



## **Marine & Environmental Resources Task Force (MERTF)**

**Town Hall Council Chambers  
6231 Estero Boulevard  
Fort Myers Beach, FL 33931  
Wednesday, June 10, 2026**

**Agenda**

**9:00 AM**

### **ORDER OF BUSINESS**

- I. CALL TO ORDER**
- II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
- III. ROLL CALL**
- IV. PUBLIC COMMENT**
- V. APPROVAL OF FINAL AGENDA**
- VI. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
  - A. MERFT - Draft Minutes - May 13, 2026
- VII. STAFF LIAISON REPORT**
- VIII. OLD BUSINESS**
- IX. NEW BUSINESS**
  - A. Recap Ferry & Water Taxi
  - B. Beach Cleaning Policy
  - C. Fireworks, Drone, and Laser Show Events
  - D. Hurricane Preparedness - Dumpsters, trash cans & Port-O-Potties
- X. COMMITTEE MEMBERS ITEMS**
- XI. ITEMS FOR NEXT MONTH'S AGENDA**
- XII. NEXT MEETING DATE - AUGUST 12, 2026**
- XIII. ADJOURNMENT**

**NOTE: THIS MEETING IS STREAMED LIVE ON [YOUTUBE](#).**



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**MINUTES**  
**FORT MYERS BEACH**  
**MARINE & ENVIRONMENTAL**  
**RESOURCES TASK FORCE (MERTF)**  
**and**  
**FORT MYERS BEACH ANCHORAGE**  
**ADVISORY COMMITTEE (AAC)**

6231 Estero Blvd  
Fort Myers Beach, FL 33931

**I. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Nusbaum.

**II. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance**

**III. Roll Call**

MERTF Members present: Bill Althoff (virtually), Sharon Hegstrom, Robert Howell, David Nusbaum, Edward Rood, Jennifer Rusk, and Todd Zaccarelli

Staff: Environmental Projects Manager Chadd Chustz

Liaison: John King

AAC Members present: Chris Riedel King, Thomas Hedrick, Sam Lurie, Ted Lawwill, and John Wesley Nash.

Staff Liaison: Harbormaster Curtis Ludwig

Liaison: John McLean

**MOTION:** MERTF Chair Nusbaum moved to allow MERTF Member Mr. Althoff to attend the meeting virtually, seconded by MERTF Member Howell.

**VOTE:** The motion carried unanimously.

**IV. Approve The Agenda**

**MOTION:** AAC Chair King moved to approve the agenda, seconded by MERTF Chair Nusbaum.

**VOTE:** The motion carried unanimously.

**V. Approve Previous Meeting Minutes**

**a. AAC March & April 2026**

**MOTION:** AAC Member Lurie moved to approve the March minutes, seconded by AAC Member Lawwill.

**VOTE:** The motion carried unanimously.

**MOTION:** AAC Member Lurie moved to approve the April minutes, as published, seconded by AAC Member Lawwill. AAC Member Nash requested a correction on page 3, which stated that he both made and seconded a motion. AAC Chair King noted the correction.

**VOTE:** The motion carried unanimously. The minutes were approved as amended.

**b. MERTF April 2026**

**MOTION:** MERTF Chair Nusbaum moved to approve the April minutes, with MERTF Member Hegstrom's correction from "the north end" to "the south end" on page 3, seconded by MERTF Member Zaccarelli.

**VOTE:** The motion carried unanimously. The minutes were approved as amended.

**VI. Public Comment on Agenda Items (3-minute time limit per speaker) – no public comment.**

**VII. Current Items**

**a. Ferry & Water Taxi**

AAC Chair King referred members to the printed discussion draft, noting that she would go over the specifics. She stated that the Town Manager has requested the following actions: 1) review any environmental, navigational, operational, and community impacts of having water taxi or water ferry services; 2) consider regulatory tools or frameworks that the town may need;

