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12-18/30



Harbor Safety Committee Meeting Thursday, September 10, 2026

1. Welcome and Introductions

The meeting opened with introductions from representatives of the maritime industry, waterways management, law enforcement, the U.S. Coast Guard, passenger vessel operators, and other local waterway stakeholders.

The committee co-chair, Carlos Naranjo, Chief of Safety and Security Enforcement for PortMiami, welcomed attendees and provided background on the committee's reactivation. He emphasized that the committee intended to serve the entire Greater Miami maritime community rather than any single agency or port authority.

The committee's goal is to improve communication, collaboration, navigation safety, environmental protection, and coordination among all waterway users.

2. E1 Electric Powerboat Race — Event Planning

Jarrett Shaddock and representatives of the E1 electric powerboat racing organization provided an update on plans to return the event to Miami following the successful inaugural race the previous year.

Event Overview

- The event features electric hydroplane racing boats and is intended to showcase Miami as a premier international racing destination.
- Organizers are targeting a similar November timeframe, approximately November 12–15, subject to confirmation.
- The event is expected to attract significant spectators, media attention, and additional vessel traffic.
- Organizers are coordinating with PortMiami, the U.S. Coast Guard, law enforcement agencies, and other property and waterfront stakeholders.

Operational Concerns and Discussion

- **Vessel traffic management:** The Coast Guard is developing a Special Local Regulation (SLR) to establish designated vessel traffic routes and viewing areas during the races.
- **Public comment:** Committee members were encouraged to review the draft regulation and submit recommendations before publication and finalization.
- **Cruise ship coordination:** Increased cruise traffic requires careful scheduling of race operations, vessel movements, and race-course setup.
- **Race operations:** Organizers described the use of remotely operated, autonomous race-course buoys and discussed procedures for retrieving them if necessary.
- **Emergency communications:** Organizers expressed willingness to establish direct communications with Coast Guard and law enforcement personnel, including potential agency representation within the event command center.
- **Spectator access and parking:** Limited dock space and congestion around Watson Island remain concerns. Waterborne transportation, off-site viewing areas, and large-screen viewing options were discussed as potential alternatives.
- **Environmental protection:** Vessel anchoring, manatee protection, and congestion along the Intracoastal Waterway were identified as considerations.

The Coast Guard clarified that the proposed SLR would streamline the regulatory process for a recurring event but would not eliminate the event permit process or the need for continued coordination and annual review.

Follow-Up Actions

1. The Coast Guard will circulate the draft SLR for review and comments.
2. Committee members will provide recommendations concerning vessel routes, viewing areas, access restrictions, and operational timing.
3. E1 organizers will distribute an updated race schedule and coordinate directly with affected agencies.
4. Organizers and agency representatives will continue evaluating communications protocols and spectator transportation alternatives.

3. Review of the Proposed Committee Charter

The committee conducted a section-by-section review of the proposed charter, with the objective of developing a revised document for consideration and formal adoption at a subsequent meeting.

A. Name and Mission

The proposed name, **Greater Miami Harbor Safety Committee**, was discussed to reflect the broader geographic scope and participation of the regional maritime community.

The committee's mission is to provide an inclusive forum for government agencies, commercial operators, recreational users, and the public to identify and address issues affecting:

- Navigation and vessel safety.
- Waterway efficiency and congestion.
- Maritime security.
- Environmental protection.
- Education and public outreach.
- Coordination among waterway stakeholders.

Members also discussed the importance of recognizing the committee's role as a local point of coordination with national maritime organizations and as an advisory resource to the U.S. Coast Guard.

B. Legal Status and Authority

The proposed charter identifies the committee as a voluntary, non-governmental stakeholder forum without independent regulatory or enforcement authority.

The committee would provide recommendations and facilitate cooperation among stakeholders while preserving the respective legal responsibilities of participating agencies.

C. Geographic Scope

Members discussed defining the committee's area of responsibility to include the PortMiami approaches and channels, Miami River, Biscayne Bay, North Biscayne Bay, and associated waterways.

The charter's geographic language will be reviewed to ensure consistency with the Coast Guard Sector Miami area of responsibility and the committee's intended regional and national coordination functions.

D. Membership and Representation

The committee reviewed the proposed membership structure, including voting members, non-voting government advisers, and members of the public.

Discussion included:

- Ensuring representation from commercial shipping, passenger vessels, recreational boating, fishing, towing, pilots, terminal operators, shipping agents, and human-powered watercraft.
 - Clarifying representation for state-licensed and other legally operating charter businesses.
 - Maintaining broad public participation while establishing reasonable procedures for public comment.
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- Defining voting categories, primary representatives, alternates, and membership approval.
- Establishing procedures for removal of voting members for cause.

Members emphasized that the structure should allow all relevant sectors to contribute while maintaining an orderly decision-making process.

E. Illegal or Non-compliant Passenger Operations

Members discussed the ongoing problem of illegal or non-compliant passenger-for-hire operations, including certain operations marketed as bareboat charters.

The discussion favored broader language addressing illegal or non-compliant passenger operations rather than focusing exclusively on one type of charter arrangement.

