

**TOWN OF OCEAN BREEZE
REGULAR TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
AGENDA**

April 10, 2023 6:00 pm
Ocean Breeze Resort Clubhouse Pineapple Bay Room
700 NE Seabreeze Way, Ocean Breeze, FL

***PLEASE TURN OFF CELL PHONES –
SPEAK DIRECTLY INTO MICROPHONE***

1. Call to Order, President De Angeles

- Pledge of Allegiance
- Roll Call

2. Approval of Minutes –

- Regular Meeting, Monday, March 13, 2023
(Motion, second, public comment, all in favor)

3. Proclamation - National Donate Life Month Proclamation – Mayor Ostrand

(Motion to approve, second, public comment, all in favor)

4. FIRST READING ORDINANCE NO. 336-2023 AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF OCEAN BREEZE, FLORIDA, AMENDING SECTION ONE OF ORDINANCE #273-2017 THEREBY CHANGING THE DATE UPON WHICH NEWLY ELECTED TOWN OFFICIALS ARE SWORN INTO OFFICE; PROVIDING FOR REPEAL OF LAWS IN CONFLICT, SEVERABILITY, APPLICABILITY; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

(Motion to approve on first reading, second, public comment, roll call)

5. Approval of Proposed Budget Hearing Dates

- Budget Workshop and Setting of Tentative Millage Rate, Wednesday, July 26 at 6:00pm *
- Proposed Budget and Tentative Millage Hearing, Wednesday, September 13, 2023 at 6:00pm*
- Final Budget and Millage Rate Hearing, Wednesday, September 20, 2023 at 6:00pm*

(Motion, second, public comment, roll call)

6. Comments from the public on topics not on the Agenda

7. Comments from the Council on topics not on the Agenda

8. Comments from Town Management Consultant, Terry O'Neil

9. Comments from Mayor Ostrand

10. Announcements – The next Regular Town Council meeting will occur on Monday, May 8th at 10:30AM All meetings are held at the Ocean Breeze Resort Clubhouse, Pineapple Bay Room, 700 NE Seabreeze Way, Town of Ocean Breeze

11. Adjourn (Motion, second, all in favor)

*All meetings including all Budget meetings will be held at The Ocean Breeze Resort Clubhouse, Pineapple Bay Room, 700 NE Seabreeze Way, Town of Ocean Breeze

TOWN OF OCEAN BREEZE
MINUTES REGULAR TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
Monday, March 13, 2023
Ocean Breeze Resort Clubhouse, Pineapple Bay Room
700 NE Seabreeze Way, Ocean Breeze, FL

- 1. Call to Order** – President De Angeles called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m.
 - Pledge of Allegiance – Council Member Kelley led the Pledge of Allegiance
 - Roll Call –President Kenneth De Angeles, Vice-President Bill Arnold, Council Members Kevin Docherty, Gina Kent, Liz Reese, Sandy Keblbeck-Kelley
 - Staff Present –Town Management Consultant, Terry O’Neil; Town Attorney, Rick Crary; Kim Stanton, Town Clerk; and Administrative Assistant, Shannon Roger
- 2. Approval of Minutes** – Vice-President Arnold, seconded by Council Member Reese, made a motion to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of February 13, 2023.

President De Angeles asked for public comments. There were none.

All in Favor: Yes: De Angeles, Arnold, Reese, Kelley, Kent, Docherty; No: None; Motion Passed – 6-0

- 3. Proclamation – Problem Gambling Awareness Month** - Mayor Ostrand presented the Proclamation for Gambling Awareness month, and read it into the record.

President De Angeles asked the Public for comments.

Deirdre Henry, 107 NE Bay Drive, commented that an addicted person had to want help.

President De Angeles asked for a motion to approve the Proclamation.

Vice-President Arnold, seconded by Council Member Kent, made a motion to approve the Proclamation.

President De Angeles asked for any additional comments from the public. There were none.

