

Shore Protection Manager

Greg L. Rudolph
Tel: (252) 393.2663
Fax: (252) 393.6639
rudi@carteretcountygov.org



CARTERET COUNTY BEACH COMMISSION MEETING

Minutes

Pine Knoll Shores Town Hall

March 22, 2010, 2 pm

Attendance.

Commission chair Buck Fugate, vice-chair William Donnelly, Commission Members Doug Fleming, Tom Hoover, Richard Hunt, Ken Jones, Ted Lindblad, Dr. Antonio Rodriguez, Art Schools, secretary Greg Rudolph, and the general public. Members A.B. "Trace" Cooper and Jack Goldstein were absent.

- (1) **Call to Order.** –Chairman Fugate called the meeting to order.
- (2) **Approval of Minutes - Regular Beach Commission Meeting (February 8, 2010).** – Chairman Fugate asked the Commission if there were any corrections, additions, or comments regarding the February 8th regular session minutes presented in the agenda packet. Member Jones mentioned a typographical error in the minutes, and member Donnelly subsequently motioned the minutes be approved with that correction. The motion was seconded by member Hoover and unanimously approved.
- (3) **Occupancy Tax and "Beach Fund" Update.** – The secretary guided the Commission to the January 2010 occupancy tax collection report included in the agenda packet, which constituted an 18% drop compared to the January 2009 collection. However, January is one of the lowest revenue producing months in the entire year. For instance, the drop in revenue for January was roughly \$4,500 to the beach nourishment reserve (Beach Fund) – the annual revenue is approximately \$2.2 million. Also upon a deeper inspection of the January collection, it is apparent that the decline was almost 100% attributable to the hotel/motel sector rather than the condo/cottage sector. Member Schools mentioned that the unusually and persistent cold weather here and abroad may have negatively impacted tourism/weekend get-a-ways, etc. as well. The good news may lie that many advance bookings are up considerably compared to years past, so perhaps we'll see a turnaround this summer. Secretary Rudolph added the occupancy tax collection is down by roughly 4% for the fiscal year, but we could very well be in positive territory if the higher volume collection months of May and June are fruitful. And in conclusion, the beach nourishment reserve is at roughly \$9 million.
- (4) **Discussion and Approval – Water Resources Development Project Grant Application for the Bogue Banks Master Beach Nourishment Plan.** – The secretary noted that as the Commission is aware, the N.C. Division of Water Resources (DWR) provides grants for water resources projects such as dredging, beach nourishment, feasibility studies, etc. The County and the local communities have a very long and successful relationship with the DWR grant program, and currently can provide up to 50% of the cost for the Bogue Banks Master Beach Nourishment Plan and similar studies. Accordingly, the agenda materials contain a complete grant application for

~\$873,000, and an important component of the application is a resolution that needs to be signed by the County Board of Commissioners. Secretary Rudolph continued that in the past, grant funding was easier to secure but now with severe State budget shortfalls, it will take a little more work to get the grant. For instance last year as a cost saving measure, DWR instituted a policy where they would only provide funding for projects that had a Federal cost-share component. So while the State has been openly supportive of the Master Plan, funding for this effort will likely be a little harder to come by compared to previous projects we have participated in. Member Schools asked when the application is due. The secretary responded that the application is due July 1st and therefore will likely be considered for the next State budget cycle (FY 2011-12). The secretary concluded that in speaking with member Lindblad prior to the meeting, there has been some discussion regarding potentially harsh conditions that could be imposed on the County by accepting the grant. Upon further inspection of the grant guidelines however, it appears that the grant conditions are very benign and shouldn't expose the County to any risk or unfunded mandates, etc. Member Schools subsequently made motion recommending that the Beach Commission request the County Board of Commissioners to approve the resolution and grant package. The motion was seconded by member Donnelly and unanimously approved.

- (5) **Public Comment.** – Before the chairman called for public comment, the chairman recognized Jim Willis, III (Capt. Jim) in the audience and reiterated his and the Beach Commission's appreciation for all of Capt. Jim's efforts over the past several decades regarding beach preservation, including his tenure on the Beach Commission. Capt. Jim's previous work helped lay the ground work for the County and was invaluable. Capt. Jim responded by thanking the Beach Commission as well for their work, and also thanked the Commission for incorporating Hammocks Beach and Shackleford Banks into the annual beach monitoring program. Having the data to prove that nourishment activity along Bogue Banks is not harming these parks is very beneficial and heads & shoulders above just "here say". Moreover, having the beach profiles along Shackleford Banks will continue to provide insights to how the tip of Cape Lookout migrates towards and may possibly weld on to east Shackleford Banks.
- (6) **Other Business.** – Secretary Rudolph took this opportunity to thank the Beach Commission and the Towns for; (a) taking the time to understand the static line exception issue and the interlocal agreement for the master nourishment plan, and (b) to additionally thank the Town managers/administrators and elected officials for caucusing and explaining these two components to other elected officials and the public. On Wednesday (3/24) the static line exceptions for Atlantic beach, Pine Knoll Shores, Indian Beach/Salter Path, and Emerald Isle will all be considered by the Coastal Resources Commission (CRC) with a favorable recommendation by N.C. Division of Coastal Management staff. The interlocal agreement has been approved by all the Towns to date and will be placed in front of the County Board for their approval in April.

The CRC will also be making their final recommendation regarding the terminal groin issue as well at their meeting this week. To date, a CRC committee has been meeting and formulating ideas. The full CRC will be discussing this issue at length on Thursday (3/25) and will need to incorporate their final decision into a report that is due to the General Assembly on April 1st. And finally as a quick review, the secretary disclosed that he went to Washington, DC two weeks ago for an American Shore & Beach Preservation Association conference and while he didn't have many appointments because of a previous visit with chairman Fugate and vice-chair Donnelly a month earlier, it was good to see that both Senators (Burr and Hagan) and Congressman Jones all

signed a letter to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service regarding the Coastal Barrier Resources Act Pilot Study.

- (7) **April 2010 Meeting Date (April 26, 2010 – proposed)**. – It was agreed upon that the next Beach Commission meeting would be held on April 26, 2010 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.