

## **CALL TO ORDER**

A special call Meeting of the City Council of Marathon, Florida was held on June 14, 2010 at the Marathon High School Auditorium, 350 Sombrero Beach Road in Marathon. Mayor Ginger Snead called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

## **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

There were present:

Vice-Mayor Mike Cinque

Councilmember Richard Keating

Councilmember Dick Ramsay

Councilmember Pete Worthington

Mayor Ginger Snead, comprising a quorum

Also in attendance were:

Captain Pat DeQuattro, US Coast Guard

Mark Stultz BP Response Public Information Officer

Sean Morton, NOAA Sanctuary Superintendent

Scott Donahue, NOAA Research Coordinator

Dr. Dave Vaughan, Executive Director MOTE Marine Laboratories

Kim Sovia-Crandon, Florida Keys Congressional Aide Representing Congresswoman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen

State Rep. Ron Saunders

County Commissioner Mario DiGennaro, also Governor Crist's appointment to the Gulf Oil Spill Economic Recovery Task Force

City Manager, Roger Hernstadt

City Attorney, John Herin

City Clerk, Diane Clavier

### **Welcome and Introduction of Officials**

#### **Mayor Snead welcomed everyone and introduced the following officials:**

Kim Sovia-Crandon, Florida Keys Congressional Aide Representing Congresswoman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen  
State Rep. Ron Saunders  
County Commissioner Mario DiGennaro, also Governor Crist's appointment to the Gulf Oil Spill Economic Recovery Task Force  
Captain DeQuattro, USCG  
Mark Stultz, BP Response Public Information Officer  
Sean Morton, NOAA Sanctuary Superintendent  
Scott Donahue, NOAA Research Coordinator  
Dr. Dave Vaughan, Executive Director MOTE Marine Lab

#### **Mayor Snead also introduced and recognized the following in attendance:**

Tom Linley, Chief of Staff and Director of Volunteer Services, the Governor's Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service - Volunteer Florida  
Key Colony Mayor Ron Sutton  
Key Colony Vice-Mayor Geraldine Zahn  
Key Colony Commissioner Mary Schmidt  
Key Colony Commissioner John DeNeale  
Kelly Grinter, Marathon Wild Bird Rescue  
Ryan Butts, Marathon Turtle Hospital

### **Approval of agenda**

MOTION: Ramsay, moved to approve the agenda.

SECOND: Worthington

With no objection from the members of Council, Mayor Snead declared the motion approved by unanimous consent.

### **Comments from those speaking on behalf of an organization:**

Chris Gratton, on behalf of the Florida Keys Contractors Assoc. stated the association's concerns and the association's willingness to help with the effort.

Brian Schmidt, on behalf of the Florida Keys Realtors Associations spoke of cancelled sales contracts and vacation rentals.

George Steinmetz on behalf of the Florida Keys Marine Contractors Association spoke of the association's concerns and the association's willingness to help with the effort.

Karl Lessard, President of Florida Keys Commercial Fishing Association spoke regarding the impacts to the fishing industry.

Jeff Kramer, on behalf of Organized Fisherman of Florida spoke regarding the perception problems and how it is affecting the organization.

Ed Russo, on behalf of the Florida Keys Environmental Coalition spoke regarding continuing training.

Jeri Sears, on behalf of the Near Shore Waters Committee asked for consideration of a team to organize volunteers.

Daniel Samess, on behalf of the Chamber of Commerce spoke regarding promoting accurate and realistic information and urged businesspeople to attend the Chamber's seminar on Thursday.

Mayor Snead asked Monroe County Commissioner DiGennaro for comments.

Mayor DiGennaro spoke regarding perceptions, negative media coverage, and the complicated claims process. DiGennaro spoke regarding goals of economic recovery, letting people know the Florida Keys are open for business and the need for long term answers.

Mayor Snead asked Kim Crandon for comments.

Kim Sovia-Crandon, Florida Keys Congressional Aide Representing Congresswoman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen reported that the Congresswoman has been on top of the Deepwater Horizon Spill situation from day one, and concerns of slow claims process. Crandon stated the Congresswoman wants to hear the public's issues, she provided contact information and the Congresswoman Ros-Lehtinen's website information.