All in Favor: Yes: De Angeles, Arnold, Reese, Kelley, Kent, Docherty; No: None; Motion Passed – 6-0

- 4. SECOND READING: ORDINANCE NO. 331-2023 – AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF OCEAN BREEZE, FLORIDA CHANGING THE TIME OF REGULAR TOWN COUNCIL MEETINGS HELD ON THE SECOND MONDAY OF EACH MONTH DURING THE MONTHS OF JANUARY, APRIL, JULY, AND OCTOBER FROM 10:30 AM TO 6:00 PM, BUT RETAINING THE TIME FOR ALL OTHER REGULAR TOWN COUNCIL MEETINGS AT 10:30 AM; PROVIDING FOR A SEVERABILITY CLAUSE AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.**

Town Clerk, Kim Stanton, read Ordinance No. 331-2023 into the record.

President De Angeles asked for a motion to approve Ordinance No. 331-2023.

Council Member Docherty, seconded by Council Member Reese, made a motion to approve Ordinance 331-2023.

President De Angeles asked for comments from the public.

Discussion ensued regarding changing the times of the Regular Town Council meetings.

President De Angles asked for more comments from the public. There were none.

Roll Call: Yes: Kelley, Reese, Kent, Docherty; No: De Angeles, Arnold; Motion Passed: 4-2

5. Comments from the public on topics not on the agenda – Ann Kagdis commented on the turnout of the St. Patrick's Day Parade, and encouraged others to attend next year's parade. She thanked the Council Members who participated in the Art and Music Auction last April which raised \$5,000.00 for Jensen Beach Schools Art and Music Programs. She then asked Town Council members to consider donating their time and an item for this year's Auction would take place on Wednesday, April 26 2023 at 5:00 pm. She remarked that the Dollar Donor Program would benefit the Jensen Beach History Museum. She continued that the Museum hoped to raise \$10,000.00 through the program. She added that the evening Regular Town Council meetings would enable more residents and business owners to attend.

6. Comments from the Council on topics not on the agenda – There were none.

President De Angeles asked Martin County Sheriff's Deputy Andy Adams if he had any comments.

Deputy Adams informed the Council that the additional patrols in the Town had begun and would continue to be ongoing.

Council Member Kelley informed Deputy Adams of an upcoming Crime Watch meeting in Seawalk.

Deputy Adams said, if possible, he would attend.

Council Member Docherty asked if Council members could attend the Crime Watch meeting.

President De Angeles stated that if two Council Members were present at the meeting, they could unintentionally violate the Sunshine Law. He added that the Mayor was able to attend.

President De Angles asked Town Manager Consultant Terry O'Neil for clarification.

Town Management Consultant Terry O'Neil confirmed that more than one Council Member present at the meeting could be problematic as Town business could potentially be discussed. He added that one Council Member and the Mayor could attend without conflict.

7. Comments from Town Management Consultant Terry O'Neil – Mr. O'Neil informed the Council that the additional patrols in the Town of Ocean Breeze had begun, and thanked the Martin County Sheriff's Department for their help.

Council Member Kent suggested that the patrols take place after midnight.

Deputy Adams stated that the Sheriff's Department had narrowed down the hours of the majority of the incidents and would be patrolling during those times; he added that they would be shifting the patrolling times and that they would not take place at the same time.

President De Angles asked Deputy Adams to keep Seawalk residents updated regarding the additional patrols.

8. Comments from Mayor Ostrand – Mayor Ostrand announced the Grand Opening of Ocean Breeze Beer Company in Ocean Breeze Plaza, and introduced the owner, Lance Davis.

9. Announcements – The next regular Town Council Meeting will be held on Monday April 10, 2023 at 6:00 pm at the Ocean Breeze Resort Clubhouse, Pineapple Bay Room, 700 NE Seabreeze Way, Ocean Breeze.

President De Angeles asked for a motion to adjourn.

