

**MINUTES OF THE  
HARBOR AND WATERWAYS BOARD MEETING  
DESTIN CITY HALL ANNEX  
MARCH 27, 2025 - 5:30 P.M.**

**1. CALL TO ORDER:**

Vice Chairman Stephens called the meeting of the Thursday, March 27, 2025 Destin Harbor and Waterways Board meeting to at approximately 5:30 p.m., at Destin City Hall Annex, with the Pledge of Allegiance immediately following.

**2. ROLL CALL:**

**Member Present:**

John Stephens  
Guy Tadlock  
Bill McKissick  
Jarod Hayden

**Members Absent**

Jim Green

**Staff:**

Kim Montgomery Deputy City Clerk  
Daniel Butler Principal Planner  
Ashley Dominguez Planner  
Kim Kopp City Attorney

**3. AGENDA APPROVAL:**

**Motion to change the order of the day, move item 4 to follow item 6 position on the agenda was made by Board member Tadlock, with Board member McKissick providing the second. The motion was carried with a 4-0 vote for approval.**

**4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

➤ **February 27, 2025 Minutes**

**Motion by Vice Chair McKissick, seconded by Board member Tadlock, to approve the minutes of the February 27, 2025 meeting as written. The motion passed 4-0.**

**5. OLD BUSINESS:**

**A) 600 Magnolia Drive, Single Family Residential Dock and Boatlift Marine Construction, HWB-001506-2024**

Ms. Ashley Dominguez Planner for the city explained to the members the details of the request, which is also reflected in their staff report, and explained further that part of the applicant's request is to replace everything that is currently in place. Additionally, the applicant provided approval from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP), Permit No.: 0454834-001-EI/46 and the Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) proof of submittal, application No: SAJ-2008-01592. City Staff reviewed the application and determined that the plans comply with LDC Section 11.05.00, Marina Siting, and the Coastal Management Element of the City's Comprehensive Plan (Coastal Management Element Policy 6-1.1.6), and staff recommend approval of the project and all applicable federal or state approvals need to be submitted with the

Marine Construction Permit application. Additionally, all regulations of the city's marina, citing LDC section 11.05, must be adhered to and followed at all times.

Questions were posed regarding how the placement of the ties backs and what type of materials would be used for the decking and what the total square footage would be afterwards. The applicant's agent explained that the walls are moving out so there is plenty of room for the tie backs, and the decking will be made of composite wood, and that there would not be a change to the square footage to what is currently in place.

**Motion by Board member Tadlock, seconded by Board member McKissick the members voted 4-0 to recommend the approval of the request for the Residential Marine Construction project proposed at 600 Magnolia Drive, for the replacement of an existing single-family residential marginal dock and a boat lift, with the following conditions:**

- 1. All applicable Federal or State approvals shall be submitted with the Marine Construction Permit application; and**
- 2. All regulations of the City's Marina Siting LDC Section 11.05.00 shall be adhered to and followed at all times.**

**B) 84 Indian Bayou Dr, Residential Marine Construction, HWB-001554-2025**

Ms. Ashley Dominguez Planner for the city explained to the members the details of the request, which is also reflected in their staff report, for a new single family dock and covered boat lift.

**Board member Hayden made the recommended motion that the Harbor and Waterways Board recommends City Council approve the proposed residential marine construction project at 84 Indian Bayou Drive for the construction of a new single-family residential dock and a covered boat lift with the following conditions.**

- 1. All applicable federal and state approval shall be submitted with the marine construction permit application; and**
- 2. All regulations of the city marinas citing LDC section 11.05.00 shall be adhered to and followed at all times.**

In discussion, Board member McKissick asked if the entire project includes the total square footage as stated in the agenda item or is it more. According to Mr. Butler the project's square adds up to the amount indicated in the request of 1,350 square feet. **With no further comments, Chairman Stephens called for the vote and the motion passed with a unanimous vote of 4-0.**

**6. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS/QUESTIONS**

**A) Jim Green- Chair**

- **US Army Corps of Engineers Harbor Capacity Study-Requested Copy**
  - **THIS ITEM WAS NOT HEARD**

**B) John Stephens- Vice Chair**

➤ **Wastewater/Pump Out USA- Donnie Brown**

- Mr. Brown provided a historical overview of his career and environmental efforts in the Destin Harbor, beginning with snorkeling tours and leading to the creation of the first pump-out boat service in Florida.
- He emphasized the longstanding issue of untreated sewage from vessels accumulating in the local waters and the Destin Harbor and the need for comprehensive, fully funded pump-out programs.
- He cited success his initial success in Monroe County, where a seven-year program prevented beach closures and included over 4,000 boaters with pump-outs reaching 3,000 vessels per month.
- He shared that many tour boats in Destin are not Coast Guard-certified to travel offshore and legally discharge waste, leading to assumptions that raw sewage is being dumped locally.
- Previous free services in Destin showed significant demand, but the inability to find a sustainable and affordable discharge location caused the project to cease.

