

## **Clamagore Submarine Likely To Remain Open At Patriots Point For Another Year**

**Dave Munday, Post and Courier, April 3**



Visitors to Patriots Point can expect the submarine Clamagore to remain open for another year or so, despite talk that it might be hauled off and sunk at a Florida reef by the summer, according to executive director Mac Burdette.

“No way,” Burdette said when asked if he expects the sub to be moved this year.

The reason: Patriots Point Development Authority, a state agency, owns the World War II submarine near the Yorktown, but the Navy retains oversight and would have to approve the move.

“The Navy never gives up ultimate control of ships, even though we own it,” Burdette said. “We are responsible for that ship until the

Navy says we aren’t, but the Navy can tell us what we can and cannot do with her.”

The fact that the sub is a National Historic Landmark makes the relocation even more complicated. Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 requires the Navy to get input from the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, the State Historic Preservation Officer and the public.

Other federal agencies would also have to be given a chance to weigh in, including the Environmental Protection Agency, the Fish and Wildlife Service and the Coast Guard.

The Department of Interior may also require a video documentary and other records before the sub is sunk, since only divers will have access after it's submerged under 90 feet of water about a mile off Juno Beach.

There has been talk for at least five years that the Clamagore could become a Florida reef because Patriots Point can no longer afford to maintain it. The talk took a step toward reality earlier this year when the Palm Beach County Board of Commissioners voted to hire Artificial Reefs International of Key West to move the sub, remove all the contaminants, sink it, secure it to the bottom of the ocean and open it up for an underwater museum.

Palm Beach County kicked in \$1 million for the transfer earlier this year, and Artificial Reefs has been raising another \$3 million.

Palm Beach County Environmental Resources Management is coordinating the project. Deputy director Dan Bates recently said he's hoping to have the sub in the water off the coast this summer. Artificial Reefs also has said they hope to move the sub by summer, according to Bob Howard, Patriots Point's operations director.

They may raise the money by summer, but there's no way they're going to move the sub that quickly, Burdette said.

“It just takes time,” he said.

Patriots Point recently finished a survey of the Clamagore’s fuel tanks and found about 100,000 gallons of contaminated water. That contaminated liquid would have to be removed and the tanks cleaned and sealed and filled with fresh water for ballast before the sub is moved. It's likely the tanks would have to be drained anyway because of the threat of a hurricane, Burdette said.