

Transcript

Narrator

You tuned into another edition of The Break Room, a weekly conversation about how the city of Saint Augustine works from those who do the work every day hosted by the City of Saint Augustine's communications director Melissa Wissel. The Break Room offers a closer look at the different city departments and provides updates on current and upcoming projects and events. And now your host. Melissa Wissel.

Melissa Wissel

Thanks for tuning into the break room. I'm Melissa Wissel, communications director for the City of Saint Augustine. This week, we're heading downtown to the Saint Augustine Municipal Marina, where we have recently dedicated a newly named park. We have an update on our visiting Spanish Ship. They are extending their visit. Lots going on. So I'd like to welcome to the break room. Our Harbor Master, Eric Mauldin, welcome back.

Eric Mauldin

Thank you. Thanks for having me again.

Melissa Wissel

Lots going on. You guys always have stuff going on even when it's quiet. You're fixing moorings, fixing docks.

Eric Mauldin

Yes, yes. Yep. Yep. Yeah, we're susceptible to the weather. We got the boating seasons. So there's a lot going on all the time.

Melissa Wissel

Everything. Let's start with our recent pride, prideful moment, and I'm going to just give us both the pat on the back because this was. Very near and dear to our hearts, a shout out to Commissioner Garris, but tell us about Harbor Master Park.

Eric Mauldin

Yeah, especially for both of us. Yeah. So. Wonderful dedication to Sam Audukiewicz, our former Harbor Master unfortunately passed away a year ago. He was harbor master from 2008 to 2021 and had many accomplishments within the Marina that we thought fit to name something in the Marina property. To further his memory at the Marina

Melissa Wissel

Marina the weather was fantastic. You could not have asked for more beautiful day.

Eric Mauldin

No perfect game, best backdrop. Full Marina at the Nao Trinidad in the background. Lots of friends and families, yeah.

Melissa Wissel

Lots of people. Yeah. And it was Sam's birthday. That was a really great part.

Eric Mauldin

That was a special part of how that we actually were able to get that done on Sam's birthday. Yeah, yeah.

Melissa Wissel

Yeah, that was a real great celebration. And one of the things actually, the mayor pointed out to me, so I would like to ask you about it. Can you tell us about the role that Sam played with the mooring field? So that was a huge project. And the mayor just kind of commented to me that she was, that was something that she remembered most. So could you give us a.

Eric Mauldin

Yes.

Melissa Wissel

Little background on.

Eric Mauldin

Yeah, so very. Very early on, even before Sam, there was discussions about installing a mooring field and when Sam came on, it was kind of given to him to actually. You know, install and bring up and and provide the policy procedures and all that stuff for them, mooring field. And in 2010 there was actually the opening of the mooring field and there's 115 usable moorings between downtown and in Salt run as. Well.

Melissa Wissel

But the the thing I think that was so important about it was the reason why we wanted that was there was no enforcement or regulation of boats.

Eric Mauldin

Yeah. And it kind of cleaned the area up as far as where you can actually accommodate more vessels in the harbor than just if on anchor they attach to the moorings or certain swing radius. So you can actually get more boats in the same area versus just anchored. And it's a little safer way to anchor, especially how much current and wind that we do get in the area.

Melissa Wissel

And it cleans up the boats that get left unattended, which we're fighting a little bit for addressing, shall we say. We're addressing that over in Salt Run

Eric Mauldin

Yeah, yeah, it definitely helps with the derelict boat problems. Yeah. Yep, Yep. Yeah. Yeah, it does limit some of the anchoring in the areas. There are plenty of spots still to anchor to visit the town. And we provide the dingy dock for those that you choose to anchor. But the mooring field does restrict anchoring within the mooring field and 100 feet outside the mooring.

Melissa Wissel

As well, so that was a huge. Shout out for when Sam was our harbor master.

Eric Mauldin

Yes.