3) identify gaps in current town authority and opportunities for coordination with state and federal partners; 4) provide recommendations to the Town Council on a governance approach that is proactive, protective, and adaptable. She provided that the purpose of this document is to give a potential basic outlook and address what currently exists. She reminded members that their remit is to suggest what guardrails the town could proactively put in place to govern operations deemed allowable and not to determine the viability or desirability of allowing the operations. AAC Chair King identified that the overall goal is to find an option that has low environmental impact with maximum positive community impact, while understanding that there are two different purviews to be covered. The first is a water taxi service, which the primary use case might be transportation to and from vessels in the mooring field, the anchorage. It would alleviate the use of dinghies that are utilized overnight, which is not allowed. The second is a water ferry service. A primary use case would likely be transportation between the ends of Fort Myers Beach during the season to avoid traffic on Estero Boulevard. A secondary use may be to transport people onto Fort Myers Beach from and back to designated off-island locations. She listed environmental protection, speed, waterway congestion, parking, and safe boating operations as overarching concerns. She referred members to the federal, state, county, and local laws that already provide coverage on various aspects. FWC has already addressed speed and wake zones; wildlife protection; and refuge, trash, and waste disposal. The Coast Guard has covered operator qualifications and required licensing. Business licensing would go through the county. She presented that the town's operating model would be a clear standardized permit for water taxi ferry operators, which would include environmental, navigational, and operational requirements. She noted that there will be some items that the town can provide guardrails for that can fill the gaps in coverage.

MERTF Member Rusk spoke with several individuals on the island about residential canals. People agree with the idea of water taxi services. She has voiced her opposition solely due to environmental concerns. She stated that she had received several questions and asked when she could share these inquiries. AAC Chair King provided that she should frame them around the discussion on guardrails and reminded her that discussions should not focus on deciding whether certain aspects are allowed. MERTF Member Rusk posed the question, "Is this something the town wants to actually manage and permit?" AAC Chair King responded that it would be, as the Town Manager has submitted these requests to the two committees. Environmental Projects Manager Chadd Chustz stated that it would be under the purview of the Town Council to decide whether the town would wish to regulate. The joint committees can advise the body, but the ultimate decision would come from the Town Council. MERTF Member Howell posed a follow-up question on the difference between these guardrails and any other nature tour that already exists. He noted that there are already laws and regulations from different organizations. Mr. Chustz noted that the town regulates uses. He identified potential differences between tours that do not have a specified destination and tours that are scheduled to arrive at multiple locations. He stated that there are variations in the nature of the operation and that these would therefore be regulated differently. AAC Member Hedrick inquired if this would be a private taxi or ferry service. Harbormaster Curtis Ludwig confirmed that there may be outside entities running these services. Mr. Chustz expressed caution about speaking on behalf of the town, as the Council is the body that makes these decisions. He provided that this question would be better suited for the elected representatives. MERTF Chair

Nusbaum reminded members that the town has requested that the two committees investigate the possibility of the ferry service becoming a reality, regardless of who would be responsible for running it. He noted that members should focus on the guardrails as posed by the Town Manager. AAC Member Hedrick expressed his intent to explore the ability to create narrower guidelines. AAC Chair King advised that they should focus on areas outside existing federal, state, local, and county guidelines. AAC Member Lurie believed that they should look at the expectation that outside entities are running these businesses.

AAC Member Nash referred to a maximum of six passengers on page 4, noting his opinion against this restriction and any other specification. He also pointed to the use of rough water waivers for water taxi services. He explained the difference between water ferries and water taxis. Harbor Master Curtis Ludwig stated that this provision on capacity is based on the water taxi captain's license, which contains a maximum number of passengers. Captain licenses for ferries, on the other hand, are subject to tonnage of the vessel and passenger count. He noted that there should be a limitation to capacity for water taxis due to their on-demand nature. AAC Chair King confirmed with Harbormaster Ludwig that licensing would come from the federal level. AAC Member Nash cited personal experiences of water taxis that provide for larger capacities. AAC Chair King offered a revision to include that passenger limitations can vary based on the discretion of the operators and the licensing that the operator holds. He responded that he would like this provision to only address the differences between water taxi and water ferry services. AAC Member Hedrick noted that there should be a restriction on the size of the vessel. AAC member Nash expressed his agreement but provided that the current issue is on operational limitations. MERTF Chair Nusbaum said that economics would play a role in the determination of size. He would like the joint committees to recommend various aspects, including vessel size and licensing, for the Town Council to consider. He agreed that there should be an outline establishing the differences between the two services. Harbormaster Ludwig provided that water taxi service would need a smaller vessel to properly maneuver the canals within the mooring field and that a water ferry would be a larger operation. He acknowledged the economic component as well. Upon AAC Chair King's request, he provided his opinion of a size range between 18 feet to 30 feet. MERTF Member Howell confirmed with the Harbormaster that this was both a desire from the people in the mooring field and a desire from the town for the service. He requested additional information regarding the demand for water taxis and ferries. MERTF Member Rusk noted the feedback she has received from those who have run taxi services thirty years ago. These operations were not financially sustainable, even during the season. She asked for additional information on the enforcement aspect of permitting. Environmental Projects Manager Chustz recommended providing more general findings to the Town Council. MERTF Member Rood did not see the need to regulate or enforce at the town level, if these already exist at the county, state, and federal level.

