



## MEMORANDUM

**Date:** June 18, 2024

**Subject:** Water Safety – Swim Zones, Potential Lifeguard Program, Other

### **Background:**

A main destination within our wonderful City of Madeira Beach is our beach (sand). Millions visit our sand every year expecting to benefit from our wonderful climate and the vast water uses from just relaxing/refreshing from the sun & heat to a swim to lounging on a flotation device to a light or moderate leisure activity such as tossing a frisbee or paddleboarding. Whatever the enjoyment, the City's top priority is always ensuring water safety. Currently, only signage (and related media), the periodic PCSO patrols, and other beach (sand) attendees are the only source of safety prevention, promotion, and assistance. The City of Madeira Beach would like to solicit public input to determine if potentially other forms of safety prevention, promotion, or other should be added, such as:

1. Additional/Alternate signage/markers on land and in the water
2. Swim Zone adjustments – identify existing areas and determine whether to add or reduce
3. Enact a lifeguard program
4. Other

### **Discussion:**

While millions have and continue to enjoy our beach (sand) very little has changed over the years to incorporate, add, or modify to the above (background) other than the usual replacement of signage and swim zone buoys. Recently the City began an effort to replace the swim buoys (that had been washed away twice in hurricanes Ian (2022) and Idalia (2023) with poles/pilings that was met with much resistance, forcing the City to halt the process that gave rise to the need for public input (via public meetings). City has historically only utilized buoys to mark/delineate established/approved swimming areas. The City further identified that the marked swim zones have existed since at least the early 1980's (evidenced by three ordinances adopted in the 1980's and early 1990's, copies enclosed). The current swimming areas/zones are:

1. John's Pass waterway to 131<sup>st</sup> Ave
2. Pinellas County Park/Madeira beach access at 144<sup>th</sup> and 145<sup>th</sup> Ave
3. Ocean Sands Condo South Tower, North to a point approximately 750 feet South of the City's north boundary at 155<sup>th</sup> Ave

4. A point approximately 527 feet South of the City's north boundary at 155<sup>th</sup> Ave

The purpose of the public meetings are to determine what the swimming areas/zones should be and how should they be marked/delineated.

Additionally, should the City consider adding a lifeguard program that would likely cost upwards of \$400,000 to \$500,000 per year (funded out of Parking Fund – City looking to increase parking rate to \$4.00 per hour beginning FY 2025).

**Fiscal Impact:**

From approximately \$10,000.00 (additional/replacement signage, buoys, etc.), up to \$500,000.00 annual with a full-fledged lifeguard program – all to be funded out of the Parking Fund.

**Attachments:**

June 2024 Water Safety Presentation

Maps of Existing Swim Zones

City Code of Ordinances, Sec 78.4, Restricted Swimming Areas Established

City Ordinances 678, 795, and 846 establishing restricted swimming areas

Proposed lifeguard program