



**AGENDA
WATERFRONT ADVISORY BOARD
REGULAR MEETING
MAY 26, 2026
6:00 PM
CITY HALL COMMISSION CHAMBERS
204 ASH STREET
FERNANDINA BEACH, FL 32034**

- 1. CALL TO ORDER**
- 2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
- 3. ROLL CALL**
- 4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
 - 4.1 The minutes from the April 27, 2026, regular meeting, are presented for approval.
- 5. PUBLIC COMMENT REGARDING ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA**
- 6. STAFF REPORT**
 - 6.1 **MARINA MANAGER REPORT** - *Marina Manager Chris Ferguson will present an update.*
 - 6.2 **PROJECT UPDATE** - *City staff will provide updates on various projects within the CRA.*
- 7. OLD BUSINESS**
 - 7.1 **WATERFRONT ADVISORY BOARD WORK PLAN** - *The Board will review the draft work plan and finalize it to present to the City Commission in June.*
- 8. BOARD MEMBER REPORTS/COMMENTS**
- 9. NEXT MEETING DATE**
 - 9.1 The next Waterfront Advisory Board will be held on Monday, June 22, 2026.
- 10. ADJOURNMENT**

All members of the public are invited to be present and be heard. Persons with disabilities requiring accommodations in order to participate in this program or activity should contact the

City Clerk at (904) 310-3115 or TTY/TDD 711 (for the hearing or speech impaired). All interested parties may appear at said meeting and be heard as to the advisability of any action, which may be considered with respect to such matter. For information regarding this matter, please contact the Marina Manager.



**MINUTES
WATERFRONT ADVISORY BOARD
REGULAR MEETING
APRIL 27, 2026
6:00 PM
CITY HALL COMMISSION CHAMBERS
204 ASH STREET
FERNANDINA BEACH, FL 32034**

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chair Schaffer at 6:00pm.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. ROLL CALL

Present: Chair Schaffer, Members Cook, Mills, Nikoloff, Roland, Sharpe and Stewart.
Absent: Member Smith

Member Stewart was seated as voting member.

3.1 Welcome new members - Jeff Stewart and Chuck Smith.

Chair Schaffer announced that with the two new members, Member Roland was now a full-time voting member and Member Stewart will serve as the alternate.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

4.1 The minutes from the March 23, 2026, regular meeting, are presented for approval.

Chair Schaffer provided a list of corrections for the minutes. Member Nikoloff made a motion to approve the minutes as amended, seconded by Member Roland, which passed, all in favor.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT REGARDING ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

No members of the public requested to speak under this item.

6. STAFF REPORTS

6.1 **CITY UPDATES** - *Staff will provide an update on Paid Parking implementation and Waterfront Park Phase II Concept.*

Downtown Coordinator Katie Newton provided updates including the City's purchase of 115 S. 2nd Street and paid parking revenue. Board discussion included the processing fee for parking permits.

Project Coordinator Jacob Platt showed the concept drawings for Phase II of the Amelia River Waterfront Park. A rough opinion of probable costs is around \$700,000 and is budgeted for FY2027-28.

The Board discussed the boat ramp adjacent to this section of the park. Member Sharpe stated that the Board had not been consulted on this design and that there was no place for boaters to pull over and prepare for launching. He wants to see that spot as a functional portion of the marina and not a park.

Mr. Platt stated that this update was an opportunity for the Board to provide feedback and he understands there are maneuverability issues with the boat ramp. It is also at the end of its life and is an expensive component to the waterfront area.

A motion was made by Member Sharpe, seconded by Member Nickoloff, to request that work on the design stops until the WAB discusses the future of the boat ramp. The motion passed, all in favor.

Staff will discuss with the City Manager the Board's vote and she will go to Commission if she feels the need for further direction.

Member Cook would like to see a two-lane boat ramp. The Board discussed how traffic gets blocked at that intersection and possible reconfigurations at length.

There was discussion on how the park would be funded. Parks and Recreation impact fees were planned to be used; however, if the boat ramp improvements a new funding source may have to be identified. Mr. Platt stated he would send out the plans and request feedback from the Board prior to the next meeting.

Member Nickoloff asked about additional handicap parking availability

Mr. Eric Bartelt, 3920 South Fletcher Avenue, asked how boaters are entering the boat ramp lane currently. Member Mills comes from Front Street, pulls the truck up Ash, and backs in. Some day boaters come up Ash Street then turn north on Front Street to back in. The ramp has been there for more than 50 years, but the town has changed.