Mayor Snead asked Representative Saunders for comments.

Representative Saunders stated he was there to listen and his fears regarding the coral reefs, chemicals being used, training costs and concerns and the importance of knowing who the authority in charge is.

DiGennaro read a letter from Governor Crist and stated the Governor would continue to hold BP accountable and responsible.

### **NOAA Probable Forecast**

Sean Morton, NOAA Sanctuary Superintendent reported NOAA's role in the response efforts is to provide scientific and biological information, and providing advice on the best and right resources. Morton stated NOAA has provided trajectories, over flights, and vessels in the water. Morton stated thus far they have not seen any oil sheens near the Florida Keys. He stated if there were any threat at all, it would most likely be tar balls. Morton also stated NOAA.gov website shows forecasts and information contained on the website covers all different types of oil spills.

Scott Donahue, NOAA Research Coordinator reported that NOAA helps guide the response efforts and that the environmental unit is community driven. He stated the roll is in the planning process on how to respond and to supplement the area contingency plan.

Dr. Dave Vaughan, Executive Director MOTE Marine Lab stated his expertise in marine life and coral reef research. Dr. Vaughan stated people are frustrated with the lack of information and that he was preparing and expanding the MEERA program, which takes observations and information from the public. Dr. Vaughan stated the biggest impact so far has been because of misinformation. Dr. Vaughan reported MOTE has two high tech unmanned subs deployed in SW Florida and off of Key West and provided a website [www.mote.org/robot](http://www.mote.org/robot). Dr. Vaughan explained the loop current and that the oil has a long time to weather and bacteria have time to naturally dissolve and digest oil; so far the Keys have dodged the bullet but the leak needs to be capped soon.

### **US Coast Guard Key West Sector Response Plan**

Captain DeQuattro, USCG spoke regarding the aggressive monitoring program, and expansion of the monitoring program to the upper Gulf to allow scientists to view the tar balls in the state. DeQuattro stated this is funded by BP and the unified command consisted of the Coast Guard, Dept. of Environmental Protection, Department of Interior and BP. Responding to oil offshore is the focus. The spill site is 450 miles from Key West, what is released at the spill site is not what we would see in the Keys if we do see anything; it would be tar balls. Collection and disbursements have been the response, and every tar ball picked up in the North is one less that could affect the Florida Keys. DeQuattro stated the local unified command has been established and that BP is not part of the command but they are in the room so that they are informed as to what is being done.

Captain DeQuattro spoke regarding what resources, specialists and materials will be brought in if needed, and each day they get a better idea of what may be needed. Goal is the right resources at the right time. Captain DeQuattro spoke highly of the community of Marathon and Florida Keys and offered to set up a visit to the Florida Peninsula Command.

### **BP Response and Claims Update**

Mark Stultz, BP Response Public Information Officer stated BP's focus locally is to minimize and mitigate any impacts. Stultz stated to date there have been 215 claims in the Florida Keys. Staff is ready to help, explained the process and asked those filing a claim to bring documentation. Stultz stated it takes a maximum of four days to have communication on the status of claims, and that no claims have been denied at this point. Stultz stated training will be established and paid for by BP. Stultz stated that they don't want to contribute to negative signals, wants visitors to continue to visit Florida beaches, and will identify those most in need of assistance and will work to provide training and be compensated for it, and would stay as long as it takes to address any concerns one on one.

### **Wildlife Protection Response:**

Kelly Grinter, Marathon Wild Bird Center stated Fish & Wildlife Commission (FWC) wants them to wait, as this situation may not affect wildlife as we thought in the beginning, it takes 3 months of training to handle these animals, right now, they are in touch with FWC and just waiting.

Ryan Butts, Marathon Turtle Hospital spoke regarding concerns, the hospital is as prepared as they can be, stating they will be going to the Gulf to learn as much as possible.

