

Shore Protection Manager

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CARTERET COUNTY BEACH COMMISSION MEETING

Minutes

Pine Knoll Shores Town Hall

April 27, 2009, 2 pm

Attendance.

Commission Chair Buck Fugate, Vice-Chair William Donnelly, Commission Members Pete Allen, A.B. "Trace" Cooper, Jack Goldstein, Tom Hoover, Joan Lamson, Art Schools, Jim Stephenson, secretary Greg Rudolph, and the general public. Members Ted Lindblad and Jim Willis were absent.

- (1) **Call to Order.** – Chairman Fugate called the meeting to order.
- (2) **Approval of Minutes - Regular Beach Commission Meeting (February 23, 2009).** – Chairman Fugate asked the Commission if there were any corrections, additions, or comments regarding the February 23rd regular session minutes presented in the agenda packet. With no comments forthcoming from the Commission, member Goldstein motioned the minutes be approved as presented. The motion was seconded by member Donnelly and unanimously approved.
- (3) **Occupancy Tax and "Beach Fund" Update.** – Secretary Rudolph directed the Commission to the agenda packet that included the first three months of occupancy tax collections for the calendar year of 2009. Without revisiting the specifics explained in the agenda packet, the occupancy tax collections on average were down by over 30% per month for the first quarter. The March 2009 figure could be deceiving because the Easter Holiday fell in March the year prior (2008) rather than in the traditional month of April. Fortunately however the first three months of the calendar year historically contribute very little to the overall collection to the year, and the 30% decline in revenue although alarming, could be somewhat minimal if we have a strong May and June to end the fiscal year. Member Schools and Cooper both added the weekend weather in March was unpleasant, yet the April weekend weather has been great, so hopefully we'll see a nice rebound for April. The secretary concluded that the occupancy tax collection is down by 6% for the year (fiscal year), which happens to be the Beach Commission's projection. The beach nourishment reserve ("Beach Fund") is estimated to be at \$7.1 million.
- (4) **Governmental Affairs Update – A Washington D.C. Perspective.** – Chairman Fugate introduced Howard Marlowe and Daniel Sheehan with Marlowe & Co. – the Beach Commission's governmental affairs consultant (lobbyists). Mr. Sheehan discussed the FY 2009 omnibus bill and the local appropriations that were contained in the bill. Ironically, at the same time the FY 2009 omnibus bill was being passed, the FY 2010 budget submittals were due and the stimulus package was also in the process of being released. Mr. Marlowe followed that beach nourishment funding contained in the stimulus bill has been withdrawn by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), and even though there have been some subsequent adds placed back into the stimulus list; OMB has again stripped nourishment funding from the stimulus. The Administration appears to be

concerned about appearances regarding the stimulus bill, and therefore stimulus funding for nourishment will not be included. However, Mr. Marlowe believes the Administration may indeed begin to actually start budgeting for nourishment under the normal year-to-year appropriation process. Granted this won't be a windfall, but a possible step in the right direction.

Mr. Marlowe continued that the Master Nourishment Project the Beach Commission is planning may negatively affect the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) Feasibility Study for Bogue Banks because the Corps may see a pattern of "self help" and therefore drop out of the Study. It would be a good idea to discuss this with the Corps. Mr. Marlowe continued that his philosophy is that communities should not be disadvantaged for taking matters into their own hands as the Corps continues in a long and protracted study. Chairman Fugate added that we're in a "Catch 22" because the beaches will need nourishment within the next 3 to 5 years and the Feasibility Report will likely not be completed by then, let alone will there be any Federal funding to construct the project. In the interim, we should have the ability to start moving forward with the permitting required for a self help project. Mr. Marlowe agreed wholeheartedly and added maybe some outside engineering assistance could be solicited to help the Corps complete the Feasibility Study. The chairman and the secretary thanked Mr. Marlowe and Sheehan for their time today and mentioned an appropriation spreadsheet that was included in the agenda packet providing list of all waterway and beach funding secured for County Projects since 2001, which has been a team accomplishment between the County and Marlowe & Co.

- (5) **Appointments for the Bogue Banks Master Nourishment Plan Selection Committee.** – Chairman Fugate appointed members Hoover, Cooper, Lamson, Goldstein, and himself to the selection committee for the Master Nourishment Plan. A total number of five committee members were stipulated in a recent request for qualifications that was issued for the proposed plan. Two non-voting members will also be part of the committee – one from the State's Division of Water resources and one from the Division of Coastal Management.
- (6) **Public Comment.** – None.
- (7) **Other Business.** – Chairman Fugate mentioned he and the secretary attended a Dredge Material Management Plan (DMMP) meeting at the Corps of Engineers Wilmington District last week. The completion of the DMMP is a stipulation included in the settlement agreement between Carteret County and the Corps, and unlike the Bogue Banks Feasibility Study, the DMMP appears to be progressing on-time and on-schedule with a sincere/genuine effort on the Corps part. The Corps project manager, Chris Frabotta has been particularly attentive.
- (8) **May 2009 Meeting Date (May 25, 2009 – discussion).** – The next regularly scheduled meeting falls on the Memorial Day holiday, and after some discussion, it was agreed upon to cancel the meeting. The next Beach Commission meeting will be held on June 22, 2009 at 2:00 pm, Pine Knoll Shores Town Hall.
- (9) **Adjourn.** – Chairman Fugate asked for any additional comments and with no additional comments forthcoming, the meeting was adjourned.