



## CARTERET COUNTY BEACH COMMISSION MEETING

### Minutes

Pine Knoll Shores Town Hall

June 22, 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 Willis, secretary Greg Rudolph, and the general public. Member Ted Lindblad was absent and there is currently one vacancy on the Commission.

- (1) **Call to Order.** – Chairman Fugate called the meeting to order and asked for a moment of silence to honor and reflect on the life of Beach Commission member Jim Stephenson, who passed away on May 28<sup>th</sup>.
- (2) **Approval of Minutes - Regular Beach Commission Meeting (April 27, 2009).** – Chairman Fugate asked the Commission if there were any corrections, additions, or comments regarding the April 27<sup>th</sup> 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 mentioned that the April 2009 collection was up by roughly 19% compared to the April 2008 collection; however the Easter holiday was in March last year (2008) and therefore it would be more appropriate to review the combined March-April total for 2008 and 2009. When doing so, it reveals that there was a 6% decrease in the March-April 2009 collection compared to the March-April 2008 collection. As mentioned to the Beach Commission before, while this is not good news *per se*, it is not within the "catastrophic" range of minus 20% or greater. The year-to-date total for the occupancy tax is down by 5% - the Beach Commission's budgetary estimate is minus 6% for FY 2008-09. Accordingly if the occupancy tax receipts are strong for May and June, then we should be close to our budget targets. The secretary concluded the beach nourishment reserve ("Beach Fund") is estimated to be at \$7 million; however this estimate includes the expenditures through May 31<sup>st</sup>, but only includes the revenue through April.

Member Donnelly added that the traffic on the island appears to be heavier than normal for this time of year and hopefully this will bode well for the occupancy tax. Secretary Rudolph replied that it's difficult to discern the day visitors from those staying for multiple days. Member Schools added that the hotel/motel receipts appear to be down compared to the cottage sector, which tend toward a thinking that there are more people staying on the island for vacations. Chairman Fugate added that in his conversations with occupancy tax collectors, it appears the overall volume of visitors staying overnight is up, but they are not renting the higher dollar cottages but rather opting

for the second-row or other lower cost alternatives. Member Cooper also added that the water usage in Atlantic Beach have been at record highs, which also could serve as a proxy for higher than normal visitation.

- (4) **Discussion – Public Comment for the CBRS (Coastal Barrier Resources System) Digital Mapping Pilot Project.** – The secretary disclosed that the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USF&WS) recently issued a report for public review concerning a pilot project aimed to remap portions of the CBRS. The Shore Protection Office consequently has drafted a letter to serve as the County's official response that will be presented to the County Board of Commissioners tonight (6 pm, June 22). The public comment letter is also attached to the Beach Commission's agenda packet for their review and approval as well. The presentation today was created to help de-mystify the Coastal Barrier Resources Act (CBRA) in general, discuss the premise behind the mapping pilot project, and finally, what aspects of the pilot study that require attention. The presentation that was provided to the Beach Commission and is available at; [http://www.protectthebeach.com/minutes/2009/cbra%20presentation\\_cboc.pptx](http://www.protectthebeach.com/minutes/2009/cbra%20presentation_cboc.pptx)

Subsequent to the presentation, member Lamson asked if the sound side portion of Emerald Isle and mainland sound side portions of the County are included in the new proposed CBRA unit (NC-06); then will they not be eligible for participation in the National Flood Insurance Program? Secretary Rudolph responded that for one, existing structures would be grandfathered in, but new structures may encounter some problems, depending where the new CBRA line is drawn relative to the property line. Member Donnelly subsequently asked what is the fundamental purpose of CBRA? Chairman Fugate utilized Core Banks as a hypothetical example – if Core Banks was undeveloped and privately owned, then it would be a high risk piece of property that probably shouldn't be developed. This would be a good candidate for a CBRA unit (under this hypothesis). Member Donnelly agreed but noted the USF&WS is proposing to add areas that are already developed, which essentially is a taking of property rights. Secretary Rudolph concluded that the public comment letter questions the USF&WS's authority to even establish a new CBRA unit, objects to the establishment of the "NC-06" unit on principle, and discusses some of the smaller mapping issues as well. It would be good to have the Beach Commission approve this letter before it is considered by the County Board of Commissioners. Member Lamson made a motion to approve the public comment letter prepared by the Shore Protection Office. The motion was seconded by member Donnelly and unanimously approved by those Beach Commission members in attendance.

- (5) **Public Comment.** – None.
- (6) **Other Business.** – Chairman Fugate mentioned that Olsen Associates, Coastal Planning & Engineering, and Moffatt & Nichol have been selected for an interview in association with the proposed Bogue Banks Master Beach Nourishment Plan. This information was disclosed previously to the Beach Commission and the interviews will take place on July 15<sup>th</sup> – we will invite the Town Managers and other elected members of the municipalities to the interviews in a continuing effort to gain acceptance and consensus regarding the nourishment plan.

Member Willis disclosed it is clear that the net littoral drift at the Ft. Macon bath house groin is from east to west. The nodal point is estimated to reside near the old Triple S Pier, but the evidence at the groin indicates otherwise. He (member Willis) encouraged Beach Commission

members to visit this area – the beach is in very, very bad shape. The chairman added that Ft. Macon beach is scheduled to receive sand in November as part of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) Interim Operation Plan. Similarly, he and the secretary also attended the Dredged Material Management Plan (DMMP) meeting last Thursday (6/18). The DMMP is due by October 2011 according to the legal settlement reached between the County and the Corps – there was nothing new to report from Thursday's meeting.

Chairman Fugate also wanted to take this opportunity to address the vacancy on the Beach Commission that surfaced in the wake of Jim Stephenson's unfortunate passing. Mr. Stephenson was the N.C. Coastal Federation's policy analyst, and in the spirit of cooperation, he (chairman Fugate) and the secretary have spoken to Todd Miller with the N.C. Coastal Federation in regards to possibly filling the "County-at-large" vacancy within the Beach Commission. The chairman disclosed that Mr. Miller indicated he would like to serve in this capacity, and accordingly the chairman appointed the entire Beach Commission as the nomination committee. The nomination committee subsequently unanimously agreed to submit Todd Miller's name to the County Board of Commissioners for their consideration and ultimate approval/appointment via a motion made by member Lamson and seconded by member Donnelly.

- (7) **July 2009 Meeting Date (July 27, 2009 – proposed)**. – It was agreed upon that the next Beach Commission meeting would be held on July 27, 2009 at 2:00 pm, Pine Knoll Shores Town Hall.
- (8) **Adjourn.** – Chairman Fugate asked for any additional comments and with no additional comments forthcoming, the meeting was adjourned.