AAC Chair King referred members to the points she believed that the two committees can consider and recommend: number of licenses for either services, operating fees, insurance and liability minimums, hours or months of operations, and noise and loud music restrictions. AAC Member Lurie expressed his preference for setting limitations on insurance and liability. Chair Nusbaum believed that limitations on licenses for water ferries may work but that water taxi services should be left to supply and demand. To illustrate his thinking, he provided an example

of services being offered through a ridesharing mobile application like Uber. MERTF Member Rood expressed his agreement. He said that the town should focus on wildlife protection. AAC Chair King noted that there are previously established wake zones. MERTF Member Howell brought up his concern about speeding, as water taxi captains may be motivated to go at higher speeds to service more passengers and, thus, earn more revenue. MERTF Member Rood noted that the Coast Guard may be able to address this issue. MERTF Member Howell mentioned the lack of enforcement. AAC Member Lurie believed that charter captains are already operating taxi services legally. MERTF Member Rusk confirmed that they were all licensed. AAC Member Nash expressed his agreement with MERTF Member Rood's remarks. It is of his opinion that the joint committees should examine the size limitations and locations for landing. AAC Chair King referred to MERTF Chair Nusbaum's reference to a ridesharing app and asked the committees for their input on registration for these captains. Ferry operations, on the other hand, could be governed by a permitting process. MERTF Member Rusk asked what is currently being required for taxi services, particularly for individuals who own fishing boats. Environmental Projects Manager Chustz stated that these questions can be referred to the legal department. AAC Member Nash noted that any business in the town would need a permit. AAC Member Lurie provided that individuals would need to submit their active captain license and provide a commercial or acceptable location. This would not be done through the town. AAC Chair King announced that there is currently consensus on the desire to enforce the size of the vessel, especially within the mooring field and anchorage areas, and to establish a range of 18-30 feet. AAC Member Lurie requested the incorporation of drafts.

MERTF Member Howell recommended offering online education for certifications. This may allow encourage individuals to learn more, while also developing a competitive edge. MERTF Member Rusk raised issues of liability for town endorsement. He recognized the risk but noted that there should be ways for mitigation. MERTF Chair Nusbaum entertained the possibility of a town website page for water taxi services, where individuals who wish to provide these services will need to complete certain requirements before being listed on the website. He is cautious about establishing canal restrictions that are too strict, believing that this should be left at the discretion of the captain. Council Liaison McLean listed some existing permits, guidelines, and ordinances for regulating water-based businesses. He said that the committees should explore how they wish to control, limit or create these companies. Council Liaison King voiced his opinion against town endorsements. AAC Member Lurie inquired about the status of the terminal parking and arches. He emphasized the need for differentiated parking for that project. Council Liaison King answered that this was still open-ended and noted that this terminal would be just one of the destinations. AAC Member Hedrick asked how other towns have approached these issues. AAC Chair King stated that she could follow up with additional information. Harbormaster Ludwig said that they have knowledge that other towns have taxi services and reminded the committees that this is just one factor that they will present to the Town Council. Council Liaison King expressed his agreement to Harbormaster Ludwig's remarks on focusing on the best practices. MERTF Chair Nusbaum noted the unanimous concern on speed. AAC Member Hedrick and MERTF Member Rood both agreed and believed that the town should meet with the Coast Guard and FWC to address enforcement issues.

MERTF Member Howell proposed that the committee urge the Mayor to contact the Sheriff's Department on speed enforcement. He provided that FWC and the Coast Guard are not working together for this cause. There were comments about the large number of manatee deaths due to boats and the issues with residents following the speed regulations. AAC Chair King emphasized the importance of education. AAC Member Lurie recommended contacting the state and documenting and submitting complaints.

MERTF Bill Althoff suggested that the town look to Naples's current operations for guidance. He believed that one of the primary goals should be to redistribute traffic from Estero Boulevard during the prime time. He suggested that the town focus on an agreement for available docks and address the need for parking. MERTF Member Rusk noted that it would take around 45 minutes to 1 hour to travel from the south to north end, using the appropriate speed.

AAC Chair King concluded by informing members that she will develop a document incorporating the areas of consensus, which will be presented to the committees for their consideration. She will then meet with MERTF Chair Nusbaum on how to bring the proposals forth to the Town Council.