Tom Linley, Chief of Staff and Director of Volunteer Services, the Governor's Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service - Volunteer Florida spoke regarding the role of volunteers, asked everyone to enjoy the resources and invite friends and family to the Keys.

**Citizens Comments:**

Joel Biddle, Formal Educational Director for Reef Relief, spoke regarding an oil tanker strategy.

Del Ashburn, spoke regarding a boom he devised to keep any oil off and away from his property on Big Coppitt Key.

Lott Pansky asked for third party independent adjustors and for the Council to abate wastewater connection charges.

William Hollis asked if the Coast Guard researched a skirt boom, and evaporation effects into the rain clouds.

Barbara Thompson spoke regarding destruction of the reefs, livelihoods and falling property values.

Debbie Cronin, representing Key Colony Beach Marina asked how the marinas can help and what is being done about inland waterways, booms, skimmers and claims.

Hans Stiglitz stated everyone has been impacted; spoke regarding the need for prevention as well as a good maintenance program.

Christopher Byrne, representing Keys Fisheries Market and Marina, spoke regarding the perception problem, and that BP should be spending advertising money to change the perception instead of to save face.

**Council Comments:**

Worthington thanked everyone for attending the meeting, and stressed the importance of the public staying educated and the availability of training at no costs. Worthington asked for the resources to deal with the oil, would like to see the boom stacked here in the Keys.

Captain DeQuattro responded that once there is a threat, there would be pre-staging.

Cinque thanked everyone for attending the meeting. Cinque informed everyone he met with scientists from Texas and the science on the microbes appears to be sound and environmentally friendly.

Rep. Saunders asked that all ideas be considered, one of the main concerns is what is underneath the oil plumbs.

Keating spoke regarding the negative perception from the National news day after day and asked for funds to market the Keys.

Rep. Saunders spoke regarding counteracting the bad press, doing whatever it takes to make sure the oil doesn't get here and letting the world know our seafood is safe.

DiGennaro stated he was working with the task force to get out a positive message.

Ramsay thanked everyone for attending the meeting and asked Stultz why the questions the City presented to them were not answered, and requested a written response to the questions.

Snead stated she was recently in Nashville, and people there thought everyone in Florida had oil on their beaches. Snead asked if the municipalities would deal directly with BP. Stultz responded that there was a claims process for local government entities in addition to grant money. Snead asked about the timeframes and limitations. Stultz replied the intent was that no taxpayer funds would be used for cleanup and that expenditures could be submitted after the fact.

Snead stated tax returns are not showing a loss of income. Stultz replied that the documentation could be a range of things, from five years back, including emails, etc. An independent mediator is used to assess.

Snead asked if someone was available to help put the claim information together. Stultz responded that attorney and accountant fees would be part of the costs. Claims adjusters would assist and asked that it be communicated to him if people are not being treated well.

Worthington asked what BP was prepared to do to help with perception. Stultz responded BP would provide the best, accurate information, using websites and working with the State, and providing funding to the State of Florida.

DiGennaro asked that the claims office be a one stop shop.

**MOTION:** Cinque to direct the City Manager put together a local response team and budget amount to get what we need to protect our coasts and a list of volunteers.

**SECOND:** Snead

Cinque stated after submitting the budget we put together, if BP doesn't fund, we need to move forward.

Ramsay stated the City of Marathon is proactive, and wants answers to the questions.

Keating stated he would like to use local contractors and the volunteers in the response team.

**Vote on the Motion:**

Yes: Cinque, Ramsay, Worthington, Keating, Snead

No: None

Absent: None

Abstain: None

**Vote on the Motion:** 5 Yes, 0 No, 0 Absent, 0 Abstain


City of Marathon  
Special Call City Council Meeting Action Minutes  
June 14, 2010 Special Call Meeting – Marathon, Florida


Snead thanked everyone including Marathon High School.

**ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business to come before the Council, Mayor Snead adjourned the meeting at 8:15 p.m. by unanimous consent.

I certify the above represents an accurate summary of the special call council meeting of June 14, 2010.

  
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Diane Clavier, City Clerk

  
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Date