Vice President Arnold, seconded by Council Member Docherty, made a motion to adjourn.

Meeting adjourned at 11:02AM

Minutes approved: _____



National Donate Life Month Proclamation

- WHEREAS: One of the most meaningful gifts that a human being can bestow upon another is the gift of life; and
- WHEREAS: over 103,000 men, women and children are currently on the national waiting list for organ transplantation, of which nearly 4,900 reside in Florida; and
- WHEREAS: 42,888, a record number of transplants, occurred in the calendar year 2022 thanks to the generosity of 21,370 deceased and living donors, of which 3,064 transplant patients and 1,230 deceased and living donors were from Florida; and
- WHEREAS: more than 2.5 million people throughout the country and in Florida benefit annually from tissue transplantation thanks to thousands of tissue donors; and
- WHEREAS: the need for organ, eye, and tissue donation remains critical as a new patient is added to the national waiting list for an organ transplant every 10 minutes and each day roughly 20 people die due to the lack of available organs; and
- WHEREAS: more than 12 million Floridians have already registered their decision to give the Gift of Life through organ and tissue donation at www.DonateLifeFlorida.org or on their driver license; and
- WHEREAS: LifeLink® of Florida, the non-profit organization dedicated to the recovery of organs and tissue for transplantation therapy in Florida, with a mission to honor donors and save lives through organ and tissue donation.

Now, therefore, I, Karen M. Ostrand, Mayor of the Town of Ocean Breeze, Florida do hereby proclaim the month of April, 2023 as

DONATE LIFE MONTH

in Ocean Breeze, Florida, and encourage all residents to consider giving life through organ donation and to sign up on Florida's organ and tissue donor registry by visiting www.DonateLifeFlorida.org or when renewing their driver license or state identification card.



ORDINANCE No. 336 -2023

AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF OCEAN BREEZE, FLORIDA, AMENDING SECTION ONE OF ORDINANCE NO. 273-2017 THEREBY CHANGING THE DATE UPON WHICH NEWLY ELECTED TOWN OFFICIALS ARE SWORN INTO OFFICE; PROVIDING FOR REPEAL OF LAWS IN CONFLICT, SEVERABILITY, APPLICABILITY; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, under Ordinance No. 273-2017 newly elected Town Officials are currently sworn into office at the first regular meeting of the Town Council following the date of their election; and

WHEREAS, to allow for more time to coordinate canvassing and other election certification activities with the Martin County Supervisor of Elections Office, the Ocean Breeze Town Council deems it in the Public's best interest to change the date for swearing in newly elected Town Officials to the second regular meeting following the date of their election.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE OCEAN BREEZE TOWN COUNCIL THAT:

SECTION ONE: Section One of Ordinance No. 273-2017 is hereby amended as follows:

SECTION ONE: Newly elected members of the Town Council, and any newly elected Mayor, shall assume the duties of office as of the ~~first~~ second regular meeting ~~of the Town Council~~ following the date of their election; provided however, in the event a duly noticed special meeting of the Town Council takes place prior ~~thereto~~, to the said second regular meeting following the date of their election, then in that event, newly elected members of the Town Council and any newly elected Mayor shall assume the duties of office at such special meeting.

SECTION TWO: Except as specifically amended in this Ordinance No. 336-2023, the provisions set forth in Ordinance No. 273-2017 shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION THREE: All provisions of any resolutions or ordinances in conflict herewith are hereby repealed.

SECTION FOUR: If any section, sentence, clause, phrase, or word of this Ordinance is for any reason held or declared to be unconstitutional, inoperative, or void, such holding or invalidity

shall not affect the remaining portions of this Ordinance and the remaining portions shall be deemed and held to be valid.

SECTION FIVE: This Ordinance shall become effective upon its adoption by the Town Council.

PASSED on first reading this _____ day of _____, 2023.

Council Member _____ offered the forgoing ordinance and moved its approval on first reading. The motion was seconded by Council Member _____ and upon being put to a roll call vote, the vote was approved ____ to ____.

