

**MINUTES OF THE
HARBOR AND WATERWAYS BOARD MEETING
DESTIN CITY HALL ANNEX
MAY 22, 2025 - 5:30 P.M.**

1. CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Green called the meeting of the Thursday, May 22, 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:

Jim Green
John Stephens
Jerod Hayden
Ryan Holloway

Members Absent

Guy Tadlock
Bill McKissick

Staff:

Kim Montgomery Deputy City Clerk
Steve o'Connor Deputy CD Director
Ashley Dominguez Planner
Kim Kopp City Attorney

3. AGENDA APPROVAL:

With no changes needed for the agenda, the chairman called for the approval and the members all agreed.

4. NEW BUSINESS:

➤ **4144 Belcourt Dr, Residential Marine Construction, HWB-001565-2025**

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, covered boat slip, two catwalks, and two platforms. These are the existing conditions that the contractor provided, and currently there is nothing there. The proposed scope is a total square footage of approximately 912 square feet for the proposed project consisting of a 64 linear feet dock with the total slip density of two slips. The proposed project meets the requirements of the Coastal Management Element of the Comprehensive Plan and links to the strategic goals and objectives of enhancing quality of life and safety for families. There is no anticipated effect on the budget and staff recommends the Harbor Waterways Board's approval of the marine construction project proposed at this address with the following conditions: All applicable federal and state approvals need to be submitted with the marine construction permit and all regulations of the city's marina siting must be adhered to and followed at all times.

Vice Chair Stephens questioned staff if the pilings are existing or newly installed.

According to Ms. Dominguez they were there already in place. Additionally, she informed the Board that the applicant did receive a stop work on the project to apply to the Harbor & Waterways Board and the permitting process for the project.

Vice Chair Stephens questioned if there were any grass beds in the area that may be affected by the project. Ms. Dominguez referred Vice Chair Stephens to the FDEP permit has the information in the permit regarding the presence of any sea grasses.

Motion by Vice Chair Stephens seconded by Board member Hayden, the Board voted 4-0 for the Harbor and Waterways Board recommends to the City Council approval of the request for marine construction at 4144 Belcourt Dr, Residential Marine Construction, HWB-001565-2025at 4144 Belcourt Dr, for the construction of a new single-family residential dock and a covered boat slip, 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.**

➤ **724 Harbor Blvd, Commercial Marine Construction, HWB-001582-2025**

Ms. Dominguez explained how the applicant is seeking a recommendation from the Harbor and Waterways Board and subsequent approval from City Council for the installation and reconfiguration of an existing 6-slip multi-family Commercial Marine Construction Project located at 724 Harbor Blvd. Additionally, the applicant has provided proof of submittal from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) and proof of Army Corps Submittal, Permit Application No. SAJ-2023-00893. City Staff has reviewed the application and determined that the project complies 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 recommends approval with conditions as outlined in the staff report.

Chairman Green asked staff if they had any response from the adjacent property owners regarding this project. According to Ms. Dominguez, staff sent the letters out on May 1st and have not received any response.

There were additional questions regarding slip use and if lifts were going to be installed into each slip. Mr. Simmons explained that they're requesting to construct the six slips for residential use only and they may or may not install lifts in all six, so they went ahead and requested all six of them with this submittal.

Motion by Chairman Green, seconded by Vice Chair Stephens, passed with a unanimous vote of 4-0 for the Harbor and Waterways Board to recommend to the City

Council approval of the proposed Commercial Marine Construction Project at 724 Harbor Blvd, for the reconfiguration of an existing multifamily commercial dock, 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.**

- **Ordinance 25-05-CC - Relating to livery vessels; amending Article VIII "Registration of Livery Vessels"; amending provisions related to transferability of permits; providing for additional required training and safety measures.**

The City Attorney read the ordinance title into the record and provided a summary explanation of its purpose and provisions:

Purpose and Scope:

The ordinance is designed to implement required safety standards and administrative controls for livery vessel operations within the City of Destin. It achieves two primary objectives:

1. **Aligning Safety Measures with Okaloosa County:**
 - Introduces mandatory employee training requirements for livery vessel operators and staff.
 - Establishes standardized safety expectations for rental customers, particularly those operating motorized vessels.
 - Implements the bracelet system currently used by the County to monitor and verify operator eligibility and safety compliance.
2. **Transferability and Cap on Livery Vessel Permits:**
 - Establishes a firm cap of 490 permits, which includes:
 - All livery vessels permitted since the implementation of the moratorium,
 - Plus 11 additional vessels designated as yachts (not for rental).
 - Codifies the principle that each permit is tied to a specific, actively registered vessel:
 - The permit attaches to a vessel's unexpired Florida registration number.
 - The permit is not transferable apart from the vessel.