Melissa Wissel

And so if you haven't seen it yet, there's a beautiful sign. You can see it from the road and from the water. And it just says harbor master work dedicating the memory of Sam Adukiewicz. So it's a great, great accomplishment. So switching gears a little bit, let's talk about the Nao Trinidad, you mentioned the Spanish vessel that was behind our backdrop there for the ceremony.

Eric Mauldin

Yeah.

Melissa Wissel

They're here for a little bit while longer. We thought they were leaving the end of April. How long are they staying?

Eric Mauldin

Yeah. So now instead of leaving in end of April, they're going to stay throughout June. Don't know how the exact date yet, but sometime at the end of June, they'll they'll be with us.

Melissa Wissel

Us and they come, we kind of lost track of them for a little while there with COVID. There's their schedule.

Eric Mauldin

Yeah. Yeah. They originally started during the 450th event, bringing that galleon. And then Nao Victoria and Santa Maria and they returned a couple of times in between that. But now they've got their new ship replication of Magellan's ship. That's like, that's it.

Melissa Wissel

Yes, the Magellan. It serves it's a replica of the Magellan ship that circumnavigated. I don't know that I. Would want to go around the world.

Eric Mauldin

Yeah, now.

Melissa Wissel

Back in those days, we were in had the we had the privilege of being able to go to Spain and we saw the museum, the of the now Victoria Foundation, which.

Eric Mauldin

Yeah, that's how they did it.

Melissa Wissel

Which is the owner of all of these boats. And when you see the track and you hear how many boats started out on that circumnavigation and how many were left.

Eric Mauldin

He actually made it versus didn't come back. Yeah, yeah.

Melissa Wissel

And he made it. And that was that's quite a ship. But they the folks that are on board there give you tours. You can also go on board and just walk around yourself. It's a guided tour. If you're looking for information about the Nao Trinidad, you can go to the city website. We have a link in our resources there on the home page and at Citysanog.com/NaoTrinidad and that's Nao now, Trinidad, if you want information to get tickets or like you said just go right. Down to the dock and.

Eric Mauldin

Yes. Yeah. Anyways, welcome. Just walk down the dock, take a look at the ship. If you choose to go on board, just walk on board and purchase a ticket.

Melissa Wissel

and you can go walk past it. Yes, without even having to get on it. If you wanna go.

Eric Mauldin

Yeah. Just go down and visit and look.

Melissa Wissel

Get your pick. Yep, just wave to them. Say hi.

Eric Mauldin

At it. Yeah, exactly. But then you'll. Want to go on it? Once you're down there.

Melissa Wissel

Absolutely. Well, the marina is looking good. You've done some recent repairs. The pilings?

Eric Mauldin

Yes. Yes. Yep. Yeah. So about a year and a half ago, we had Ian and Nicole. Those calls cause extensive, extensive damage to our breakwater dock. So about October, we started the repair

process. It just opened up March 1st back open to the public and taking reservations again for that dock.

Melissa Wissel

Tell me about the pilings.

Eric Mauldin

So, it's glad to have that.

Melissa Wissel

Back but the break, that's the that's why it's there as much as we say. Oh, it got damaged.

Eric Mauldin

Yeah, it's only purpose really, but it does provide slips and some larger slips for bigger yachts. But its main purpose is just to protect the rest of the Marina. And that was part of what we did with our repairs. FEMA, port and waterway, and find were very generous with grant contributions to actually fund a project to do more mitigation for those piling. So we replaced the concrete pilings along that whole entire N run, all 26 of them we have from 18 inch. Concrete pilings to now we've got 18 inch steel pilings that are embedded further in the ground, and also taller.

Melissa Wissel

They look like torpedoes. I mean, they look serious. They look really serious.

Eric Mauldin

Yeah. Yeah, they're strong. Very strong. Yeah. We hope to never have to worry about broken pilings again.

Melissa Wissel

The docks might get damaged. Yeah, yeah. The docks will definitely break around those filings. Those things are, yeah.