ADOPTED on second and final reading this _____ day of _____, 2023

KEN DE ANGELES, PRESIDENT

BILL ARNOLD, VICE-PRESIDENT

KEVIN DOCHERTY, COUNCIL MEMBER

SANDRA KEBLBECK-KELLEY, COUNCIL MEMBER

GINA KENT, COUNCIL MEMBER

ELIZABETH REESE, COUNCIL MEMBER

YES	NO	ABSENT	ABSTAIN

Karen M. Ostrand, Mayor

Ken De Angeles, President

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

ATTEST:

William F. Crary, II, Town Attorney

Kim Stanton, Town Clerk

Vice President Arnold seconded by Council Member Docherty made a motion to accept Resolution #332-2023.

Roll Call: Yes: Kelley, De Angeles, Kent, Reese, Docherty, Arnold; No: None; Motion Passed 6-0

5. Comments from the public on topics not on the agenda – There were none

6. Comments from the Council on topics not on the agenda – Council Member Docherty spoke about the recent traffic accidents on Indian River Drive and then reminded Council of the Speed Limit sign and speed tracker the Town had on Indian River Drive. He said that while the sign had reduced the number of cars driving over the speed limit, there was more work to be done, and he was working with Town Management Consultant Terry O'Neil on the issue.

President De Angeles asked if Indian River Drive fell under the responsibility of Martin County.

Town Management Consultant Terry O'Neil confirmed that the road was a County Road however the Town shares gas tax resources with the County and those funds have paid for the speed signs. Mr. O'Neil went on to say he would like to meet with the Town Engineer to discuss other ways to reduce speeding on Indian River Drive.

President De Angeles asked Town Management Consultant Mr. O'Neil if the Town would need the County's approval before any improvements could be implemented.

Mr. O'Neil confirmed that the Town did require the approval of Martin County as it was a County owned road.

Vice President Arnold noted that law enforcement would be pleased with any help to reduce the speeding in the area.

Martin County Sheriff's Deputy Andy Adams commented that the Town had done a remarkable job implementing measures to calm the traffic on Indian River Drive. He went on to say that the Sheriff's Department was going to great lengths to curb speeding and traffic accidents in Martin County. He also informed the Council that the Sheriff's Department will try to send a deputy to attend the Council meetings regardless of the potential time change. He added that the Martin County Sheriff's Department was now enforcing a zero tolerance policy for unregistered golf carts outside of residential developments. Driving an unregistered golf cart on public roads and sidewalks may result in a citation.

7. Comments from Town Management Consultant, Terry O'Neil – Mr. O'Neil referenced an ordinance written in 2018 that moved the Town's Election Day to first the Tuesday in November to coincide with the national General Election that occurs every two years. This Ordinance brought considerable savings to the town, as the Martin County Supervisor of Elections conducts the election and canvassing on our behalf. Additionally, the Ordinance states that newly elected Town Officials are to be sworn in at the next Regular Town Council Meeting following the election. This leaves very little time for the Martin County Supervisor of Elections to complete their canvassing duties and certify the election results. Mr. O'Neil asked the Town Council to instruct the town to prepare an ordinance which would move the swearing in date of newly elected officials from the first Regular Council Meeting after the election to the second Regular Council Meeting after the election. This new Ordinance would give the Supervisor of Elections ample time to complete the canvassing and certification.

Attorney Crary remarked that newly elected Town Officials are subject to the Sunshine Law immediately upon election and before they are sworn in.

President De Angeles asked for comments from the Council.

Council Member Docherty asked Attorney Crary if outgoing Town Officials were also subject to the Sunshine Law until the newly elected Town Officials were sworn in.

Attorney Crary confirmed that outgoing Town Officials were subject the Sunshine Law until newly elected officials were sworn in.

