

CITY OF FORT PIERCE  
MARINA OPERATIONS

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Honorable Mayor and Commissioners

FROM: Marina Manager, H. Dean Kubitschek



SUBJECT: Governance of the Port of Fort Pierce

DATE: June 4, 2014

As you are aware, the City Marina is not a part of the Port but a close neighbor. Over the years, the current governance of the Port of Fort Pierce had no effect on the City Marina as the Port has been in a period of stagnation. There has been no real communication with the Port Authority other than to direct captains interested in the docking of larger vessels to the County Administrator, who is the Port Authority.

Effects of future governance of the Port of Fort Pierce on the City Marina cannot be determined until future goals and direction can be outlined, but I do believe that better communication relating to the ongoing status would be of benefit to both parties. If it is decided that the Port focuses on freight, then there would be no direct impact. If it is determined that the port moves in the direction of accommodating larger yachting vessels for dockage and services, it would generate additional revenues and jobs for the local area and all the local marine facilities, retail trade, manufacturing and local tradesmen. The City Marina, once completed, will be able to accommodate larger vessels up to any size with the limitation dictated by the draft of a vessel. At this time, we can only accommodate a maximum of a 7 ft. draft vessel. In the future, we will need to deepen the entrance channel and the Intercoastal waterway from the bridge to the entrance channel to 12 ft. to take full advantage of the larger slips in the marina for larger vessels. When completed, this action will feed other service yards in the area as well as the Port. At this time, we cannot accommodate requests from deeper draft vessels for dockage or service so we have to turn away the captain and the vessel from the area.

The Port of Fort Pierce has the advantage of the deeper water, but does not have the facilities. Some of the larger vessels have a draft up to 12 ft. that many boat yards cannot accommodate. Growth of this market has now reached West Palm Beach benefiting from the mega yacht businesses they have developed over the last 5 years. The spin-off effect of creating a larger yacht facility able to accommodate mega yachts would put the local area in the position as a contender for this market, which would create future growth of local maritime business and education. The Fort Pierce location should become a port of desire and destination for the boat captains who usually make the determination on where the vessel will be facilitated. Due to our geographic location, a deep water inlet, access to the Bahamas and a possible maintenance location within 2 miles of the ocean with year round moderate warm weather in comparison to Fort Lauderdale or Savannah, Georgia, that are both extremely hot in the summer and Savannah cold in the winter, makes this port an ideal location for future growth in this industry.