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May 14, 2018

Major Robert Rowe
Boating and Waterways Section Leader
Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
Bryant Building
620 S. Meridian St.
Tallahassee, FL. 32399

Dear Mr. Rowe:

I am writing to formally request a boating safety study be conducted within the boundaries of the City Hallandale Beach on the Intracoastal Waterways. For years, our City has made several requests to reconsider the zone within our narrow City waterways and establish a boating restricted area. The tragedy that occurred on March 20, 2018 involving a boating accident with a fatality has prompted me to submit this letter to you with the hopes of finally obtaining a resolution.

As I understand, Florida Statute 327 entitled "Florida Vessel Safety Law" is the governing Statute controlling speed zones within the State's waterways. Section 327.46 addresses "Boating Restricted Areas". It provides in part that boating restricted areas, including, but not limited to, restrictions of vessel speeds and vessel traffic, may be established on the waters of the state for any purpose necessary to protect the safety of the public, if such restrictions are necessary based on the following criteria:

- 1) Boating accidents
- 2) Visibility
- 3) Hazardous current or water levels
- 4) Vessel traffic congestion

If we apply the above stated criteria to the City of Hallandale Beach portion of the Intracoastal Waterway (ICW), I would suggest the following:

- 1) **Boating Accidents** - As you are aware, there have been three boating accidents that have occurred within the zone or just immediately north of the zone in the past seven years. Two of these accidents involved fatalities; all three involved speed as one of the factors that contributed to the accident.

Visibility - While the ICW in the Hallandale Beach zone is straight, it is very narrow (only 300' wide). Boats are entering the ICW from Golden Isles through two entry points. While boats are legally required to operate slowly within 50 feet of the seawalls on each side of the ICW, boaters routinely ignore this regulation.

2) Accordingly, when a boat is entering the ICW from one of the interior waterways in Golden Isles, the boat operator may not see a speeding boat within the 50 foot buffer until it is too late to prevent a collision, especially if one or both boats are planing. Further, the Hemispheres Condominium has legally permitted boat lifts at their marina that are installed so that the boats are perpendicular to the ICW. These boats are required to back into the ICW from their slip, creating a dangerously obstructed view. Boats leaving the Hemispheres are at risk for being struck by a speeding vessel.

3) **Hazardous Currents or Water Levels** - Water levels have risen over the past several years and this trend is predicted to continue. The combination of increased water volume, a narrow waterway and physically larger boats, make for large and dangerous wakes. A boating vessel begins to plane at faster speeds, increasing response time and distances to avoid collisions. These vessels become particularly dangerous to smaller vessels. I would also mention the immense popularity of pontoon boats that are designed to hold a large number of passengers on a low platform. This design responds very poorly to large waves or boat wakes. These vessels, which are common in the Hallandale Beach zone, are particularly subject to a bad outcome if confronted with a large illegal wake. Additionally, since the ICW in Hallandale Beach is one of the narrowest portions of the ICW that has seawalls on both sides, there is significant wake reverberation resulting in very large waves similar to what one would expect in the Atlantic Ocean.

4) **Vessel Traffic Congestion** - This zone is heavily congested on the weekends. Visiting sandbars has become a very popular boating activity, and many boaters spend the day at the sandbar at the Haulover Inlet in Miami-Dade County. Boats travel south from all parts of Broward County to congregate here. The sandbar traffic can be observed by very heavy traffic heading south in the mornings and early afternoons and returning north later in the afternoon and early evening.

Additionally, there are approximately 300 waterfront homes in the Golden Isles community. Many of those homes have boats docked behind them. Those boats travel through the zone when leaving or returning to their docks.

The fact that this is a very heavily used portion of the ICW should prove to be indisputable. It is of course busiest on the weekends and holidays, but there is also a steady flow of traffic on the waterway daily. I seriously doubt that there is any portion of the ICW in Broward County that is as narrow as Hallandale Beach, as congested as Hallandale Beach and is a 25-mph speed zone, except for the Hollywood zone between South Lake and the Diplomat Hotel slow zone. One need only look at the map of Broward County waterways included in the Broward Safe Boating Guide to see that these two zones are an anomaly in all of Broward County. What makes the Hallandale Beach zone different than all the other straight, narrow portions of the ICW that are all slow zones? I would submit that there is no difference.

This zone should be made consistent with other similar zones in Broward County. The City of Hollywood has slow zones from the Hollywood bridge north to a point well north of their restaurants. I have heard that the justification for that zone was due to the public restaurants. If that is the case, I would submit that the Hemispheres Condominium property contains a popular public waterfront restaurant called 'Juniper on the Water". Why does that restaurant or their marina not count? The restaurant is clearly open to the public and is very popular among patrons who do not live at the condominium.

In closing, I would like to express my appreciation for your assistance. Please provide the timeframe necessary to analyze and complete this study. Our Police Department is available and willing to assist in anyway necessary. Should you have further questions, Mr. Roger M. Carlton, City Manager, and/or Chief Sonia Quiñones, Chief of Police, are available to assist. Mr. Carlton can be reached at (954)457-1300, while Chief Quiñones can be reached at (954)457-1400. Thank you in advance for your attention to this matter, I am looking forward to a positive response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Keith S. London". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Keith" being the most prominent.

Keith S. London
Mayor, City of Hallandale Beach

Cc: Hallandale Beach City Commission
Roger M. Carlton, City Manager
Jennifer Merino, City Attorney
Sonia Quiñones, Chief of Police
Jenorgen Guillen, Interim City Clerk