President De Angeles asked for comments from the public. There were none

Vice President Arnold seconded by Council Member Docherty made a **motion to create an ordinance moving the swearing in of newly elected Town Officials** from the first Regular Town Council Meeting after the election to the second Regular Town Council Meeting after the election.

Roll Call Vote: Arnold, Docherty, Kent, Reese, De Angeles, Kelley; No: None; **Motion Passed 6-0**

8. Comments from Mayor Ostrand – Mayor Ostrand reminded Council Members that they are welcome to attend any and all Florida League of Cities Advocacy meetings with her.

President De Angeles thanked the newest Town Council Members for their input and hard work.

9. Announcements – Regular Town Council Meeting Monday, February 13 2023 at 10:30AM to be held at Ocean Breeze Resort Clubhouse, Pineapple Bay Room, 700 NE Seabreeze Way, Ocean Breeze.

10. Adjourn Council Member Arnold, seconded by Council Member Kent made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:48 AM.

Minutes approved: _____

Item #7

Memorandum

To: Town Council and Mayor

From: Terry O'Neil, Town Management Consultant

Cc: Town Clerk and Town Attorney

Date: January 2, 2023

Re: Discussion of moving the date on which newly elected Town officials are sworn into office from the first regular Town Council meeting following the election to the second regular Town Council meeting following the election.

In May of 2018, the Town Council adopted Ordinance No. 276-2018 (copy attached) which moved Town elections to partially coincide with the general election held on the first Tuesday of November every two years. As a result, during years when state and federal elections are held, the Town has been able to "piggyback" on the Election Supervisor's county-wide activities, during which she conducts the Town's election and canvases the results at no cost to Ocean Breeze. In "off-year" elections, when no state or federal seats are at issue, the Town pays the Supervisor to conduct its election and convenes its own canvassing board.

This arrangement has worked well for the Town, however, immediately following the November 8, 2022 general election an apparent flaw in Ordinance No. 273-2017, adopted in December of 2017 (copy attached), came to light; namely its provision calling for newly elected Town officials to be sworn in at the first regular Town Council meeting following the election, which in 2022 was November 14.

Because of this provision, the Supervisor was compelled, or more accurately was kind enough, to expedite her canvassing of the Town's results on an expedited/emergency basis in order not to run afoul of the Town's November 14 swearing-in deadline. Ordinarily, the Supervisor has up to ten days to complete her canvassing activities.

Recommendation:

Noting that the Supervisor can pull only so many rabbits out of her hat, it is recommended that the Council direct staff to return with a draft ordinance moving the swearing in date to the second regular Town Council meeting following the election.



ORDINANCE NUMBER 273-2017

AN EMERGENCY ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF OCEAN BREEZE, FLORIDA, CONFIRMING THE TIME WHEN NEWLY ELECTED COUNCIL MEMBERS TAKE OFFICE; PROVIDING FOR REPEAL OF LAWS IN CONFLICT, SEVERABILITY, APPLICABILITY; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, it has been the custom and practice of the Town of Ocean Breeze for newly elected members of the Town Council to assume the duties of office as of the first regular meeting of the Town Council following the date of their election; and

WHEREAS, the Town Council wishes to confirm and ratify that practice, and

WHEREAS, because of the timing of the upcoming election the Town Council has determined it is necessary to take emergency action with regard to the subject matter of this ordinance,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED AND ENACTED BY THE TOWN OF OCEAN BREEZE, FLORIDA:

SECTION ONE: Newly elected members of the Town Council shall assume the duties of office as of the first regular meeting of the Town Council following the date of their election; provided however, in the event a duly noticed special meeting of the Town Council takes place prior thereto, then in that event, newly elected members of the Town Council shall assume the duties of office at such special meeting.


SECTION TWO: All provisions of any resolutions or ordinances in conflict herewith are hereby repealed.

SECTION THREE: If any section, sentence, clause, phrase, or word of this Ordinance is for any reason held or declared to be unconstitutional, inoperative, or void, such holding or invalidity shall not affect the remaining portions of this Ordinance.