6.2 **MARINA MANAGER REPORT** - *Marina Manager Chris Ferguson will provide a brief update.*

Marina Manager Chris Ferguson stated the marina is having a great year, revenue-wise, at \$116,000 more in sales and \$38,000 more in contracts year-to-date than last year. E dock is currently full. March was a tough month for fuel sales. The

dinghy dock project will be under budget and complete. The impact on expenses includes bad debt, including \$66,000 of Snag-a-Slip, and \$39,000 in credit card fees. Dockwa should reduce those costs considerably. They are seeing a really strong transient season and hoping for good weather.

He discussed boat club events that came in, and the aqua bike disposition. The mooring field project will begin after transient season and the ACL cruise ships will take a summer break at the end of May.

Member Mills asked why credit card surcharges applied to long-term slip holders and not to transients. Mr. Ferguson explained that slip holders have several options to pay, and the credit card is one of them. The other ways do not incur a fee (cash, check, or ACH). He asked about fuel, and Mr. Ferguson stated that with the idea of drawing in customers, it does not make sense to add additional fees to fuel and transient dockage. If someone cancels a reservation, the customer would receive a refund minus the credit card fees. There are limitations with the fees in the Dockwa platform as well. The Marina is trying to grow the business and draw boater in and not deter them with fees. Member Sharpe suggested showing a discounted cash price as being more palatable. Member Stewart explained that the boaters communicate closely and might choose to pass the area by and go someplace where there is now a fee. Right now, people are more interested in fuel prices than dockage rates.

7. OLD BUSINESS

7.1 MARINA REDEVELOPMENT UPDATE - *Staff to provide an update on Marina Redevelopment plans and timeline.*

Project Manager Jacob Platt showed the revised layout based on the comments from both the Historic District Council and Waterfront Advisory Boards. He outlines the timeframe including going out to the bid in the next week, with award by Commission in late June and construction beginning late July. All of Parking Lot A will be a staging area for construction. Before demolition, a construction tunnel will be built for access to the marina facilities throughout the project. Brett's will be demolished, a temporary fuel facility will be established, and the original bulkhead will be partially replaced. An updated fuel system will be added, dredging will occur, and a new pier built. The new pier system will be about 2.5 feet higher than the current walkway near Lot B.

There was discussion of a reef, but no plans to move forward at this time. They also showed additional dockage on E and F docks. They discussed connecting the walkway to the proposed project to the north – that elevation is about 6 feet higher than the City's walkway. They also discussed a possible partnership on extending the docks north rather than the private owner building his own dockage.

During construction, everything on A and B will be removed. Shallow draft boats will go to the dinghy dock, and the rest will be moved south. It will be fluid depending on tides.

7.2 **BOARD WORK PLAN** - *The Board will discuss priorities to form their work plan for the next two years.*

Downtown Coordinator showed slides of the priorities of the Board members. The first report to the Commission is due June 16 (agenda deadline May 29). The individual members were concerned about access to the waterfront, the boat ramp, and the financial stability of the Marina. They also wanted to make smart commercial development of the waterfront, a fishing pier, and redevelopment efforts in the CRA. Other considerations include the downtown revitalization project, updates to the CRA Plan, and assisting the City in forging public-private partnerships.

Ms. Newton asked the Board to synthesize those comments into 3 or 4 goals and define some strategies for the Board to help meet those goals.

Member Sharpe stated that the Board is often bypassed and it is frustrating to have no input on project. The WAB approval isn't a requirement for project plans, but they can make recommendations. The Board discussed the benefits and drawbacks of adding a code requirement for items for the Board to have approval authority over. They want to be able to give feedback prior to going to HDC or other approval boards. The Board decided that they do not want approval authority, but they do want anything in the CRA to come before them for initial feedback. The Board settled on a goal for smart development in the CRA and the strategies of formalizing a review process and following that process.

Member Allen suggested that the next goal be to drive events and activities to the waterfront park. The goal would be to have fewer road closures and more use of the park. Mr. Platt stated that falls within the CRA objective of marketing the CRA and is a good goal to have. Member Sharpe stated that since we have the park, let's use it. Member Allen described the amenities of the park and how they suited for many events that currently cause road closures.

The third area the Board wants to focus on is related to traffic flow. Member Nickoloff discussed how busy Front Street is and that one-way traffic might be better for safety and flow. Mr. Platt discussed ongoing studies related to that topic and that Front Street development may spur that conversation forward, especially with the opening of Alachua. Member Allen suggested the numbered streets continue one-way at least to Broome and Beech. Member Cook reminded the group that truck traffic flow is an important factor to consider. The goal is a more efficient and safe traffic and pedestrian flow and design with strategies including traffic studies, the boat ramp, and downtown revitalization.

