

Shore Protection Manager

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CARTERET COUNTY BEACH COMMISSION MEETING

Minutes

Pine Knoll Shores Town Hall

April 25, 2011, 2 pm

Attendance.

Commission chair Buck Fugate, Commission Members Larry Baldwin, Robin Comer, A.B. "Trace" Cooper, Jack Goldstein, Tom Hoover, Ken Jones, Ted Lindblad, Art Schools, secretary Greg Rudolph, and the general public. Members Bill Donnelly and Doug Fleming were absent.

- (1) **Call to Order.** – Chairman Fugate called the meeting to order.
- (2) **Approval of Minutes - Regular Beach Commission Meeting (March 28, 2011).** – Chairman Fugate asked the Commission if there were any corrections, additions, or comments regarding the March 28th regular session minutes presented in the agenda packet. Member Goldstein subsequently motioned the minutes be approved as presented, which was seconded by member Lindblad and unanimously approved.
- (3) **Occupancy Tax and "Beach Fund" Update.** – Secretary Rudolph mentioned that we are in the "low volume months" of the fiscal year as evidenced by the fact that the December/January/February months have historically accounted for just 4% of the total yearly revenue. Accordingly, the more important number to review is the year-to-date figure; which is up by almost 6% compared to this same point in time last fiscal year (FY 09-10). Barring a disastrous May and June, the occupancy tax should end the year is positive territory for the first time since FY 07-08. In conclusion, if we take our opening balance at the beginning of our fiscal year and our current revenue and expenditures; it is estimated that the Beach Fund reserve is approximately \$10.4 million.

Chairman Fugate asked if there were any preliminary reports regarding March and April relative to the recent surge of gas prices. Member Schools replied that it seems the beaches were very busy this past Easter weekend, and he's still seeing a car per person in driveways. We'll likely see more persons carpooling to the beach long before they decide not to visit the beach altogether.

- (4) **Manager's Comments (Borrow Source Screening & N.C. Beach and Inlet Management Plan).** – Secretary Rudolph noted that there are three predominant sources we are targeting for the Master Beach Nourishment Plan; (1) the Offshore Dredged Material Disposal Site (ODMDS), (2) a new offshore borrow source referred to as borrow site Y, and (3) Bogue Inlet. Before we penetrate the seafloor to investigate these sites, we have to fulfill requirements in federal waters (>3 miles offshore) set forth by the old Material Management Service (MMS), now known as the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Regulation and Enforcement or "BOEMRE". This becomes germane for our evaluation of the ODMDS because most of the site is indeed in federal waters. BOEMRE's

permission is needed to; (a) remotely-sense, (b) core, and (c) extract material from the borrow source (ODMDS). The permit processes for these actions are in the weeks, months, and years timeframes, respectively. The second set of rules pertain to the State's sediment criteria rules, which establishes thresholds for sediment characteristics of the native beach to that of the borrow source. This is a requirement regardless if the material is excavated from State or federal waters. Another component of the State's rules is the surveying protocol for obtaining; (1) bathymetric data, (2) side scan sonar, (3) seismics, and (4) coring.

Our proposed sampling plan came into conflict with the State's compatibility rules regarding two major aspects; (1) the 1,000 feet remote-sensing and coring grid requirement for all offshore sources, and (2) the repetitive sampling requirement for maintained navigation channels, whereby a channel would need to be sampled each and everytime it was used for nourishment – regardless of past experiences. The 1,000 feet grid spacing becomes problematic for the ODMDS where we have a good sense of what has been dumped in the disposal site and have used that material before for beach nourishment. The 1,000 feet grid is appropriate for unknown/virgin borrow sources, but is very much “overkill” for a managed offshore site like the ODMDS.