➤ **Challenges Presented:**

- DWU (Destin Water Users) is unable to accept concentrated sewage from pump-out boats due to system limitations.
- Current infrastructure and costs (e.g., \$1,000 per dump at Fort Walton Beach transfer system) are the barriers to a successful implementation in the city of Destin.
- Insurance and FDEP permits are challenges.
- Monroe County's similar program ended due to internal politics, despite its initial success.

➤ **Recommendations:**

- Mandatory participation for all harbor vessels.
- Free pump out service to encourage compliance.
- Explore grant funding at state and federal levels to support operations and logistics.
- Consider sticker-based tracking programs for boat pump-outs.
- Investigate alternative discharge solutions and/or encourage DWU cooperation.

**C) Guy Tadlock - Water Quality Update/Harbor Pump Progress**

- **Water Quality Testing:**
  - Concerns were raised regarding Enterococci and coliform bacteria spikes in the water of the harbor.
  - Sampling limitations noted, data is merely a snapshot, not continuous metrics.
  - Committee members encouraged to pursue trend analysis, possibly visualized in charts.
  - The harbor pump, after being rebuilt and operational, circulates 16.8 million gallons nightly from March to the end of October.

- **DWU Response (Sandy Trammell, Board Member):**
  - DWU’s treatment plant cannot handle highly concentrated or chemically treated waste from vessels.
  - Existing marina pump-outs are not tied into DWU; waste is trucked offsite.
  - Emphasized that DWU is member-owned and not city-run; taxes cannot fund infrastructure expansion projects.
  - Raised fairness concerns, boat operators should pay for sewage processing just like everyone does individually at their home.
- **Committee Member Comments:**
  - Several members expressed personal experiences with harbor-related infections (e.g., MRSA).
  - Acknowledged the need for cooperation from DWU, possibly with either assistance from state intervention or outside haulers.
  - Interest in Monroe County’s ordinances and enforcement model as a blueprint.
  - Discussion about establishing infrastructure before implementing laws and vice versa.

❖ **Chairman Stephens opened the public to speak**

Mr. Craig Cole, marine contractor, echoed concerns about the harbor’s black sludge on the bottom and the frequent health issues among his workers that are in the water for any length of time and urged swift action on the sanitation.

**6. Council member Sandy Trammell - Sunshine Law, Public Records Act & Ethics Training**

- Topics covered included:
  - **Public Records Act:** Everything related to committee work is public record, including notes, emails, and informal conversations.
  - **Sunshine Law:** Board discussions must be public. Ex parte communications must be disclosed at meetings.
  - **Voting Conflicts:** Members must abstain and file a disclosure form if they or close family have financial interests.
  - **Quasi-Judicial Conduct:** Committee acts like judges in dock applications and similar matters. Must remain impartial.
  - **Committee Procedures:**
    - Goals and objectives must be measurable and submitted before budget deadlines.
    - Resolutions should be sought to earmark grant funds for specific uses.
    - Work plans can be created or added mid-year with council approval.

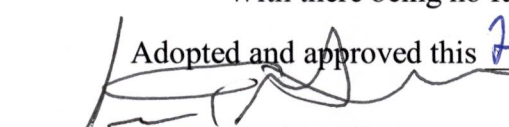
➤ **Staffing - Code Compliance – Mr. Butler**

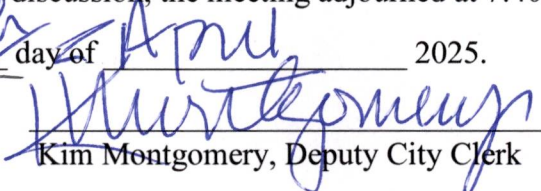
- Currently short-staffed; only three officers on shift at a time.
- Two positions recently vacated and interviews underway for replacements.
- Committee members discussed enforcement limitations and the need for a Harbor Master.

**10. ADJOURNMENT:**

With there being no further discussion, the meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Adopted and approved this 24th day of April 2025.

  
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John Stephens, Vice Chairman

  
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Kim Montgomery, Deputy City Clerk

✓ JIM GREEN, CHAIRMAN