**b. Algal Accumulation Policy**

MERTF Chair Nusbaum reported that there was a complaint from a condominium on the south end of the island. The Town Manager has requested that the two committees look into this matter and see if there are any recommendations for changing existing policies. According to the complaint, a substantial amount of algae had accumulated. Following Hurricane Ian, a tidal pool had formed, and algae had drifted into, but had not washed out of, this area. This has led to an accumulation, which has started to decompose and emit an obnoxious smell. He noted that this pool was next to the shorebird nesting area, which may limit the town's options. Environmental Projects Manager Chadd Chustz informed the committees that there is currently an algal accumulation policy, which is based on the one established by Sanibel. In order for the town to remove the algae, the area needs to be 30 feet wide, around a foot on average in depth, and about a quarter of a mile, or 1,000 feet, in length. He stated that these accumulations happen frequently following tropical storms. He requested general guidance for this matter but also pointed to the limitations with the policy and resources. He mentioned that the town does receive funding from TDC for these kinds of clean-ups. The town staff is aware of the importance of tourism and wildlife. He offered the possibilities of setting complaint or physical thresholds or using location as a deciding factor. Even with TDC funding, he noted the limitations on staff to coordinate and facilitate the collection of algae. AAC Chair King thanked him for the information and believes this can be used to help establish a guideline. Mr. Chustz also remarked that the town does have a permit for these activities. He recounted that, during the issuance last year, the state had provided that the town should disperse the algae at the tidal line where it has accumulated and that collection should be conducted if the algae remain

present after four tidal cycles. He explained that algae can move with the tides or become covered by sand, which adds a level of unpredictability. He also brought up challenges with dumping the algae after collection, as there could still be an offensive odor there. Harbormaster Curtis Ludwig confirmed that the presence of algae is a sign of a healthy ecosystem.

Council Liaison McLean read the policy on beach racking and the rack line. He explained that these regulations apply mostly to private property owners and resorts. He wished to provide this information as a baseline for discussions. He would like the two committees to consider the definition of excessive racking. AAC Chair King and MERTF Chair Nusbaum noted that the Town Manager tasked the groups with exploring possible changes to the algal accumulation policy. Environmental Projects Manager Chadd Chustz explained that the 8000 block is a special case, as the algae has been sitting in the inlet created by Hurricane Ian. He noted the dynamic nature of the accumulation. He recognized the concerns on smell, though he has personally not noticed this odor. He recounted an instance of fish kill that caused a spike in complaints due to the sulfuric smell. He noted the existing odors of the beach, which will continue to exist with or without the algae. AAC Member Hedrick asked if the depression near Carlos Point was caused by beach reclamation activities. Environmental Projects Manager Chadd Chustz stated that it was not caused by beach renourishment but did mention that the area was left unfilled due to permitting and authorization limitations. AAC Member Hedrick commented that the area should be cleaned due to the smell. MERTF Member Hegstrom stated that the algae can wash out but pointed to the large volume of algae, which can cause water blockage. She also noticed how quickly the algae returns after collection. She provided her personal experience with the smell. AAC Member Lurie believes that there are no toxins, as the birds have been able to eat near the accumulation. He observed a slightly mucky smell.

MERTF Member Rusk referred to the state permit and recommended that the town follow the guidelines within that document. Environmental Projects Manager Chadd Chustz provided that this permit is posted with the Town Clerk but will also distribute copies to the members. MERTF Member Hegstrom stated that algal blooms are making dolphins sick. Mr. Chustz listed different dangers caused by these blooms, including toxins and oxygen depletion. He said that there are no dangers with macroalgae. He believed the primary concern would thus be the smell. Council Liaison King mentioned the potential breathing issues associated with the accumulation. MERTF Member Howell commented that this issue is a good example of the need to balance human wants and nature's needs. He pointed to the trends of warmer water, which is causing an increase in algae. He believed that special situations like the 8000 block should be examined on a case-by-case basis. AAC Chair King provided a description of what the area had looked like before the storm. She noted that this was a multi-prong issue. MERTF Member Howell inquired if actions had been taken to mitigate the accumulation during the beach renourishment process. AAC Chair King responded that there was not and alluded to the

limitations for refilling the sand in the area. MERTF Chair Nusbaum, referring to prior remarks on the balance, mentioned that the algae is a source of food for the shorebirds. These organisms also provide protection to baby sea turtles. He recognized the Governor's work in cleaning up the Gulf for the past four to six years. He believed that discretion should be used when determining how algae collection is conducted. He proposed that the staff can stagger cleaning, if needed. He stated that this responsibility and decision would fall on the town staff. It was his opinion that the process be complaint-driven.