The proposed charter and relevant subcommittee language will be revised to reflect this broader safety and compliance objective.

F. Governance and Officer Positions

The proposed governance structure includes:

- Full committee.
- Executive steering board.
- Standing sub-committees and temporary working groups.

The proposed steering board positions are chairperson, vice chairperson, executive secretary, treasurer, and member-at-large positions, with the precise number and structure to be clarified in the revised draft.

The committee reviewed proposed responsibilities, officer eligibility, election procedures, terms of service, vacancies, and removal procedures.

Government advisory members would participate without voting and would not serve as steering board officers under the draft provisions.

G. Subcommittees and Working Groups

The committee discussed establishing subject-specific groups to address:

1. Navigation and vessel safety.
2. Illegal or non-compliant passenger operations and charter education.
3. Recreational boating and human-powered watercraft.
4. Environmental protection and water quality.
5. Emergency preparedness and severe-weather response.
6. Education, public outreach, and communications.

7. Legislative and regulatory review and recommendations.

Members also proposed a working group to strengthen coordination with Coast Guard Sector Miami, including the development and communication of safety advisories, incident information, and recommendations.

Sub-committee chairs, membership, and reporting responsibilities will be clarified in the revised charter. Participants may include subject-matter experts who are not voting members.

H. Meetings and Voting Procedures

The draft provides for at least four full committee meetings annually, with additional steering board meetings as necessary.

Other proposed procedures include:

- Publicly available meeting notices and agendas.
- At least 14 days' advance notice for regular full committee meetings.
- In-person and virtual participation.
- Quorum requirements based on voting membership.
- Voting procedures and specified two-thirds approval requirements for certain actions.
- Special meetings when necessary.

Members raised the need for an expedited procedure for time-sensitive publications, safety reports, and recommendations that should not have to wait until the next regularly scheduled meeting.

The revised language should address urgent matters while maintaining appropriate committee oversight.

I. Financial Management, Records, and Amendments

The draft charter provides for voluntary participation and contributions, if any, without mandatory membership dues.

It also addresses financial oversight, recordkeeping, meeting minutes, publication of records, liability, non-discrimination, amendments, and dissolution.

Members identified the need to reconcile record-publication timelines and standardize the use of acronyms by spelling out each term at its first appearance. A glossary was also discussed as a possible addition.

Charter Outcome

The committee reviewed the draft but did not complete final adoption during this meeting. Members agreed to incorporate the proposed revisions and recommendations into a revised document for circulation and consideration at the next meeting.

The next meeting is expected to provide an opportunity for further review and formal action on the charter.

4. Maritime Safety and Regulatory Updates

The Coast Guard provided several additional updates.

Critical Infrastructure

Members were informed that the Coast Guard had released a report associated with critical infrastructure identification workshops conducted in 2024. PortMiami was among the locations involved in the national initiative.

Participants were encouraged to review the report and consider how locally identified risks relate to broader port and maritime infrastructure concerns.

Illegal Passenger Operations

The Coast Guard discussed increased attention to illegal passenger operations following a fatal incident in New York. A Government Accountability Office audit concerning charter operations was also anticipated in the Miami area.

The Coast Guard acknowledged the contribution of local law enforcement, industry partners, and committee collaboration to enforcement and compliance efforts.

Private Aids to Navigation

The Coast Guard raised concerns about unauthorized or improperly installed lights on private aids to navigation.

Although the Coast Guard oversees the regulatory requirements for these aids, owners remain responsible for their upkeep and maintenance. Unapproved lighting can confuse mariners and create navigation hazards.

Follow-up: Committee members were asked to report suspected unauthorized or unapproved navigation lights to the appropriate Coast Guard waterways management personnel for review.

5. Closing Remarks and Open Discussion

The Coast Guard representative commended the committee's progress in bringing together industry, government, law enforcement, and recreational waterway stakeholders.

The representative emphasized that ongoing communication and collaboration between meetings are essential to identifying hazards and implementing practical safety improvements.

Committee leadership thanked attendees for their participation and reiterated the importance of preserving institutional knowledge and subject-matter expertise as the committee's governance structure develops.

The meeting concluded with confirmation that the charter revisions would be prepared for further review and that the committee would continue pursuing broader regional representation and appropriate formal recognition.

Action Item Summary

Action Item	Responsible Party	Status
Circulate the draft E1 Special Local Regulation for review	U.S. Coast Guard	Pending
Submit recommendations on race routes, viewing areas, and vessel traffic management	Committee members	Pending
Provide an updated E1 race schedule and coordinate operational communications	E1 organizers	Pending
Evaluate spectator transportation and alternative viewing arrangements	E1 organizers and relevant partners	Under discussion
Revise the committee charter based on meeting comments	Committee leadership and charter working group	Pending
Clarify membership categories, voting procedures, officer structure, and subcommittee responsibilities	Charter working group	Pending
Develop language for expedited action on time-sensitive safety matters	Charter working group	Pending
Review the critical infrastructure report	Committee members	Pending
Report potentially unauthorized private navigation lights	All waterway stakeholders	Ongoing