Caribe Nautical

Ships' Agents

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To: Key West City Commission
Fm: John E Wells, Ships' Agent
Re: Commission Meeting 9 OCT 25
Items19 and 29: Water Quality Monitoring/Coral Relocation
Date: 7 October 2025

Dear Mayor and Commissioners:

Thank you for continuing the effort to monitor water quality in Key West waters, an effort I have always supported. Also, thank you for awarding a contract to remove and relocate living corals from Mallory Pier before the pending reconstruction project begins. As you likely know, a number of these large and viable coral organisms on and near Mallory Pier are important threatened species. We can reasonably expect that the new portions of Mallory will also grow and nurture corals.

Your recognition of the existence of the marine life community on and near Mallory Pier, including robust hard corals, is a welcome public comment on the discussion of whether cruise ship operations harm our coral reefs. Obviously, they do not.

The proposed water quality monitoring contract with Stantec is also a large step towards identifying the true sources of water pollution around Key West. The prior monitoring contract with the College of the Florida Keys (CFK) was narrowly focused and ineffective as it was fixated on one controversial issue: transient propwash turbidity from ship operations. You were wise to cancel that politically driven research model. Clearly, the anti-ship activists in our community were bent on using CFK's skewed turbidity data to attack cruise ships. One might surmise that those activists were involved in designing the monitoring model.

Finally, I once again urge all Commissioners to reach out to the maritime community as an information source regarding ship operations in Key West. In the past, some commissioners have preferred to accept their information from anti-ship sources – much of it outdated, all of it biased. For a more balanced information stream, I urge you to reach out to the Key West maritime community as well as the Florida-Caribbean Cruise Association and Cruise Line International Association. Their environmental departments have a plethora of information regarding environmental regulations, controls and modern ship systems and protocols.

I commend your resistance to being compelled by the anti-cruise ship operatives in our community to set your agenda.

Thank you,

JOHN E WELLS
Ships' Agent