The secretary subsequently reviewed the differences between seismic, side scan sonar, and single/multi-beam bathymetric surveys (remote-sensed data) using visual aids (Powerpoint). In conclusion and after showing two slides graphically demonstrating the differences between a 1,000 and 2,000 feet sampling grid in the ODMDS, the secretary mentioned the cost differential would be \$1,000,000 compared to roughly \$600,000, or a \$400,000 difference. To these effects, the N.C. Division of Coastal Management is requesting a change to the State's compatibility rules that have been developed in conjunction with the County. The Coastal Resources Commission will be considering the rule change on May 5th, and assuming a favorable ruling, the language will go through the public hearing process and rules review committee. Hopefully they (the new rules) will be in effect by the fall. Member Schools asked a quick question relative to some verbiage in the agenda packet concerning future realignments of Bogue Inlet. The secretary responded with a slide illustrating initial corridor boundaries of where we think the channel should be located.

The second subject the secretary discussed was the formal release of the State's Beach and Inlet Management Plan (BIMP). This effort was initiated in 2007, and the primary focus of the document was to justify a dedicated State funding source for nourishment and waterway projects, and begin developing a tiered system that could be used to prioritize the expenditure of these funds. The BIMP was first completed at the same time the economic collapse occurred, and the State likely believed issuing a report of this nature that creates more government and more spending was inappropriate. While the timing of its release right now might not be any better, there are some good elements in the BIMP that could be advanced at a later date. The secretary continued that he is a little disturbed with the BIMP because Carteret County is often cited as the management model for the State and our new master Plan is exactly the type of regionalization effort the BIMP is promoting – yet, we have not received a single State dollar for the Master Plan that has been requested. The BIMP will likely sit on the shelf for a while, especially as the State is currently cutting 15,000 jobs and decreasing department budgets. When economic times change for the better, then there are good elements of the BIMP that should be promoted. If there is any County that has the most to gain from the BIMP, it is Carteret.

- (5) **Public Comment.** – James N. Willis, III from Atlantic Beach took the time to thank the Commission for continuing to perform beach surveys along Shackleford Banks, most notably the profile along the Eastern half of the island. These data are providing great insight to how the hook of Cape Lookout is migrating and may close Barden Inlet. The closing of Barden Inlet may galvanize stakeholders to dredge/maintain the channel and perhaps place the dredged material along Shackleford Banks. This in turn would help the sediment budget for the region (including Bogue Banks). Chairman Fugate thanked Mr. Willis for his comments and also noted that according to what he is hearing, the shoaling is bad on the inside of Barden Inlet as well, north of the inlet throat.
- (6) **Other Business.** – Member Schools noted that he has recently been to Raleigh to help aid the efforts concerning terminal groin legislation the State Assembly is currently considering. It has passed the Senate, but there have been some concerns raised in the House. There should be a House vote soon on a House committee substitute. Last year, the Commission prepared a resolution supporting terminal groins that the County Board approved and member Schools would like to see the Beach Commission continue to take an active role regarding terminal groins. Not necessarily lead the charge, but be very supportive.
- The secretary noted the House committee version has included two important changes; (1) there can only be two public and one private terminal groin projects which can be constructed in the State (3 total), and (2) there has to be a public vote concerning any financial obligations when constructing the groin. The Beach Commission has done a good job in picking battles, and if the House version passes and does go to a conference with the Senate to reconcile differences, then we should probably prepare a letter in opposition of these changes because the 3 groin limit results in a “first come – first serve” policy rather than a more desirable “best fit” policy, and the voter approval provision sets a dangerous precedent – i.e., is this the start of asking voter approval for sidewalks, water wells, or any other public infrastructure? Member Schools subsequently made a motion in support or preparing a letter to this effect for the County Board’s approval. The motion was seconded by member Jones and unanimously approved. The secretary concluded that he would keep the Commission apprised of the terminal groin developments in real-time/on-the-fly rather than reporting items after the fact. Member Baldwin added/concluded that society seems to get lost in regard that new man-made structures are usually addressing major shortcomings of previous coastal projects. i.e., the new structure is often seen as the cause, rather than a solution.
- (7) **May 2011 Meeting Date (May 23, 2011 – proposed).** – It was agreed upon that the next Beach Commission meeting would be held on May 23rd, 2011 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.