adopted. Frank Wasson moved to “accept bullet 1 and bullet 2 alternative 1 (as modified by bullet 4) of strategy 5.” The motion was adopted. Frank Wasson moved “to remove bullet 1 of strategy 6”. The motion was adopted. Frank Wasson moved “to accept bullet 2 of strategy 6 as written.” The motion was adopted.

Clint Moore moved “to strike bullet 3.” The motion was adopted. Frank Wasson moved “to accept bullet 4 of strategy 6 as written.” The motion was adopted. Art Melvin moved “to direct sanctuary staff to review the language surrounding the prohibition of explosives within the sanctuary and to make a recommendation to the Advisory Council.” The motion was adopted after debate.

Emma Hickerson gave a report from the Blue Seas Green Communities Subcommittee.

Art Melvin moved “to accept the selected Council meeting dates for 2008: 16 April, 10 September, 12 November.” The motion was adopted.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:00 P.M.

Jennifer Morgan, Sanctuary Advisory Council Coordinator