SECTION FOUR: This Ordinance is hereby declared to be an emergency measure upon the urgent need to provide clarity as to when newly elected members of the Town Council assume their duties. This Ordinance shall take effect immediately upon its passage and adoption.

PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED THIS 11th DAY OF December, 2017.


Karen M. Ostrand, Mayor


Ann G. Kagdis, President

APPROVED AS TO FORM:


William F. Crary, II, Town Attorney

ATTEST:


Pam Orr, Town Clerk



Town of Ocean Breeze

Proposed TRIM Hearings Schedule (IN RED) – 2023

Monday, April 10, 6:00 pm – Regular Town Council Meeting
Monday, May 8, 10:30 am – Regular Town Council Meeting
Monday, June 12, 10:30 am – Regular Town Council Meeting
Monday, July 10, 6:00 pm – Regular Town Council Meeting

Wednesday, July 26, 6:00 pm – Public Hearing Workshop for
setting of Millage Rate and
Budget for FY 2023/2024

Monday, August 14, 10:30 pm – Regular Town Council Meeting
Monday, Sept. 11, 10:30 pm – Regular Town Council Meeting

Wednesday, Sept. 13, 6:00 pm – Public Hearing for Setting of the
Tentative Millage Rate & Budget
for FY 2023/2024

Wednesday, Sept. 20, 6:00 pm – Public Hearing for Adoption of
Final Millage Rate & Budget for
FY 2023/2024

Monday, Oct. 9, 6:00 pm – Regular Town Council Meeting
Monday, Nov. 13, 10:30 am – Regular Town Council Meeting
Monday, Dec. 11, 10:30 am – Regular Town Council Meeting

P. O. Box 1025 • Jensen Beach, FL 34958

Office: 772-334-6826 • Fax: 772-334-6823

email: townclerk@townofoceanbreeze.org • website: townofoceanbreeze.org

GENERAL INFORMATION ITEMS

The attached items (i.e.: correspondence, e-mails, reports, etc.) are provided as general information and are not necessarily subject to discussion during this meeting unless Council Members or the Mayor wish to do so.



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE MARCH 20, 2023

Marine Resources Council Releases First Indian River Lagoon Progress Report

Contact: Interim Executive Director Jim Moir, Council@mrcl.org or 772.341.4953

Palm Bay, FL —Marine Resources Council (MRC), founded in 1990, has released its first Indian River Lagoon (IRL) Coastal Community of East Central Florida Progress Report. The non-profit organization is conducting a Tallahassee to Loxahatchee outreach and tour to share the information from now through June. To review the report visit LoveTheIRL.org; to request a presentation or printed copies, contact MRC via council@mrcl.org or 321.725.7775.

“The east central Florida regional economy depends upon a healthy lagoon,” said Jim Moir, interim executive director of MRC. “The report explains in simple terms that much is already being done to return balance to the region, what more will need to happen, and what everyone must do to help,”

Waterways, canals and stormwater, from across the region east of Orlando, flow to the 150-mile-long lagoon, which also is an estuary. When healthy, it supports one of the most diverse habitats in North America. The lagoon is one of only 28 Estuaries of National Significance in the U.S., making it a growing focus of research and resources. It takes in almost 40 percent of the state’s east coast.

The report explains that recently water in the Indian River Lagoon is generally clearer, and nitrogen and phosphorus pollution is being reduced, helping to curb toxic algal blooms. “We’re making historic progress,” said Moir. “Yet, seagrass, the foundation of the lagoon ecosystem, is not recovering. We need to know why.” The phenomenon is addressed in the report.

The report explains how the U.S., State of Florida, local governments, non-profit organizations, corporations, and others are uniting to provide clear, concise, and consistent communication about the lagoon. “We need to share the progress and interesting stories with the public,” said Moir.

