

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY**

Meeting Date: March 19, 2008

Division: _____

Bulk Item: Yes X No ___

Department: _____

Staff Contact: Commissioner Dixie Spehar

AGENDA ITEM WORDING:

Approval of a Resolution of the Board of County Commissioners acknowledging the environmental impacts associated with the anchorage at Boca Chica harbor, addressing the issue of derelict and abandoned vessels, and directing staff to evaluate the potential of establishing a managed mooring field and pumpout facilities to serve boaters and protect the marine environment.

ITEM BACKGROUND:

The Commission recognizes impacts associated with the unregulated long-term anchoring of vessels in the harbor adjacent to Boca Chica and Stock Island, including the illegal discharge of sewage, benthic damage, and derelict and abandoned vessels. A managed mooring field, including sewage disposal and shore-side facilities, is a management strategy that would eliminate the environmental impacts associated with anchored vessels and provide the necessary infrastructure to serve the crowded anchorage.

PREVIOUS RELEVANT BOCC ACTION:

February 2001- Approval of a Boating Improvement Program grant agreement for funding of the Boot Key Harbor mooring field project.

February 2003- Approval of a contract for completion of bathymetric surveys and photography for three proposed mooring field sites.

CONTRACT/AGREEMENT CHANGES:

N/A

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

Approval

TOTAL COST: N/A

BUDGETED: Yes ___ No ___

COST TO COUNTY: _____

SOURCE OF FUNDS: _____

REVENUE PRODUCING: Yes ___ No ___

AMOUNT PER MONTH ___ **Year** ___

APPROVED BY: County Atty X OMB/Purchasing ___ Risk Management ___

DOCUMENTATION: Included X Not Required _____

DISPOSITION: _____

AGENDA ITEM # _____

RESOLUTION _____ - 2008

A RESOLUTION OF THE MONROE COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS ACKNOWLEDGING THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE ANCHORAGE AT BOCA CHICA HARBOR, ADDRESSING THE ISSUE OF DERELICT AND ABANDONED VESSELS, AND DIRECTING STAFF TO EVALUATE THE POTENTIAL OF ESTABLISHING A MANAGED MOORING FIELD AND PUMPOUT FACILITIES TO SERVE BOATERS AND PROTECT THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT

WHEREAS, Monroe County is home to North America's only coral barrier reef, among the most endangered coral reefs in the world due to multiple stressors including pollution from sewage that has caused a decline in water quality; and

WHEREAS, the reduction of water quality in Monroe County is caused in part by the discharge of untreated or poorly treated sewage from vessels within Monroe County; and

WHEREAS, these waters are of such value that the State of Florida has designated them as Outstanding Florida Waters and Congress has designated them as part of the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary; and

WHEREAS, through the efforts of the Governor and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, state waters within the boundaries of the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary were established as a No Discharge Zone for boater sewage effective June 19, 2002, as published in the *Federal Register* at 67 FR 35735 on May 21, 2002; and

WHEREAS, the Monroe County 2010 Comprehensive Plan requires the County to develop provisions to reduce pollutant discharges from anchored liveaboard vessels, including the establishment of mooring areas; and

WHEREAS, surveys conducted for *Boat Live-Aboards in The Florida Keys: A New Factor in Waterfront Development* prepared by Gus Antonini in 1990 concluded that anchor-outs are one of the most serious concerns in regard to live-aboard issues in the keys; and

WHEREAS, *The Boating Impacts Management Plan* prepared by the Monroe County Department of Marine Resources in 1992 recognized that liveaboard vessels require specialized infrastructural services including sewage disposal and shore-side facilities; and

WHEREAS, *The Channel Marking Master Plan for the Florida Keys* prepared by the Monroe County Department of Marine Resources in 1998 identified mooring fields as a key management tool in addressing the variety of impacts generated by the proliferation of liveaboard boaters anchored throughout the keys; and

WHEREAS, in 2001 the Monroe County Board of County Commissioners gave approval for the Department of Marine Resources to apply for grants to fund the implementation of mooring fields and pumpout facilities; and

WHEREAS, in 2001 the Monroe County Department of Marine Resources prepared a *Project Proposal for a Keys-Wide Mooring Field System* for the Florida Department of Community Affairs which recognized a variety of impacts associated with live-aboard anchorages in the keys; and

WHEREAS, in 2002 the Monroe County Department of Marine Resources prepared a *Keys-Wide Mooring Field System Preliminary Planning Document* which included an evaluation of numerous anchorages throughout the keys including Boca Chica harbor and recognized the need to address numerous boating impacts associated with the crowded anchorage; and

WHEREAS, the anchorage at Boca Chica Harbor would benefit from implementation of infrastructural services for the disposal of vessel sewage waste, provision of vessel mooring systems and designated access to the shoreline; and

WHEREAS, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection has recognized the need for establishing mooring fields designed to accommodate the management goals of local government programs;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Monroe County Board of County Commissioners:

1. The BOCC supports the implementation of a managed mooring field and vessel sewage disposal facilities as an appropriate strategy to address environmental impacts associated with the Boca Chica harbor anchorage.
2. The BOCC directs staff to evaluate the potential for developing a managed mooring field at the Boca Chica harbor anchorage.
3. The BOCC directs staff to consider options for establishing a shore-side facility to serve a mooring field at Boca Chica harbor, including the feasibility of public/private partnerships.
4. The BOCC and staff will collaborate with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection concerning the need for addressing anchoring issues at Boca Chica harbor, and address permitting criteria for mooring installations in an effort to eliminate environmental impacts associated with current anchoring activities.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Board of County Commissioners of Monroe County, Florida, at a meeting of said Board held on the 19th day of March, A.D., 2008.

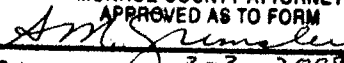
Mayor Charles "Sonny" McCoy	_____
Mayor Pro Tem Mario DiGennaro	_____
Commissioner Dixie M. Spehar	_____
Commissioner Sylvia Murphy	_____
Commissioner George Neugent	_____

(SEAL)
Attest: **DANNY L. KOLHAGE**, Clerk

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OF MONROE COUNTY, FLORIDA**

By _____
Deputy Clerk

By _____
Mayor/Chairman

MONROE COUNTY ATTORNEY APPROVED AS TO FORM  Date: 3-3-2008
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