

News FROM THE CITY OF ST. AUGUSTINE

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City seeks input on harbor management pilot program

Public input sought at meeting set for May 19

Last June the City of St. Augustine launched a key provision of its harbor management plan when it began accepting reservations for spaces in its three mooring fields. Now, less than a year later, by every measure, the mooring fields have been a tremendous success and proven its worth by organizing the city's harbor in a manner that is safe, secure and environmentally responsible.

Now, with the approval by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, the agency responsible for the state's waterways, the City of St. Augustine is one of five Florida coastal cities selected for a pilot program that will allow further development of the harbor management system in a way that is essentially tailor-made to meet the specific needs of this community.

The initial step towards a more developed management system is to listen to the community's suggestions for policies that might be included. That listening will commence at a public meeting on Thursday, May 19 at 5:00pm in The Alcazar Room, City Hall, 75 King Street. Please note that one or more members of the St. Augustine City Commission may be in attendance at the public meeting.

The pilot program, once approved by the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, will run for a three year trial period after which the new plan may receive final approval, be denied, or be extended for an additional trial period.

Whether a boat owner or not, it is clear that the entire community has benefited thus far from the implementation of an organized anchorage in the city's waterways brought about by the mooring fields. With vessels restricted to designated moorings, boats are anchored a safe distance from other vessels and owners must dispose of trash and sewage properly. Additionally, the program has greatly reduced the derelict vessel problem created by boat owners abandoning vessels which become the responsibility of the city.

For more information about the city's harbor management plan and the upcoming public meeting, please call the city's General Services Department at 904.825.1010.

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