Ms. Newton told the Board she would compile the information and send a draft out to the Board.

8. NEW BUSINESS

Member Allen wanted to discuss parking – specifically if the Ms. Newton stated that staff is working with the vendor on that solution. He asked about the whitelist, which is specifically for emergency and working City vehicles.

9. BOARD MEMBER REPORTS/COMMENTS

Chair Schaffer stated that the Standard Marine building is in permitting. She also stated that the Alachua Street (Flannery) property is under contract.

Member Sharpe asked about parking at 101 N. Front Street. Mr. Platt stated there was a debate, and that area floods, so it does not make sense to enhance the area yet. Member Roland talked about the great view there and likes the clear sight line. It might be a nice spot for a fishing pier.

Member Roland commented that he was pleased with the Amelia River Waterfront Park and he thinks it will be a premier facility for downtown and the waterfront.

Member Nickoloff stated he is excited that the City has taken over the Marina and there are a lot of benefits to having the City operate it.

Member Allan likes the “Fernandina Harbor Marina” branding and the new park.

The members all welcomed Member Stewart.

10. NEXT MEETING DATE

10.1 The next meeting of the Waterfront Advisory Board is scheduled for May 26 (Tuesday due to Memorial Day)

11. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Board, meeting was adjourned at 7:56pm.

Katie Newton
Staff Liaison

Jenny Schaffer
Board Chair

WATERFRONT ADVISORY BOARD

ANNUAL WORK PLAN



The Waterfront Advisory Board (WAB) is charged with the task of advising the City Commission on issues including implementation of the CRA Plan by providing recommendations and assistance in identifying and prioritizing projects to be undertaken as consistent with the CRA Plan. The focus of the WAB is economic development of properties in the City's established CRA and the adjoining Central Business District with specific consideration on infrastructure improvements and attracting and retaining businesses.

FOCUS AREAS

Area	Community Redevelopment Area	The Amelia River Waterfront	Safety & Traffic
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GOALS FOR EACH FOCUS AREA

GOAL	Strategic development within the Community Redevelopment Area (CRA)	Focus on driving events and providing access to the Amelia River Waterfront	Efficient and safe vehicular and pedestrian traffic
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ACTIVITIES	Develop a process to ensure all development projects within the CRA are reviewed.	Promote the Amelia River Waterfront Park as an event destination.	Analyze, provide feedback, and recommendations for the Downtown Traffic Study
	Review the CRA Plan and prepare a formal amendment for presentation and adoption to the City Commission.	Review Amelia River Waterfront Park Phase II plans and provide recommendations.	Review the boat ramp area and identify solutions for improved safety
	Review and provide feedback to private and public development projects within the CRA.	Review the recommendations for the Fernandina Harbor Master Plan and provide feedback.	Discuss Front Street traffic flow and identify possibilities for improved traffic flow
	Look for public-private partnerships to spur new projects while maintaining the historic integrity of the working waterfront.	Monitor progress on the Marina Redevelopment Project and provide ongoing feedback to staff.	Review and provide feedback to staff regarding the Downtown Revitalization project.

OUTCOMES	New development projects within the CRA that adhere to the CRA guidelines and add to the economy.	More events at the Waterfront Park and fewer street closures.	Improved safety and less congestion on downtown streets.
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WATERFRONT ADVISORY BOARD

ANNUAL WORK PLAN 2026-2027

The Waterfront Advisory Board (WAB) advises the City Commission on redevelopment, waterfront access, infrastructure, historic preservation, and economic vitality within the CRA, downtown waterfront, and adjoining Central Business District.

FOCUS AREA	GOALS	KEY ACTIVITIES	OUTCOMES
Waterfront Development & Access	Enhance public access, connectivity, and activation along the Amelia River Waterfront.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote Waterfront Park events • Review Phase II park plans • Monitor Marina Redevelopment progress 	Increased waterfront activity and public use with improved accessibility.
Downtown Mobility & Safety	Improve pedestrian safety, traffic circulation, parking efficiency, and waterfront access.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve Front Street traffic flow • Evaluate boat ramp safety • Review downtown revitalization impacts 	Improved traffic flow, pedestrian safety, and reduced congestion.
CRA Redevelopment & Economic Vitality	Support redevelopment while preserving the historic working waterfront.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review CRA amendments • Advise on public/private projects • Encourage public-private partnerships 	Thoughtful redevelopment that strengthens the economy and preserves character.