



HERNANDO COUNTY WATERWAYS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES – July 14, 2025



Date: Monday, July 14, 2025

Time: 6:00 P.M.

Location: Hernando County Lake House
1202 Kenlake Ave, Spring Hill, FL 34606

The meeting agenda and back-up material are available online at:
<https://www.hernandocounty.us/departments/departments-n-z/public-works/aquatic-services/waterways-advisory-committee/agendas-and-minutes>

CALL TO ORDER

Kathryn Birren called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

Attendee Name	Title	Attendance
Kathryn Birren	Chairman	Yes
Maryann Johnson	Vice Chairman	Yes
Ron Zellmer	Member	Yes
Brian Woolfolk	Member	No
Vacant	Member	No
Chris Linsbeck	Community Services Director	Yes
Rob Talmage	Parks & Recreation Administrator	Yes
Carla Burrmann	Department Manager, Aquatic Services and Waterways	Yes
Lt. Reak	HCSO Marine Patrol Deputies	Yes
	Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission	No

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

APPROVAL / MODIFICATION OF AGENDA (Limited to Staff and Committee Only)

- Motion to approve agenda by Maryann Johnson. Second by Ron Zellmer.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – postponed until July 14, 2025

- Motion to approve agenda by Maryann Johnson. Second by Ron Zellmer. Approved unanimously.

MARINE PATROL REPORT

- Florida Freedom Boating Act - changes how HCSO conducts business. Law enforcement can no longer stop or board a vessel solely for safety compliance checks or marine sanitation inspections without probable cause or reasonable suspicion of a violation.
 - Rules are applicable for all boats (commercial/residential).
 - Resource checks can still be conducted.
- Trespassing letter to SWFWMD – does this need to be renewed yearly?
 - No. Statutorily the letter would be in effect if the property owner is the same.
- How many tickets have been issued?
 - Approximately 100 in the last month.

NEW BUSINESS

- Discussion of WAC future
 - Kathryn Birren (KB) attended the BOCC mtg on July 8th and addressed the commissioners on her support for the WAC.
 - Maryann Johnson (MJ) supports the WAC and feels it serves an important outlet for citizens to state their concerns regarding our waterways.
 - Ron Zellmer (RZ) also supports the continuation of the WAC as it provides another pair of eyes on our waters.
 - Procedure to remove WAC member for non-participation/attendance.
- Citizens' comments:
 - How would citizens get issues addressed if WAC was disbanded?
 - Citizens could provide comments at a BOCC meeting under citizens comment time.
 - When does the WAC vote on items? How many committee members are needed.
 - A quorum is needed to vote on a motion.
 - How can a citizen report an issue on the water?
 - Contact the Parks office (352-754-4031) or Waterways manager (Carla Burrmann).
 - Can the WAC take concerns/issues to the BOCC?
 - Yes. The WAC can advise the BOCC about any concerns/issues.
 - Can items/tasks be delegated to the WAC from Waterways staff?
 - WAC members' duties are established under section 7-153.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

- Navigational marker repairs – all missing signs have been installed with the exception of those on the Chassahowitzka River. County staff are currently working with Citrus County to locate a suitable location to moor our barge as it will need to be in the area for several days to install the missing poles/signs.
- Spoil Island debris – task completed. The county removed ~5400 lbs. of debris from the islands.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS

- Were the canals surveyed to identify debris in waters?
 - HCSO conducted a survey and did not locate any debris which would cause a navigation issue.
- What is the status of the canal maintenance study?
 - The county's consultants are currently analyzing the data and will be making a formal presentation at the BOCC meeting in August 2025.
- When will Pine Island open?
 - The county is hoping to have it open by end of July 2025. All structures will be mobile so they can be removed for a storm event.
- How will citizen park at Pine Island?
 - Park mobile app will be used along with two kiosks on-site.
- Is there an update on the Manatee Protection Zone (MPZ)?
 - The draft ordinance is being reviewed by county legal staff. Once completed, the ordinance will be advertised and presented at a BOCC meeting.
- Does the county spray waterbodies for invasive vegetation?
 - No. The county does not spray aquatic vegetation.
- Is the cut-through area from Weeki Wachee River to Mud Lake under an ISNW?
 - Yes. It is currently an Idle Speed No Wake (ISNW) however there are no signs in the cut-through area.
- Citizen located on Cheeks Creek requested to have an ISNW sign moved as it was too close to their dock.
 - Staff will look into this issue and reach out to FWC.
- Is there county staff or an HCSO deputy that can be stationed at Bayport boat ramp to control unruly people?

- Lt. Reak said to contact the HCSO when issues arise. County staff are not present at this boat ramp currently.
- Is the MPZ proposed for year-round enforcement?
 - Yes.
- Is there an update on the Weeki Wachee Preserve Park?
 - The construction plans are at 30% completion and the educational plan is under review by SWFMWD. The county hopes to be under construction within one year.
- What is the status of restoration activities at Jenkins Creek?
 - County staff are working with FWC on proposed restoration activities.
- What happened with the inflatable structure in the flats off Hernando Beach?
 - DEP contacted the owner, and had it removed as it was a violation of state regulations.

WATERWAYS ADVISORY COMMITTEE / STAFF COMMENTS

- A person will be selected to fill the WAC member vacancy and will be chosen at the July 22nd BOCC meeting.
- The Aquatic Services & Waterways Department and the Environmentally Sensitive Lands program will be combined in FY26 to create the Natural Resources Department.

OTHER –

ADJOURNMENT - Chairman (Kathryn Birren) adjourned the meeting at 7:54 p.m.

Upcoming Meeting(s):

The next regular meeting of the Waterways Advisory Committee will be held on Monday, September 8, 2025, at 6:00 P.M., at the Hernando County Lake House, 1202 Kenlake Ave., Spring Hill, FL, 34606.