MRC explains in the report that it is calling on the State of Florida to broaden water quality testing in the Indian River Lagoon, and on each county and municipality in east central Florida to convert to Low Impact Development (LID) practices. “We need to know what is in our water and how it is getting there, and we need to slow the flow of water into the lagoon while we do it,” said Moir. Water quality testing conducted by the state currently only looks at five factors, explained in the report; however, hundreds of pollutants may be disallowing seagrass to recover.

Slowing the flow includes major wastewater and stormwater infrastructure upgrades, and septic to sewer conversions. It also can be as simple as installing rain barrels to catch rainfall from the roof of a structure, and channeling it into native rain gardens on site, along with other common sense practices explained in the report.

Help MRC stir a SEA Change: Science + Education + Action. Discover how at LoveTheIRL.org, or call 321-725-7775.

3275 Dixie Hwy NE, Palm Bay, FL 32905 • 321.725.7775

Science + Education + Action



INDIAN RIVER LAGOON

COASTAL COMMUNITY OF EAST CENTRAL FLORIDA

2023 PROGRESS REPORT



MRC PREMIER DONORS

The Galesi Family Foundation ♥ The Estate of Allan Moen ♥ Save The Manatee Club
The James Edward Hudock Trust ♥ Friends of the Indian River Lagoon ♥ The Mike Covello Impact Fund

MRC PRESENTING DONORS

Gunzenhauser-Chapin Fund ♥ Joshua Moore ♥ Terry and Melinda Casto
Brevard Posh Beauty Lounge LLC ♥ Conservancy Friends of Aquarina ♥ Good Shepherd Fund
Jim and Jonnie Swann Corp ♥ Kathleen Cole in Memory of John Lees
Northrop Grumman ♥ The Greiner Family Foundation ♥ Thrivent Choice ♥ Ron Jon Surf Shop of Florida, Inc.
Surfing's Evolution & Preservation Foundation, Inc.

Dive Into One of Our Earth's Greatest Natural Treasures



Jim Moir, Chair,
Board of Directors,
Marine Resources Council

Ask people living in east central Florida how it's going and they sometimes will reply: "It's another day in paradise."

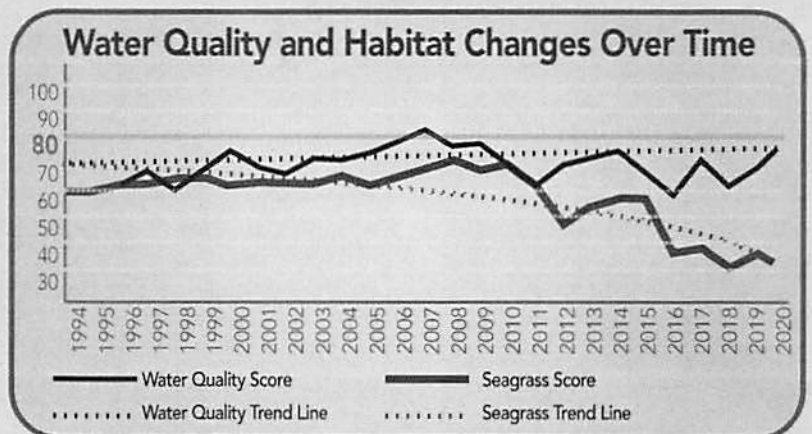
Recently, good fortune has rained upon this paradise, bringing with it a rising tide of opportunity, while straining its fabulous, yet fragile, Indian River Lagoon (IRL). The region is awash with new development, which existing stormwater and wastewater infrastructure cannot handle.

Too much of anything is usually not good.

Excess nutrient pollution is draining into the lagoon. Nutrients, such as nitrogen and phosphorus from increased fertilizer, pet waste, wastewater, stormwater, polluted groundwater, soaps, detergents and the burning of fossil fuels are at play.

