

Shore Protection Manager

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CARTERET COUNTY BEACH COMMISSION MEETING

Minutes

Pine Knoll Shores Town Hall

October 24, 2011, 2 pm

Attendance.

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

- (1) **Call to Order.** – Chairman Fugate called the meeting to order.
- (2) **Approval of Minutes - Regular Beach Commission Meeting (September 26, 2011).** – Chairman Fugate asked the Commission if there were any corrections, additions, or comments regarding the September 26th regular session minutes presented in the agenda packet. Member Lindblad cited a couple of corrections that should be made to the minutes and subsequently made a motion to approve the minutes with the corrections just highlighted. With no other comments, member Cooper seconded the motion and the minutes were unanimously approved.
- (3) **Occupancy Tax and "Beach Fund" Update.** – Secretary Rudolph mentioned the August 2011 occupancy tax collection report was attached to the Commission's agenda packet, and constitutes an -8% drop compared to the August 2010 receipt. Of course Hurricane *Irene* made landfall near Cape Lookout on Saturday, August 27th and is almost certainly the reason for the decline – tourism was impacted not just that weekend, but the week leading up to landfall and several days thereafter. The secretary continued that interestingly, we could see a significant upward spike in the September collection as a by-product of *Irene* – Hatteras Island was breached in several locations compliments of *Irene*, and the island was essentially closed for business in September. Consequently, many tourists that planned to vacation in Hatteras went to other beaches such as Bogue Banks. Whether or not the increased volume we will experience in September will offset the August decline remains to be seen. Otherwise, the occupancy tax reserve is at an estimated value of \$11.5 million taking the balance at the beginning of the fiscal year and our revenue and expenditures current through the end of August.

Member Lindblad asked if there was a "good" time to go back to the General Assembly to make any changes to the County's occupancy tax regarding the \$15 million cap and other potential changes. The Secretary replied the General Assembly's short session is just a few months away so decisions would have to be made quick if something was to occur in the session. Likewise, the County Board of Commissioners recently asked staff for an evaluation of funding sources outside the General Fund to finance waterway dredging projects. Once these funding sources have been evaluated (e.g., occupancy tax, sales tax, etc.), and a good solution has been constrained, then it will likely be time to go to the General Assembly with specific legislation in mind.

Subsequent to a brief review of the County's occupancy tax history by member Goldstein, Russell Overman (County Manager) was introduced by the chairman. Mr. Overman reiterated waterway dredging and beach nourishment is very important and as the past has indicated, the road block with changing the occupancy tax lies in the Tourism Coalition in Raleigh; not locally. Accordingly, that's where the education efforts should be focused once a good plan has been formulated. Member Lindblad agreed and asked when does it appear to be a good time to start outreaching to the Tourism Coalition? (i.e., very early in the process or after final legislation has been decided upon locally). Mr. Overman responded that the County Board will be developing a committee to evaluate all the options and then go to the full board and others with recommendations. Moreover, the General Assembly's short session may not be a viable opportunity to ask for any changes if the General Assembly follows precedent (nothing controversial in short session).

- (4) **2010 - 2011 Annual Report: Bogue Banks Beach & Nearshore Mapping Program.** – Chairman Fugate introduced Moffatt & Nichol's Johnny Martin and Nicole Vanderbeke who subsequently provided a [PowerPoint presentation](#) to the Beach Commission and audience summarizing the key aspects of the 2010-11 Bogue Banks Beach & Nearshore Mapping Program that includes periodic surveying of Bogue Banks, Shackleford Banks, and Bear Island. Mr. Martin provided a friendly reminder that this survey constitutes our "pre-storm" survey conducted in May and June of 2011. The *Irene* survey was the "post-storm" survey conducted in September 2011. The Moffatt & Nichol presentation was concluded with brief updates concerning; (1) the proposed Emerald Isle Hot Spot nourishment project and (2) the Bogue Banks Master Plan/Programmatic EIS. The complete mapping/monitoring report is also available on-line at <http://www.protectthebeach.com/Monitoring/2011%20BBBNMP%20Final%20Report.pdf>.
- (5) **Public Comment.** – None.
- (6) **Other Business.** – Secretary Rudolph mentioned he and Member Lindblad had a discussion regarding sand fencing and the possibility of the nourishment reserve covering these efforts. The secretary reiterated this was just a discussion topic, and nothing more. It was agreed that the decision regarding any expenditures of the nourishment reserve beyond those for beach nourishment would require a lot more thought and examination.
- (7) **November 2011 Meeting Date (November 28, 2011 – proposed).** – It was agreed upon that the next Beach Commission meeting would be held on November 28th at 2:00 pm, Pine Knoll Shores Town Hall, or perhaps another time as determined via e-mail as we usually combine the November/December meetings into a single event to accommodate the holidays.
- (8) **Adjourn.** – Chairman Fugate asked for any additional comments and with no additional comments forthcoming, the meeting was adjourned.