MERTF Member Althoff expressed his hope that the south end of the island is treated fairly and equally. Environmental Projects Manager Chadd Chustz noted the environmentally critical zone and the express prohibitions on raking in that area. He reported that the accumulation is most intense around the upper 4000 to 5000 block. He stressed the dynamic nature of the algae. MERTF Member Althoff commended town staff and expressed his support. He inquired if CWA is a year-round designation. It is his belief that it was not. Mr. Chustz replied that there was no caveat in the permit on any kind of seasonality. He can ask FDEP and FWC in the future. MERTF Member Rusk added that there were no timing provisions in the permit, though there were exclusions in terms of location. MERTF Member Althoff clarified that he would like to request equal treatment for the south end of the island, in places where there is no CWA designation.

Environmental Projects Manager, presented photographs of the area, taken earlier in the year and around the 4000 to 6000 block. He informed members that the tidal cycle limits collection. He reported that they cleaned the 8000 block in February. MERTF Member Althoff inquired if the algae can be used as fertilizer. Environmental Projects Manager Chadd Chustz stated that studies have been done and that there are investigations to see if there are heavy metals or other potential problems. He showed photographs of the dumpsters containing the algae and noted the strong smell.

MERTF Chair Nusbaum asked Mr. Chustz if he believed there was sufficient authority and purview to conduct the collection process. The staff member responded that he has not received enough feedback about this accumulation as a public health and safety issue. He inquired if the committee believed that staff should be extended more flexibility than the quantitative criteria that is currently established. He noted that the inlet area would not likely qualify under these standards. MERTF Chair Nusbaum offered a recommendation to Council to add a provision allowing for discretion by the Environmental Director. AAC Chair King pointed to the potential safety hazards, as the algae can be quite slippery. She said that this could be a possible way to give staff the flexibility to act. AAC Member Hedrick would like to see an option for staff to make common-sense decisions in certain situations. Both committee chairs agreed.

MERTF Member Rusk expressed her wish for the town to follow the state guidelines and protect wildlife.

### **VIII. Members' Items**

AAC Member Sam Lurie asked for permission to distribute a handout. The request was granted. He informed members of a fireworks explosion at Lover's Key around July 1990. There were four deaths. He provided his personal experience and noted the intensity and duration of the sounds from that explosion. He asserted that the town hires a barge twice per year and is allowing and paying for the dumping of hundreds of pounds of debris and toxic waste into the Gulf, around 200 yards away from Lynn Hall Park. He asked why there is a fireworks display launched from a barge that is causing such an amount of destruction. He provided that there has not been enforcement or fines from the US Coast Guard, FWC, and Lee County Sheriff's Office. He stated that wildlife are leaving the area and that individuals can suffer from hearing damage. He wonders about the negative impacts on dolphin echolocation and turtle nesting. He distributed copies of his communications to the Town Council. He reported that he had spoken during public comment and that he had never received any response other than that fireworks are patriotic. Mayor Allers had responded to let him know that they would be exploring other options, but AAC Member Lurie provided that this communication was sent over a year ago. He would like to see changes in the future, such as a transition to drone or light shows. He asked his fellow members to start these discussions. He emphasized the need to take action. Council Liaison King added that he brought up the issue before the Town Council at the budget meeting in September. He reported findings that a drone show would be just as expensive, if not more so, than a fireworks display. He shared his positive experience with a recent drone show. He believed that this was an option that the town should explore further and in more detail. AAC Member Lurie provided statistics on injuries and deaths caused by fireworks. He pointed to technological developments. Council Liaison McLean stated that he also brought this issue up. He recognized Dawn Miller and her work. He expressed his support for drone shows or other alternatives. MERTF Chair Nusbaum offered to add this item to the task force's agenda. AAC Member Lurie expressed his reluctance in bringing this matter to the joint committee and acknowledged the Millers for their support and work. He noted that he would like this to be addressed in the future.

AAC Chair King thanked all members for their attendance and participation.

MERTF Member Rusk distributed packets of photographs showing a construction site she encountered. She noted that the hurricane season and the rainy season are coming up. She recognized that many construction sites are responsible and fence the area to prevent the wind from blowing away garbage and debris. She had been picking up trash, which had gone into the water. Later, she discovered that the garbage was coming from a construction site without adequate

fencing. She observed a significant amount of trash and stated that the pictures do not depict the gravity of this situation. She requested that both committees address this matter. She would like to discuss ways to bring guidance forward to the Town Council and town staff.