Fortunately, much is being done to reduce excess nutrient pollution. Much more will need to be done, and everyone will need to get on board if the fragile balance with nature is to be restored. The regional economy depends upon a healthy lagoon.

At an average of about four feet deep, the lagoon stretches more than 150 miles taking in nearly 40 percent of the state's Atlantic coastal community. Once carpeted with meadows of emerald green seagrass, the foundation of life in the lagoon, pollution has placed it in peril.



An 80 meets target.

Seagrass, the key indicator of habitat health, is dying, even though water quality is improving.

Dive into the Data

This graph tells a story. Generally, the Indian River Lagoon (IRL) is getting clearer, and water quality, as currently measured in the lagoon, is improving. That's progress and very good news. Historically, seagrass, the foundation of the marine habitat would be improving. It's not. We need to know why and act accordingly.

Currently, water quality in the IRL is based on just four factors measured by the state: nitrogen, phosphorus, chlorophyll-A, and water clarity (turbidity). Please join MRC in calling on our state to broaden water quality testing in the IRL, and determine what, in addition to excess nutrients, is preventing seagrass from recovering.





Slow the Flow.

Start at home and work. Install rain barrels to capture rainwater; then, distribute the water as needed. Plant rain gardens, fed by rain barrels, or planted where water naturally pools. Don't fertilize during summer, and stop watering in fertilizer; learn more at BeFloridianNow.org. Discover and install attractive, durable, pervious surfaces, which allow rain water to seep into the ground rather than run into streets and storm drains that flow to the lagoon.

It's time for Low Impact Development (LID). Put the LID on harmful development practices by implementing common sense Low Impact Development (LID) in the counties, municipalities, districts, and developments of east central Florida. Discover what your county and municipality are doing now to update their comprehensive plans, zoning, codes, and ordinances, and whether they have LID projects underway.

We're all in this boat together.

Restoring balance is possible. If we continue to work together, MRC believes, as do other scientific organizations, that the fragile balance of the lagoon will be restored. MRC salutes the state for calling for \$100 million of annual funding for IRL restoration and invites you to join in monitoring progress.

Much is happening; celebrate that progress!

More needs to happen.

What more will you do?

We need to know why seagrass is not recovering. Historically, seagrass recovers as water in the IRL gets clearer and nitrogen and phosphorous decline. That is no longer the case and we need to know why. MRC is calling on the State of Florida to broaden scientifically reliable water quality testing in the IRL. Please do the same. We need to know what is in our water and why seagrass is not recovering. Seagrass is the foundation of the ecosystem. It existed for thousands of years before our current population explosion, and fish, crabs, oysters, dolphins, and manatee thrived.

MRC will continue to convene, collaborate and advocate.

Since 1990, MRC has collaborated with the community and hosted 20 action assemblies to assess, prioritize and publish actions needed to restore balance to the IRL coastal community. The most recent focused on seagrass and was held in January 2023.

Those assemblies led to the designation of the IRL as an estuary of national significance; the IRL National Estuary Program and its Comprehensive Conservation Management Plan, as well as a series of IRL Report Cards, published by MRC, which helped build international attention, awareness and action.

We are excited to publish this progress report, now that there is a growing tide of awareness, resources and action. Many thanks to all who have made progress possible.

Explore how you can join MRC and stir a SEA Change: Science + Education + Action. Visit LoveTheIRL.org. Be sure to register for the monthly MRC newsletter.

Please Donate to Marine Resources Council (MRC)

Donors are MRC Annual Members,
working together to protect, restore, unite, and promote
the IRL coastal community of east central Florida

Online at LoveTheIRL.org

Mail to:

MRC

3275 Dixie Hwy NE
Palm Bay, FL 32905

Or call us at 321.725.7775

Marine Resources Council
(Marine Resources Council of East Florida, Inc.; MRC)
Federal Tax ID#: 59-3030066

(if you wish to remain anonymous, please note when you donate)

**MRC is Stirring a SEA Change:
Science + Education + Action.**

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