# **Biscayne Bay Watershed Management Advisory Board**

## **Board Packet**

## **Table of Contents**

Agenda	Pg 3
Meeting Minutes from June 6, 2025	Pg 5
DEP Biscayne Bay Water Quality Improvement Grant Overview – Project: Water Quality Characterization and Pollution Reduction	Pg 9







#### **AGENDA**

BISCAYNE BAY WATERSHED MANAGEMENT
ADVISORY BOARD (BBWMAB) MEETING
October 3, 2025 – 9:00 am – 12:00 pm
LOCATION – Stephen P. Clark Government Center, Commission Chambers, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor
111 NW First Street, Miami, FL 33128

#### 1. Roll Call

BBWMAB Chair, Commissioner Micky Steinberg

#### 2. Reasonable Opportunity to be Heard

BBWMAB Chair, Commissioner Micky Steinberg

#### 3. Welcome New Board Members

- Commissioner Natalie Milian Orbis
- Jed Redwine, FIU, Institute of Environment
- John Stieglitz, UM, Rosenstiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Science
- 5. Approval of Agenda Actionable Item
- 6. Approval of Minutes for June 6, 2025 Actionable Item
- 7. Biscayne Bay Water Quality Improvement Grant Project Updates (Requested by OERR)

Pamela Sweeney, Chief, Water Resources Coordination Division, DERM

- 8. Reasonable Assurance Plan Dashboard (Requested by Commissioner Steinberg)
  Pamela Sweeney, Chief, Water Resources Coordination Division, DERM
  Mike Wessel, Sr. Environmental Scientist, ESA Associates (via Zoom)
- 9. 2026 Florida Legislative Session (Requested by Commissioner Steinberg)

  Jess McCarty, Executive Assistant County Attorney, Miami-Dade County Attorney's Office

## 10. BBWMAB Recommendations Update (Requested by Dave Doebler)

Nancy Jackson, Resilience Program Director, OERR

- Mobile Vessel Pump Out Directive
- Marine Debris Plan

## 11. Future Agenda Items

## 12. Adjournment

# **Biscayne Bay Watershed Management Advisory Board**

Stephen P. Clark Government Center Commission Chambers, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor 111 NW First Street Miami, FL 33128

MINUTES June 6, 2025, 9:00 am

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER	Roll call was taken and quorum established.  Members Absent: Jannek Cederberg, Spencer Crowley, Julissa Kepner, and Roberto Torres
MEMBER ATTENDEES	Vice-Chair – Mayor Vince Lago Commissioner Micky Steinberg Commissioner Alex Fernandez Mayor Tim Meerbott Mayor Rachel Streitfeld  Dave Doebler  Sam Accursio  Jim Murley Jerry Menendez  Gerald McGinley  Kevin Cunniff  Staff support for Biscayne Bay Watershed Management Advisory Board in attendance: Chief Resilience Officer, Loren Parra (OERR); Pamela Sweeney (RER-DERM); Nancy Jackson (OOR); Larissa Aploks (RER); Kathleen Oswald (OERR); and LaTousha Daniels, (OERR).

#### **REASONABLE OPPORTUNITY TO BE HEARD**

Mayor Vince Lago – Vice-Chair

PUBLIC COMMENT	Mariana Aziz, Miami Waterkeeper: Regarding RAP projects, proposed including an asset management system as we move toward implementation of the RAP. Miami Waterkeeper is available to help with implementation efforts.  Steven Leidner, Sierra Club: Spoke about the importance of biodiversity in the Bay and need to focus on upland areas to allow more space for filtering water before it reaches Biscayne Bay.  Scott Pollowitz, Friends of Biscayne Bay: Supports Boater Safety and Bay Education Task Force. Recommends including collisions between animals, and ecosystems including pelicans and seagrass. Promoted Derelict Trap Rodeo happening on July 12.  Jackeline Bonilla, Urban Paradise Guild: Discussed the DERM Manatee Protection Plan. Recommended increasing signage on the Bay to further protect manatees.  Francesca DiJulio, Everglades Law Center: Glad to see RAP moving forward. Questioned Stormwater MS4 permits being listed as new projects.
----------------	---

Gene Carlson, Resident: Asked if there is any enforcement behind what's listed in the Biscayne Bay Friendly Campaign. Noted the presence of floating garbage and asked who to contact to report these issues. It was suggested that staff can provide that information. Adriana Gonzalez Fernandez, Miami Waterkeeper: Discussed RAP and the importance of robust monitoring.