MERTF Member Hegstrom brought in a sample of sea grapes to show members how dense they were. She stated that the algae's roots help them to survive hurricanes. She provided that sea grapes could also filter the seawater. She recognized its importance as a protected species.

MERTF Member Howell encouraged all to make phone calls to the Lee County Sheriff's Department. He recognized the marine mammal rescue team and provided an update that the manatee from yesterday's rescue is either on her way or at Tampa Bay. Council Liaison King suggested that he, Council Liaison McLean, and Harbormaster Ludwig meet with the Town Manager and the new Emergency Services Director on this topic. MERTF Member Howell commented that titles have power and noted the potential impact the Mayor may have on the Sheriff. AAC Member Hedrick noted the value that law enforcement and community have for enforcement.

MERTF Chair Nusbaum reminded all members of the committee that they should only go forward and present to the Town Council when a vote has taken place and they are designated by the group to do so. He echoed AAC Chair King's remarks and thanked the members of that committee for their attendance. He recognized the importance of these joint meetings. AAC Member Lurie asked where individuals can access Mari Torgerson's No Wake Map. MERTF Chair Nusbaum responded that he had some copies available. AAC Chair King replied that the map can be accessed on the FMB Chamber Water Foundation's website. AAC Member Lawwill asked if the copies were distributed to the marinas. MERTF Chair Nusbaum responded that they were not. MERTF Member Howell asked if the map can be placed on the town's website. AAC Chair King noted that this could be a possible recommendation. MERTF Chair Nusbaum reported that Mari Torgerson is working on a mobile application that will provide map access and alert users when they are speeding.

## **IX. Staff Update**

Environmental Projects Manager Chadd Chustz reported that the truck haul project has already begun. This will begin at the Dakota access. The Sterling access will also be used to minimize damage to a snowy clover nest in the area. He noted the project's circular pattern and stated that it will last around 30 to 45 days. They will be bringing in sand to reconstitute some elevation dunes seaward of the vegetation line and filling in some scour lowlying areas on the beach. He reported that the provider should be EarthBalance, and he hopes some plantings will be done in the near future. The Town Council will need to provide approval for the FDEM extension.

Harbormaster Curtis Ludwig updated the committees on the relocation of the Mooring Fields Operations Team's office. They are moving into their new permanent office. He stated that the process should be completed within the next two weeks. He provided that the off season has just begun. There is a current average of 35 boats. He predicts that there will be an increase over the weekend. He noted that he will have a group of 12 vessels arriving. He presently has around 10 vessels in the front anchorage and 15-18 vessels in the back anchorage. The team has been cleaning pendants and the systems that were occupied during the busy season.

**X. Public Comment (3-minute time limit per speaker)**

Craig Stevenson provided that his primary concern is the no wake zone. He has observed two manatee injuries and two sea turtle incidents. He pointed to the lack of a definition for slow speed. He urged that one be established. He commented on the significance of the size of the vessel, from an environmental standpoint. Larger vessels may not be able to see marine animals. He stressed the importance of enforcement, asserting that there currently is none. He also cited possible concerns if these water ferries or taxis use public docks. He mentioned issues with trash. He has also observed charter boats making sound and wake violations. He asserted that fertilizer runoff was contributing to the algal blooms. He believes that this should be regulated. He thanked the committees for addressing the fireworks issue.

Questions and comments were made on the definition for slow speed. Harbormaster Ludwig indicated that idle speed in a no wake zone means that the engine is in gear and that the vessel cannot go faster than that speed. He recognized that slow speeds vary based on the vessel, which is what is causing challenges in enforcement. He hopes to speak with Officer Nice from LCSO on regulations and enforcement. MERTF Member Howell presented the definitions for slow speed and idle speed that were provided in captain's school.

**XI. MERTF Award Nomination – tabled until next meeting**

**XII. Next Meetings**

**a. AAC – June 22, 2026, at 9 am**

AAC Chair King provided that their next meeting will be on June 22, 2026, at 9:00 a.m.

**b. MERTF – June 10, 2026, at 10 am**

MERTF Chair Nusbaum announced that their next meeting will be on June 10, 2026, at 10:00 a.m.

**XIII. Adjournment**

**MOTION:** AAC Member Hedrick moved to adjourn, seconded by MERTF Member Rusk.

**VOTE:** The motion carried unanimously.

Adopted \_\_\_\_\_ with/without changes. Motion by \_\_\_\_\_

Vote: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

DRAFT