



Beaches and Shores Advisory Committee

Murdock Administration Building, 18500 Murdock Circle,
Building B, Room B-106, Port Charlotte, FL 33948

BOARD MEMEBERS	DISTRICT
Wendy Lang, Chair	District 5
Robert Wibbeler, Vice Chair	Member-at-Large
Gregory Garvey	District 1
Robert Hancik	District 2
Ralph Lombardo	District 3
Vacant	District 4
Hank Killion	Member-at-Large

MINUTES

February 5, 2026, at 9:00 A.M.

- 1. CALL TO ORDER**
Wendy Lang, Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:01 A.M.
- 2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
Wendy Lang, Chair led those in attendance for the Pledge of Allegiance.
- 3. ROLL CALL / DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM**
Per Melissa Mason calling roll, it was determined that a quorum was present.

Committee Members Present:

Wendy Lang
Robert Wibbeler
Gregory Garvey
Robert Hancik
Ralph Lombardo
Hank Killion

County Staff Present:

Brandon Moody, Water Quality & Resiliency Manager
Matt Logan, Coastal Projects Manager

Jamie Scudera, Environmental Specialist
Elizabeth Eastes, Environmental Specialist
Melissa Mason, Recording Secretary / Senior Administrative Assistant

Guests:

Mary McMurray, FDEP – Charlotte Harbor Aquatic Preserves
Arielle Taylor-Manges, FDEP – Charlotte Harbor Aquatic Preserve

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- a. Approval of Minutes from [January 15th, 2026](#), approved.
Motion moved by **Chair, Lang**: Seconded by **Member, Lombardo**: Motion carried unanimously.

5. CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

- a. None.

6. CITIZEN INPUT AGENDA ITEMS

- a. None.

7. NEW BUSINESS

- a. **Guest Speakers: Mary McMurray and Arielle Taylor-Manges**, introduce their slide presentation: Seagrass Monitoring and Aquatic Preserve Management

There was a presentation on:

- I. Overview of Aquatic Preserve Program
 - a. Program history – active since 1998; manages 4 million acres statewide.
 - b. The (5) five preserves are managed by the Punta Gorda office.
- II. Monitoring & Management Activities
 - a. Continuous water quality monitoring at multiple stations.
 - b. Review of docks, marinas, dredging projects.
 - c. Monitoring of 44 bird-nesting islands.
 - d. Volunteer water quality program.
 - e. Education and outreach at boat shows and community events.
- III. Seagrass Species Review
 - a. Interactive identification activity covering local species (e.g., turtle grass, shoal grass, manatee grass, paddle grass, star grass and widgeon grass).
- IV. Importance of Seagrass
 - a. Provides habitat, improves water quality, stabilizes sediment and sequesters carbon.
 - b. Economic value: supports fisheries, tourism and property values.
- V. Threats to Seagrass
 - a. Prop scarring from boats; recovery can take 10 years.

- b. Macroalgae overgrowth identified as a major cause of recent seagrass loss in Charlotte Harbor.

VI. Monitoring Methods

- a. 50 transects are monitored annually.
- b. Quadrat sampling for species, abundance, canopy height, epiphytes.
- c. Deep-edge measurements are used as water clarity indicators.

VII. Key Findings

- a. Lemon Bay: stable seagrass trends.
- b. Myakka & Peace Rivers: declines after Hurricane Irma; some recovery.
- c. Gasparilla Island: Localized loss near railroad trestle due to sand movement.
- d. Charlotte Harbor: 25% seagrass loss in upper harbor, strongly linked to macroalgae proliferation.

VIII. Macroalgae Mapping

- a. Annual mapping along East and West walls since 2020.
- b. Significant increases in green macroalgae (*Caulerpa*).

There was a discussion on:

- Causes of seagrass loss: environmental stressors, storms, nutrient loading, microalgae.
- Role of public education, boating practices, and policy.
- Opportunities for community support and advocacy.
- **Vice Chair, Wibbeler**, extending the committee's assistance with FDEP efforts.
 - i. Educational brochures for boaters at the boat shows with maps.
 - ii. Educational brochures for new residents.
 - iii. Pilot projects that FDEP is working on to be sent to the committee.
 - iv. Pictures – used for resources.
 - v. **Member, Hancik**, inquiries about data implementation efforts.
 - vi. **Chair, Lang** suggests a mobile app featuring a navigation map of seagrass location along with a public service announcement.

b. BSAC Members – Future Attendees at Various Meetings and Reporting of Information

There was a discussion on:

- Committee representation assignments to attend external meetings and report back: **Member, Lombardo** will cover the Marine Advisory Committee (MAC) meeting, **Chair Lang**, will view Planning & Zoning (P&Z) meeting via CCTV.
- Parks & Recreation assigned member attendance to be revisited at the next meeting.

8. OLD BUSINESS

a. **WATER QUALITY**

Brandon Moody, Water Quality Manager provided updates on:

- i. Grant writing
- ii. Administrative work ongoing
- iii. \$2.5M in state funding received for modeling and resiliency projects
- iv. Public speaking

- v. Upcoming water quality data/analysis
- vi. Vulnerability assessment updates

There was a discussion on:

- o Seagrass planting progress in Punta Gorda.
- o Dual permit process for seagrass planting.
- o General permit process bill for shoreline habitat restoration is in the House.
- o Contracted county lobbyists assisting with presenting information to Legislation.
- o The value of the various types of data collected.

b. PUBLIC WORKS

Matt Logan, Public Works provided MSBU update:

- i. Reports will be presented at next meeting
- ii. FEMA processes are ongoing for Manasota Key and other shoreline projects.
- iii. Ian Project – process restarted
- iv. FWC dispute settlement
- v. Sand placement at Bayshore and Chester Roberts Parks success.
- vi. Port Charlotte Park – east and west side opening
- vii. Bayshore – sand replenishment
- viii. Manchester Roberts Park – sand replenishment

There was a discussion on:

- o Reestablishing MSBU – Manasota Keys project in November 2026.

c. PARKS AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Jamie Scudera, Environmental Specialist provides update:

- i. Palm Island mitigation is complete
- ii. Outreach and education activities are ongoing.

Elizabeth Eastes, Environmental Specialist presented the Derelict Vessel Report

- i. Refer to handout – 4 open cases, 1 removal, 4 to be removed

9. CORRESPONDENCE AND COMMUNICATION

- a. None.

10. PUBLIC COMMENTS

- a. None.

11. COMMENTS BY ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF OR CONSULTANTS

- a. **Member, Lombardo** announces that the committee vacancy has been advertised on the county website.

12. MEMBER COMMENTS

- a. **Chair, Lang** reminds committee that she will not be in attendance for the Thursday, March 5, 2026, meeting.

13. SUNSHINE LAW

- a. Members reviewed the Roberts Law and Sunshine Law training videos as required.

14. NEXT MEETING – Thursday, March 5, 2026, at 9:00 a.m.

The Beaches and Shores Advisory Committee Regular Meeting will be held at:

Murdock Administration Center, Room B-106

18500 Murdock Circle

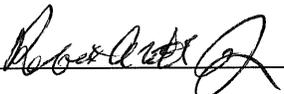
Port Charlotte, FL, 33948

***unless otherwise announced.

15. ADJOURNED

Motion moved by Vice -**Chair, Wibbeler**: Seconded by **Chair, Lang**: Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 10:16 A.M.

 - vice - chair