#### **ELECTION OF CHAIR**

Mayor Vince Lago - Vice-Chair

**BOARD ACTION** 

A motion was made to nominate Commissioner Micky Steinberg as the new Chair of the BBWMAB. Motion passed unanimously.

#### WELCOME NEW BOARD MEMBERS

Commissioner Micky Steinberg - Chair

Chair Micky Steinberg thanked Mayor Vince Lago for acting as Chair. She recognized Jim Murley, representative of the Miami River Commission and Sam Accursio, Dade Agriculture Board representative as new members to the Adivsory Board.

#### **FLORIDA LEGISLATIVE SESSION 2025**

Commissioner Micky Steinberg - Chair

## PRESENTATION

Jess McCarty, Executive Assistant County Attorney, explained the Florida legislative session, typically 60 days, has extended to June 18 (Day 95) to focus solely on budget-related bills, as all other bills passed or died on May 2. A busy week and a half of budget conferencing is underway. The goal is to have the final budget on lawmakers' desks by Friday, June 13, with a potential vote on June 16. A key win includes the \$20 million allocation for Biscayne Bay grants, which is confirmed in both the House and Senate budgets. Statewide programs, including Water Quality and Resilience Florida, appear to be well-funded. Several local priorities have also been included in the budget packet. On the policy front, SB 1822 includes a preemption on local plastics regulation and did not pass. HB "Lucy's Law" is moving forward with sponsorship from Rep. Lopez and Sen. Ileana Garcia, and SB 1388, the Boater Freedom Act, could present challenges due to its limitations on law enforcement's ability to act without probable cause.

#### **Board Comments:**

Commissioner Alex Fernandez - commended Mayor Streitfeld for traveling to Tallahassee regarding HB 481. He stressed the importance of making sure local governments have more ability to protect our waterways.

#### **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Commissioner Micky Steinberg - Chair

BOARD ACTION A motion was made to adopt the Agenda and was passed unanimously.

**BOARD ACTION** 

A motion was made to approve the Minutes from December 6, 2024, Advisory Board meeting and was passed unanimously.

#### REASONABLE ASSURANCE PLAN (RAP) PROGRESS UPDATE

Pamela Sweeney, Sr. Water Scientist, RER-DERM

Chairwoman Steinberg requested Pamela Sweeney to provide the update on the RAP. Pamela Sweeney, DERM, shared a RAP updated focused on restoring Biscayne Bay's water quality by addressing key pollutants – nitrogen, phosphorus, and chlorophyll. A new water quality model, developed in collaboration with state and county agencies, analyzes historical conditions and pollution sources. It includes a data visualization tool to explore solutions. The final draft plan is expected by the end of 2026.

#### **Board Comments:**

PRESENTATION

Chair Steinberg - commented that she is happy to see municipalities involved. Kevin Cunniff - asked about the next steps following the acceptance of the plan, specifically how a regulatory framework would be developed and implemented. Pamela responded that this would involve following the EPA Secretary's order and that allocation details would emerge during the implementation phase. She also mentioned ongoing work on the County's CDMP, updates to Chapter 24 of the Miami-Dade County code, and the potential for municipalities to adjust their policies accordingly.

Mayor Streitfeld - raised concerns about enforcement, asking whether there is a mechanism to ensure all municipalities fulfill their responsibilities, and whether the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) has the authority to initiate projects that could support these efforts. Pamela explained that the SFWMD contributes valuable information about canal functions, which is being incorporated into the water quality modeling.

Streitfeld stressed the need for clear milestones and transparency, including data on which cities are implementing which projects and whether they are being carried out efficiently. Dave Doebler - expressed concern about long-standing stormwater issues, such as inadequate street sweeping and catch basins being cleaned only once every 10 years. He asked whether municipalities are being pushed to increase their stormwater budgets.

#### **2025 PROGRESS UPDATE**

Loren Parra, Chief Resilience Officer, OERR and Pamela Sweeney, Sr. Water Scientist, DERM

PRESENTATION

Chair Steinberg requested that Loren Parra and Pamela Sweeney approach the dais to share their presentation.

Loren Parra, Chief Resilience Officer, shared updates on the office's restructuring, with technical staff reassigned to key departments, while water and Biscayne Bay remain top priorities. She announced the Mayor's Boater Safety and Bay Education Task Force, inspired by the Lucy Fernandez family, with its first meeting expected in July and recommendations to follow. Loren also celebrated the success of the Biscayne Bay specialty license plate, which reached 3,000 pre-sale vouchers; plates will be available later this summer, with proceeds going to the Biscayne Bay Recovery Fund at the Miami Foundation.

