

Shore Protection Manager

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CARTERET COUNTY BEACH COMMISSION MEETING

Minutes

Pine Knoll Shores Town Hall

September 26, 2005, 2 pm

Acronyms:

AB – Atlantic Beach

EI – Emerald Isle

NCDCM – N.C. Division of Coastal Management

USACE – United States Army Corps of Engineers

PKS – Pine Knoll Shores

Attendance.

Commission chair Buck Fugate, vice-chair William Donnelly, Commission Members Tom Doe III, Jack Goldstein, Jerry Huml, Pat McElraft, secretary Greg Rudolph, and the general public. Members Joan Lamson, Ted Lindblad, Vincent Oliveri, Jim Stephenson, and Jim Willis III were absent.

- (1) **Call to Order.** – Chairman Fugate called the meeting to order.
- (2) **Approval of Minutes (Regular Beach Commission Meeting – August 22, 2005).** – Chairman Fugate asked the Commission if there were any corrections, additions, or comments regarding the minutes presented in the agenda packet. No comments were forthcoming from the Commission and Member Huml motioned that the minutes from the Commission's regularly-scheduled August meeting be approved as presented. The motion was seconded by member McElraft and unanimously approved.
- (3) **Occupancy Tax and "Beach Fund" Update.** – As a review, secretary Rudolph mentioned that the July 2004 occupancy tax receipt was the first time that the \$1.0 million mark was reached for any month. The July 2005 collection report is attached to the Commission's agenda and is 11% greater than the July 2004 report, again eclipsing the \$1.0 million mark for a month. This equates to ~\$60,000 of additional funds attributed to the "Beach Fund" compared to the July 2004 receipt. Also, the August 2005 occupancy tax report was received electronically after the Commission's agenda was prepared and is an important month considering that the school calendar start date has been pushed to a later point in time during the year and this should have a direct impact to the occupancy tax. The August 2005 collection was up by 26% compared to last year.

Vice-chair Donnelly asked how the August 2005 report correlated to visitation along Bogue Banks. Member Goldstein replied that according to his observations, the numbers presented for August appear to agree with observations along the island for last month (August). Vice-chair Donnelly added that the Bogue Banks Country Club had a very busy August as well. Member Doe also mentioned that the Circle in AB also experienced a heavy volume of traffic in August. Member

Goldstein disclosed that the Tourism Development Authority marketed extensively for August. Member Doe mentioned that the hotel/motel numbers appear to be down in which member Goldstein added that the hotel/motels generate a higher percentage in the off season, but these numbers are small relative compared to the dollars generated by the hotel/motels in the summer.

(4) **Beach Projects and Monitoring Update.**

(A) ***Federal Appropriation Status.*** – Secretary Rudolph noted that a lot has transpired in the past month, especially Hurricane *Katrina* and the levee failure in New Orleans. Initially, this generated discussion to whether the USACE has been receiving enough funding to accomplish the tasks of navigation maintenance and flood damage reduction for the entire Country. Subsequent to considering the human element, water resource groups were quietly hoping that the USACE Civil Works budget would be increased as a result of the *Katrina* aftermath. Unfortunately, this renewed emphasis for the USACE has waned and it appears that Gulf of Mexico water resource infrastructure will be handled by the over \$62 billion dollar supplemental appropriation bill while the USACE's Civil Works budget will continue to be scrutinized penny by penny as the FY 2006 Energy & Water Development Appropriation Bill languishes and the divide between the House's \$4.8 billion and the Senate's \$5.3 billion figures continues to be at an impasse. The House Appropriation Committee chair (R. Lewis R-CA) also pleaded to exercise fiscal constraint for the USACE, thus leading to a likely continuing resolution starting October 1st. The secretary continued that it is uncertain what type of flexibility will be contained in the first, and subsequent continuing resolutions. The secretary also mentioned that he and the chairman had breakfast with Ryan Combs (Senator Burr's office) and Janet Bradbury (Senator Dole's office) and voiced concern regarding the appropriation impasse. Chairman Fugate added that he stressed the importance of beach nourishment as a proper method to avoid damages highlighting the non-impacts of *Ophelia* to Bogue Banks that are credited to nourishment projects. Member McElraft stressed that the beach is a metaphorical equivalent to a levee.

Chairman Fugate also shared that in his discussions with Ms. Bradbury and Mr. Combs, they emphasized the need for non-coastal residents who are N.C. constituents to voice their concerns regarding the Federal funding issue. The Commission subsequently discussed the efforts various non-profit groups were putting toward this objective. Member Doe agreed with this approach, noting that an inspection of tax records could provide the out-of-state database that can be used to influence representatives from across the Country.

(B) ***Bogue Inlet Flow Study.*** – As a review, secretary Rudolph noted that the Beach Commission retained Coastal Science & Engineering to conduct a flow study in Bogue Inlet to; (a) try to answer whether or not the inlet realignment project was successful, and (b) identify positive and negative points that could be used to improve project design the next time the channel is re-located. The study was funded using monies remaining from the FY 2004-05 monitoring budget that would have otherwise been utilized for a post-hurricane beach survey, which was not needed. The Shore Protection Office was also glad that a bathymetric survey of Bogue Inlet funded by the NCDCEM and conducted in June 2005 was utilized for the flow study report.