Eric Mauldin

Yeah. Yeah, that's just part of that. But as long as the pilings stay put, the majority of the actual docks will stay in place too.

Melissa Wissel

Well, the Marina where we as a city are very proud of the Marina and proud of the work you're doing to maintain that. If you are just now tuning in, you're tuning in to the break room. I'm Melissa Wissel communications director and I have Eric Mauldin with me this week. He is the city's harbor master down in the municipal Marina. We just did when I changed subjects one more time that this is really cool. Mostly because I used to work there. And I remember what it used. Would be like, but we've updated the website and you've got an update on the Marina website.

Eric Mauldin

Yes, yes, yeah, we have come kind of full circle here. We now have a whole new operating system in our Marina office. It's a little more user friendly and it gives us some well customers get better access to be able to do things on their own better user database. It has lots of features. It has the ability to make online invoice payments so the customers can view their own accounting transactions that they have in place. Managing contact information, managing stored payment information, online profile vessel information vessel pictures you can put on there as well. Online reservations. And then you can make a request to any of the staff members on there as well. And we all see that right in front of the Marina office, at the front desk and we can help you as you need.

Melissa Wissel

So, it's good if I'm. If I'm transient boater or even local. But I just want to make a reservation. I don't have to fill out the form and wait.

Eric Mauldin

Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Melissa Wissel

You guys still have to respond and confirm, but it's very interactive.

Eric Mauldin

Yeah, you won't see an actual slip location, but it will assign you a slip or mooring that you choose

Melissa Wissel

Is and I noticed you had there was some kind of an interactive map you were showing me.

Eric Mauldin

Yeah, that's more on the employee side. We're able to have an actual interactive map. It's highlighting different colors. So we can see who's coming in, who's long term, who's short term, what slips are empty. Just as a quick little visual map.

Melissa Wissel

OK. So if I'm a. Local boater and I come down to Saint Augustine. Can I come in anytime? Stop anywhere. How do I get in if I want? To come down on my. 22 foot.

Eric Mauldin

Yes. So we get a lot of people that come in just for the day. We do hourly dockage. It's a four hour Max. It's based on first come, first serve, majority of time. We will have room for those size boats.

Melissa Wissel

With for lunch.

Eric Mauldin

Busy holiday weekends, 4th of July, things like that. It's very, very limited. And that's \$5.00 an hour with a Max of four hours. And then if you choose to stay overnight, we do have walk of guests where they will choose to stay overnight and if we can accommodate them, we will that night or you can plan ahead and make reservations as well for slips and.

Melissa Wissel

and I should not just go pick up a mooring ball.

Eric Mauldin

Now everything is assigned to a customer. Yep, Yep.

Melissa Wissel

And if I'm a builder, I probably know that. What's your radio channels? VHF.

Eric Mauldin

We monitor 16 and 71. 71 is our working channel and kind of the reason why we assign those because the mornings have different specific swing radius for boat sides. And a lot of them are sailboats, so they're draft restricted and some of the mores are shallower and deeper. So we want to make sure that you get on the mooring that accommodates the vessel size.

Melissa Wissel

Pump outs. Yes, you have pump out. It's on the transient, but what if I'm anchoring out and I don't have a reservation, but I'm anchored where I'm supposed to be in the safe zone? Can I still get a pump out for my book?

Eric Mauldin

Any deal? Yes. Yeah. Absolutely, yeah. If you're within the city limits, we will pump you out. It's a Max \$5 charge that you pay if you're on the morning, it's free or it's free to pull up to fuel dock at any point and pump out.

Melissa Wissel

Excellent. How are things going over in salt run? I know I want to address a little bit of the boater frustration. I know that people get very frustrated because they try to drop their boats in off the the ramp there. But boats anchor right off that that entry and there's nothing.

Eric Mauldin

Hmm. Yes, yes, they do. No, we and we have the morning fields in place. So they obviously like I said earlier we they can't anchor inside the morning field or within the channel. And there's a certain footage around the boat ramp as well 150 feet away from the boat ramp facility that they can't anchor, but there's those other areas where they are.