➤ **Permit Forfeiture Timeline:**

- Initially, permits were to be forfeited after 180 days of inactivity or failure to register a vessel with the city.

- Council determined that 180 days was excessive and amended this to 60 days.
- The revised provision now states that if the designated vessel is not registered or used for 60 consecutive days, and the business fails to notify the City, the permit is automatically forfeited and returned to the City of Destin for reassignment.

Chapter 13-148(D) – updated to reflect the new 60-day abandonment clause.

- Permits may only be transferred when the associated vessel is sold to a new owner.
- The new owner must provide notice to the city within 10 days of the transfer.
- If no notice is received, the permit is revoked and reverts to the city.
- Additional restriction added:
 - Once a permit has been transferred with a vessel sale, it cannot be transferred again for a period of two years.

Chapter 13-148(C) – now includes the clause:

“Further, such permit may not be fully transferred or assigned again within a two-year period from the date of that notification.”

This was added at Council’s request to ensure permit stability and avoid speculative or rapid reselling of permits.

- Concerns addressed by the board members: Avoiding inflated boat prices due to bundled permits.
- A valuation limit for vessel transfers was discussed:
 - Sale price must not exceed NADA value +10%.
- Clarification on Abandonment: Does not apply if business notifies city in good faith (e.g., replacing a boat).
 - Allow unassigned permits one year post-ordinance adoption to be attached to a vessel.
 - Establish annual lottery system for any returned permits, including alternate winners list.
 - Lottery winners have 90 days to meet compliance requirements or registration goes to alternates.

Motion by Chairman Green, seconded by Board member Holloway for the Harbor and Waterways Board to recommend to the city council that when registered vessels with attached livery permits are sold, the sale price of the vessel shall not exceed the NADA Guide value plus 10%, to avoid artificial inflation of sales of registered vessels based on permit value, the motion passed with a unanimous vote of 4-0.

In regards to medallions that don't get registered or assigned, in 13-148 (C) discussion, making the assigned vessels have one year to get registered, **Motion by Chairman Stephens, seconded by Chairman Green for the Harbor and Waterways Board recommends to the city council that any livery vessel registrations that are not assigned to an active vessel as of the date of adoption of the ordinance shall be given a one (1) year grace period to assign the registration to a vessel, after which the unassigned registration shall be forfeited to the City.**

5. MEMBER COMMENTS:

❖ **Committee member Stephens - Oyster Gardening & Water Quality Initiatives**

- Presented to Harbor CRA: approved with a condition to maintain a 3-foot buffer from seagrass beds.
- Presented to Okaloosa County Coastal Resources: supportive; potential for cost-sharing or engineering assistance.
 - Estimated potential cost: up to \$60,000 depending on reef type and height.
 - Harbor CRA members suggested adding another breakwater to form an "L" shape, which was included in the updated plan.
 - Next presentations to the Parks & Rec Board
 - Followed by guidance on how to proceed toward Council since the project proponent is not city staff.
- **Pump-Out Stations & Water Quality Discussion:**
 - Monica Wallace Destin Water Users presented the following data:
 - Fecal coliforms, CBOD, enterococci — generally no alarming trends in reclaimed water and ambient monitoring data.
 - Outlier readings are likely tied to wildlife or storm events.
 - **Pump out materials:**
 - The plant is not equipped to handle concentrated boat waste.
 - Boat waste is classified as septic waste, typically requiring special treatment.
 - No current DWU-permitted marine pump-outs in Destin Harbor — unsure of existing plumbing setups at some sites such as Joe's Bayou, Harborwalk.
 - Preferred approach: smaller holding tanks regularly pumped out and hauled to Okaloosa County's permitted facility.
 - For future mooring fields, further data collection is needed to assess feasibility.
 - **Board generally agreed:**
 - Too many unknown variables for DWU to safely accept into the sewer system.
 - Private pump truck haul-off is still best practice until further data is available.
 - Suggested that more water quality sampling might be helpful.

❖ **Committee member Green – Norriego Point**

Chairman Green mentioned how he has concerns regarding the harborside of the point where the erosion control pads were installed and how he feels there needs to be signage installed warning boaters of their location because they will eventually be covered in sand.

Motion by Chairman Green, seconded by Board member Holloway to recommend to the city council to authorize installation of signage at Noriego Point to warn boaters of potential underwater hazards and erosion control structures, for public safety and protection of vessels.

10. ADJOURNMENT:

With there being no further discussion, the meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Adopted and approved this 25th day of August 2025.



Jim Green, Chairman



Kim Montgomery, Deputy City Clerk

John Stephens, V. Chairman