Pamela Sweeney highlighted that the Biscayne Bay Report Card still shows nutrient-related challenges. She shared that FDEP grant opportunities open in mid-July, with \$20 million expected. She also provided updates on the Watershed Plan, which will address sea level rise and bay access, and noted continued work on the BBSEER Project Development Team.

#### **Board Comments:**

Jim Murley - praised the coordination efforts and emphasized the importance of boater safety.

Dave Doebler - noted the timing of the updated Aquatic Preserve Management Plan and called for a comprehensive governance framework, stressing the need for clear oversight and ownership, especially regarding illegal activities.

Commissioner Fernandez - highlighted the importance of increasing budgets for marine patrol, pointing out that responsibility should not fall solely on coastal municipalities since the bay is a shared resource. He suggested treating Biscayne Bay as Miami-Dade County's largest park and proposed an impact fee on new development to help fund bay protection efforts. Chairwoman Steinberg - added that the marine patrol budget is increasing and is now under the Sheriff's Department. She also acknowledged the Boater Freedom Act may complicate enforcement.

Commissioner Fernandez - raised concerns about declining water quality between the Julia Tuttle and MacArthur Causeways and asked whether technologies like aerators could be used especially given ongoing FDOT infrastructure projects. Loren shared that she plans to meet with DTPW Director Stacey Miller to discuss living shorelines, particularly near the Julia Tuttle Causeway. Doebler pointed out long-standing water flow issues near the causeways and called for more imaginative solutions. He suggested using a more nuanced numerical scale for the report card to make it easier to understand and better capture progress. Pamela explained that the report card was designed more for the broad public understanding, but agreed that as more projects come online, better data will support deeper analysis. Kevin Cunniff - brought up the loss of several board members and asked about progress in filling vacancies. Nancy Jackson responded that two new members - from FIU and University of Miami – are being onboarded, and they should be in place by the October meeting.

#### **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

Commissioner Micky Steinberg - Chair

DISCUSSION

Dave Doebler requested the Biscayne Bay Aquatic Preserve Plan update from DEP, an update on previous motions made over the past year, and establishing a Marine Debris Working Group. Nancy noted that the Biscayne Bay Commission will meet on July 23 and that would be the appropriate venue for the draft plan's presentation. Chairwoman Steinberg requested that the next meeting also focus on the core elements of the watershed plan.

#### **ADJOURN**

Commissioner Micky Steinberg - Chair

DISCUSSION

The Chair thanked the BBWMAB and staff for their work. The meeting was adjourned.



# **DEP Biscayne Bay Water Quality Improvement Grant - Overview**



## **Project: Water Quality Characterization and Pollution Reduction**

Task / Type	Project Name	Description	Phase 1 ('20 -'21) (\$10M)	Phase 2 ('21-'22) (\$12.9M)	Phase 3 ('22-'23) (\$14.5M)	Phase 4 ('23-'24) (\$13.5M)	Phase 5 ('24-'25) (\$1.1M)
Task 3 Investigative	Water Quality Characterization	Identify sources of pollution in Biscayne Bay / Groundwater	\$2,150,000	\$2,250,000	\$0	\$800,000	\$0
Task 4 Preventative	Innovative Technology  – Wastewater	<ul> <li>Prevent Sanitary Sewer Overflows with SmartCovers and Smart Rain Gauges</li> <li>Distributed WW Treatment</li> </ul>	\$1,159,544.36	\$2,000,000	\$0	\$50,000	\$0
Task 5 Preventative	Septic Education & Outreach - Connect2Protect	Education efforts in Little River Adaptation Action Area for Connect2Protect	\$500,000	<b>\$0</b>	\$0	<b>\$0</b>	\$0
Task 6 Restorative	Septic to Sewer Conversion*	Connect vulnerable properties to sewer	\$5,050,000	\$6,690,463	\$14,490,455.64	\$12,650,000	\$0
Task 7 Restorative	Stormwater Treatment	Implement green stormwater technology in the Little River area.	\$1,300,000	\$2,000,000	\$0	<b>\$0</b>	\$1,100,000
Task 8 Restorative	Biological Restoration to Enhance Water Quality	<ul><li>Develop a "Living Shoreline" guide for the county.</li><li>Sponge nursery(ies) host site and donor site characterization</li></ul>	\$500,000	<b>\$0</b>	\$0	\$0	<b>\$0</b>

Total for 5 phases: \$52,690,463