Melissa Wissel

We can do about it.

Eric Mauldin

All too we limit to one hour Max docking at the boat ramp dock itself. That way you can keep the flow of boats putting it in and taking out. There's plenty of room to pull up to. And yeah, there's some of them where we have had some derelict boats in the area, FWC, St. John's County, City PD. Everyone's done a wonderful, wonderful job with maintaining and keeping an eye on these vessels. And getting them out in a timely manner. It's a very long process to go through. So they do a great job with keeping up with that.

Melissa Wissel

It's not as easy as a car on the side of the road. People think of that like, oh, it's just like a car on the side.

Eric Mauldin

No, it's not. No, it's not. Yeah.

Melissa Wissel

Of the road. Stop the ticket on it, tow it away.

Eric Mauldin

No, no. And it's and it's very expensive to get rid of these vessels as well. So, you got to go out and find funding things.

Melissa Wissel

You guys are doing a great job. Before we sign off, we got just a few more minutes. Let's talk a little bit about Boating Safety Week. It's always.

Eric Mauldin

Yes.

Melissa Wissel

Boating safety time. But we like to have that promotion and reminding folks as we get into boating season, what are some of the things that folks should remember in general or even just around the area?

Eric Mauldin

Yeah. So it comes up every spring because that's usually when everyone's ready to get back on the water, what the weather is starting to get nice this year. It is going to be May 18th through the 24. And then there's actually another little day, the day before, on the 17th. It's called wear your life jacket to work day. It's like, yeah, it is. So I'm gonna give you a life jacket to wear in to work.

Melissa Wissel

OK, communications department. We were wearing life jackets to May 17th. I.

Eric Mauldin

Yeah, yeah, may 17

Melissa Wissel

Won't be here, sorry.

Eric Mauldin

Friday. OK. But during that week, we will usually the first Saturday and this isn't something confirmed. We will post this if this is confirmed that. We'll have the Coast Guard Auxiliary on site at the Marina and they're just there to do a friendly check and go through what what is needed to maintain voter safety on your boat, whether it's life jackets, fire extinguishers. flairs and all that. And they're not there to write tickets. They're just there to look and see what you need or what you don't need. And they will sometimes give you a sticker too that you've been compliant and we'll confirm whether they they come this year or not. But we look forward to to their arrival.

Melissa Wissel

Are they still? Using the Big orange square life jackets. Yes, really. OK.

Eric Mauldin

Yeah, yeah. Still have those? Yep.

Melissa Wissel

I a lot of them are the ones that you. They're much slimmer, but you can't. You don't want to just jump in the water at them.

Eric Mauldin

Yeah, yeah. My guys and us at work, we we have the inflatable ones that just go around your neck and they inflate. If you fall in the water, you can manually inflate them as well. But now the ones that are compliant are those big orange. Yeah. Yep, Yep.

Melissa Wissel

Boxy orange things. Yeah, we my son used to work at the. Yacht Club and keep sailing. And if you forgot your life jacket, they had a couple of those on that. They made sure you wore those and you never forgot your life jacket. Well, Eric, it's great to have you. Lots of fun stuff going on at the Marina this boating season. So just everybody. Take care. Be careful. Don't be you. I be careful out there.

Eric Mauldin

Yeah. Yeah. Well, if you're going to be working on the 17th. I would have brought you one of those.

Melissa Wissel

What's your speeds and then the weight zones? And just be conscientious so.

Speaker

Yeah.

Melissa Wissel

Uh. Come back and see us.

Eric Mauldin

Absolutely. Look forward to it. Thank you for having me.

Melissa Wissel

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Narrator

You've been listening to the break room, a weekly program addressing projects and programs offered by the city of. Augustine join us each week as the city's communications director, Melissa Russell has in-depth conversations with the people who make our town work to meet the needs of our community. See you at this time next week for another edition. Of the break.