

Biscayne Bay Commission Minutes

April 26th, 2023, at 9:00 am

Cutler Bay Town Hall and GoToWebinar

General subject matter overview: The Biscayne Bay Commission meets to review and discuss plans to address water quality impairments as well as the priority projects and financial resources that could address these plans.

Attendee Name	Title	Status
Noah Valenstein	Chair	Not Present
Adam Blalock	Vice Chair	Present
Danielle Cohen Higgins	Commission Member	Present
Kevin Cabrera	Commission Member	Present
Micky Steinberg	Commission Member	Present
Tim Meerbott	Commission Member	Present
Scott Wagner	Commission Member	Not Present
Dr. Thomas Reinert	Commission Member	Present
Spencer Crowley III	Commission Member	Present

Welcome and Introduction

Jon Moore from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) Southeast District welcomes the room and asks all to stand and recite the Pledge of Allegiance. Jon informs the audience that the meeting is being recorded, a copy of the agenda is available for in-person and virtual attendees, and that public comments are due by May 3, 2022, and can be emailed to BBCommission@FloridaDEP.gov. Jon thanks The City of Cutler Bay for hosting.

Commission Procedural Items

Vice Chair Blalock takes roll call and introduces two new commissioners to the commission: Miami-Dade Board of County Commissioners Kevin Cabrera and Micky Steinberg. Vice Chair Blalock requests a motion to approve minutes from the February 15, 2023, commission meeting. Commission Member Dr. Thomas Reinert makes this motion and Commission Member Danielle Cohen Higgins seconds, all are in favor.

Vice Chair Blalock reviews the agenda for the meeting and reminds the commissioners that the Florida's Coral Reef presentation scheduled for the April meeting has been moved to the next commission meeting.

The Miami-Dade Back Bay Study

An overview of the following is provided by Jim Murley, the Miami-Dade County Chief Resilience Officer, with the Biscayne Bay Reasonable Assurance Plan. Jim Murley discussed the Back Bay Coastal Storm Risk Management (CSRМ) Study and its planned timeline. Community engagement and support is still needed to fully execute the plan. Agreement will be assessed in August to decide whether the feasibility study is being rolled out or not. If the study is approved, there are two potential drafted alternatives: one that maximizes nature-based features and one that closes storm surge structures to keep water out during storms.

Biscayne Bay Aquatic Preserves Monitoring Programs

Griffin Alexander, Biscayne Bay Aquatic Preserve Manager with DEP's Office of Resilience and Coastal Protection, provides a summary of the water quality monitoring projects and their benthic monitoring program. Griffin also discusses data accessibility in the SEACAR and WIN/STORET Databases. Quality assurance is also reviewed, regarding data standardization and accuracy.

Miami-Dade County's MS4 Permitting Program

Marina Blanco-Pape, Miami-Dade County's Stormwater Management Inspector, Department of Regulatory and Economic Resources, presenting virtually, provides an overview of the county's MS4 permit. Water quality monitoring and upstream assessments are discussed, which are approved by DEP.

Public Comments

Public comments are opened and led by Jon Moore. Each commenter is limited to three minutes.

- In-person commenters: Rachel Stratfield, Dave Doebler.
- Virtual commenters: N/A.

Public comment period includes the following topics:

- Jet skiing violations in North Bay as well as environmental disturbance and quality of life for residents.
- DEP stormwater monitoring update requested for next meeting.
- Rainfall data from 1970 being used for law-making.
- Stormwater drain cleaning frequency.
- Street sweeping frequency to prevent trash in stormwater.
- Ineffective waste management strategy on the spoil islands in Biscayne Bay.

Kristine Morris calls in to update on the following in relation to the Strategic Plan:

- Recapping the goal of the Strategic Plan after the last meeting. The Strategic Plan will be developed in direct support of Miami-Dade County's RAP, while furthering the work of the Biscayne Bay Commission.
- The development of goals, 1. Water Quality Monitoring, 2. Public Outreach and Education, 3. Addressing Sources of Nutrients, and 4. Natural System Restoration.
- Between this April meeting and the next meeting, DEP will be reaching out to Miami-Dade County and other partners to draft goals and outcomes to address current issues in Biscayne Bay.

Commission Discussion

Vice Chair Blalock starts the discussion by addressing public comments. He explains that a follow up item could be assessing the bay-wide water quality network of ongoing data collection. Vice Chair Blalock reminds the commissioners about the need to update the project tracker.

Spencer Crowley adds to the discussion addressing the public comment regarding solid waste management and illegal personal watercraft operations in the Bay. Spencer volunteered to work with the public, Florida Inland Navigational District (FIND), and Miami-Dade County on finding solutions to these issues.

Closing Remarks and Adjournment

Vice Chair Blalock makes closing remarks. Jon Moore reminds attendees that comments are due by May 3, 2022. The meeting is adjourned.