Secretary Rudolph summarized the findings of the report by highlighting 4 points; (1) Bogue Inlet demonstrates a high degree of phase lag, meaning that peak water levels in the inlet are measured 2-3 hours after the predicted lunar peak tides are predicted. (2) The flows and discharges of the new and old channels are perhaps the most important data and on the ebb (outgoing) tide, the new inlet captures 3 times as much water as the old channel and 0.5 as much for the flood (incoming) tide. That's a positive development as the ebb tide formerly scoured the shoreline near the point, and that erosive force has since been relocated to the new inlet. (3) A lot of water is flowing over the shoal separating the new and old channels and this appears to be flood dominated. (4) If the old channel is isolated, it appears that it is slightly ebb-dominated, meaning that slightly more water is going out of the old channel than in. This process may tend to retard accretion near the Pointe and is likely the only source of concern illustrated in the report.

The secretary disclosed that Hurricane *Ophelia* opened the Coast Guard channel and this appears to be a very viable ancillary channel. There is some concern about the Coast Guard channel and the opening occurred well after the flow study was conducted. Historically, the Coast Guard channel has been open when the main ebb channel for Bogue Inlet has been positioned in the central portion of the floodway. The Coast Guard channel also tends to migrate towards the west near the middle of the floodway and hopefully this trend will repeat itself. The only difference now is that there is an old channel near the shoulder of the inlet to reconcile. Member McElraft asked how deep the Coast Guard channel breach was. The secretary replied that channel is ~10-13 feet deep and 30 foot wide according to various reports. Member McElraft asked if there were any plans to infill the Coast Guard channel. Secretary Rudolph responded that a project of that magnitude would likely entail a new permitting process, the identification of a project sponsor, and additional funding, which all appear unlikely to secure. However, approximately 50,000 cubic yards of dredged material from the crossing of the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway and Bogue Inlet might be placed on the beach in FY 2006 and there are plans to place that material at a beneficial place along the Point.

The NCDCM is also interested in funding a new, post *Ophelia* bathymetric survey of Bogue Inlet. Although this survey is in the discussion phase, NCDCM has asked if the Beach Commission would be willing to fund a portion of the estimated \$30,000 to \$40,000 survey. A \$10,000 figure for the Beach Commission was recommended in the Commission's agenda packet for discussion purposes. Member McElraft and chairman Fugate both mentioned that there is open-ended question to how much monitoring is needed for the Beach Commission's interest and if the NCDCM is interested in a new survey, then it might be a good idea for this group to complete and fund the initiative as a stand alone project. Members Doe, Huml, and vice-chair Donnelly noted that while the Commission has a vested interest in the data, a new survey may be more under the realm of research and development. Secretary Rudolph mentioned that the flow study was authorized by the Beach Commission to seek avenues that could improve project design in case the inlet is realigned 10 to 15 years from now and would logically be under the Commission's jurisdiction. However, monitoring plans should be scheduled on a regular basis and that might be a better approach for implementing additional surveys. The Commission agreed that they were not interested in furnishing funds for an additional

Bogue Inlet bathymetric survey at this particular time; however they would be receptive to reviewing any proposals offered by NCDCM or other agencies. Member McElraft noted that the Commission does not want to close the door on cooperative surveys at all, but rather evaluate the merit of surveys on a case by case basis.

- (5) **Public Comment.** – None.
- (6) **Other Business.** – Vice-chair Donnelly noted that according to the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy's newsletter, there is proposed Federal legislation sponsored by over 200 representatives to establish a fleet of ships to transport goods along the waterway to ease interstate trucking traffic. If passed, this legislation could command new attention for waterway dredging and beneficial use of dredged material. Chairman Fugate updated the Beach Commission regarding the Independent Study of the Morehead City Harbor by Olsen Associates. It appears that they (Olsen Associates) will be able to make a case that there are impacts to Bogue Banks, however the impacts may not be as far reaching as EI or PKS. The main impacts appear to be linked to Ft. Macon, AB, and the deflation of the ebb-tide delta at Beaufort Inlet. The appendices are complete. Vice-chair Donnelly articulated that he hopes that the report will come down hard on the offshore disposal practice as bad engineering. Chairman Fugate reminded the Commission that the blame rests with the Office of Management & Budget, who controls the dollars for the USACE. In this light, it will take a wide range of stakeholders to embrace the report and move forward in a positive, cooperative manner.
- (7) **October 2005 Meeting Date (October 24, 2005 – proposed).** – It was agreed upon that the next Beach Commission meeting would be held on October 24th at 2:00 pm.
- (8) **Adjourn.** – Chairman Fugate asked for any additional comments and with no additional comments forthcoming, the meeting was adjourned.