

ST. AUGUSTINE PORT, WATERWAY & BEACH DISTRICT
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
Tuesday, January 16, 2018

The regular meeting of the St. Augustine Port, Waterway & Beach District was held at the St. Augustine Beach City Commission Meeting Room, 2200 A1A South, St. Augustine Beach, Florida on Tuesday, January 16, 2018.

1. CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Jerry Dixon called the meeting to order at 3:20 p.m.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

The Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of the United States of America followed.

3. ROLL CALL:

Chairman Jerry Dixon and Commissioners Chris Way and Mark Helman were in attendance. Vice-Chairman Barry Benjamin and Commissioner Tom Rivers were absent. The meeting was also attended by Mike Trudnak of Taylor Engineering, District Counsel Jim Bedsole and Secretary-Treasurer Elyse Kemper.

4. SECRETARY-TREASURER'S REPORT:

Secretary-Treasurer Kemper delivered the financial report. As of December 31, 2017, the District had expended \$2,019 for St. Johns County Sheriff marine unit overtime pay, \$24,120 for removal of hurricane debris from Matanzas Bay, and \$57,362 in operating expenses, for a total of \$83,501. Funds on deposit totaled \$2,176,699, and additional tax revenues of \$179,310 are expected during the remainder of this fiscal year. The segregated fund for the Summer Haven River restoration contains \$30,751 which is the remainder of all funds provided for the project by other agencies.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

The board considered the minutes of the regular meeting of December 19, 2017.

A motion by Commissioner Helman to approve the minutes of the December 19, 2017, regular meeting was seconded by Commissioner Way and passed unanimously.

6. ENGINEERING REPORT:

Mike Trudnak delivered the engineering report on behalf of Taylor Engineering. He reported the contractor could not install new signage on Markers 2 and 7 in Salt Run because

delivery of the signs has been delayed by bad weather in the place of manufacture. In the interim, Marker 4 and three no-wake signs have also fallen over, making a total of six that now need replacement. Mr. Trudnak said all six will cost \$9,900.00 to replace. He said a local sign company will supply new signs on short notice. Commissioners discussed the expense and approved it without a vote, directing Mr. Trudnak to proceed with the work.

Mr. Trudnak then reported the District's request for reimbursement from FEMA of the \$350,000 spent to repair the breach caused by Hurricane Matthew has been approved by FEMA, but must still pass State review and approval. Chairman Dixon said he visited the site of the Hurricane Matthew breach recently and was shocked to find that much of the sand placed in the breach has again been pushed into the Summer Haven River by waves and overwash. Mr. Trudnak said the contractor is still on site finishing up work in adjoining areas of the berm. Mr. Dixon said the county is responsible for the maintenance of that area and that it is critical that it be repaired before it completely opens again. He said the county settled a lawsuit over maintenance of the road several years ago and that it should be put on notice of the problem to avoid a repeat of the damage. He said a large amount of money which should have been spent on the restoration of the Summer Haven River was instead spent repairing the county's roadbed and the benefit of the work will be wasted if the current situation is not addressed

St. Johns County's FIND Commissioner, Carl Blow said the county agreed to maintain the road and asked FIND to shift its placement site west to fortify the road right-of-way. The Florida DOT has built a short length of berm beside Highway A1A north of Marineland using sand trucked in from FIND's SJ-1 site. He said the county should use the sand now clogging the Summer Haven River rather than trucking sand all the way from SJ-1.

Linda Ginn, Friends of the Summer Haven River, said the restoration plan for the river includes the construction of a robust dune system with stabilizing vegetation, but that plan depends on the county maintaining the roadbed of Old A1A. The failure of the road cost the District hundreds of thousands of dollars when the county asked the District to make emergency repairs after Hurricane Matthew. She said the failure of the road could lead to the failure of the dune system and eventually result in the undermining of Highway A1A. She said her organization has raised ninety thousand private dollars to complete the berm on the north end of the breach, but the south end is the responsibility of St. Johns County.

Chairman Dixon said the county needs to be put on notice immediately. He directed Mr. Bedsole to draft a letter to the county administrator demanding the county take action to protect the road to avoid another breach in the same place. Mr. Trudnak said the contractor is working near the site and could go to work immediately, but the county has not asked for any assistance.

7. OLD BUSINESS: NONE

8. NEW BUSINESS:

FIND Grant for Salt Run Dredging. Jim Piggott, City of St. Augustine, requested the board's cooperation again this year in pledging fifty thousand dollars in matching funds to dredge Salt Run. He said FIND will provide the other 75% of the cost for a total of \$200,000. He agreed to return at the next meeting with an interlocal agreement between the City of St. Augustine and the District to provide the funds contingent upon the FIND grant. In response to questions from Chairman Dixon, Mr. Piggott said the city is proceeding with repairs of the City Marina with funds from FIND and funds loaned by a bank until FEMA repair funds are received.

Commissioner Rivers arrived at this point in the meeting.

9. GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVE COMMENTS:

FIND Commissioner Carl Blow announced his agency's annual grant cycle and that \$600,000 is available for projects in St. Johns County. He said the deadline for grant applications is March 31, 2018, and that local agencies should submit requests so all of the available funds are used locally. The county will be requesting funds for the St. Johns County Sheriff's Office Port Security Grant and also for the Ponte Vedra-Palm Valley boat ramp expansion.

Chairman Dixon congratulated Commissioner Blow on his recent re-appointment to the board of FIND by Governor Scott.

Corporal Josh Underwood, St. Johns County Sheriff's Office Marine Unit, said deputies spent 92 hours on the water last month and responded to 46 calls, performed 18 inspections, and issued 12 warnings and 4 citations. He said next month an inspection blitz is planned in coordination with U.S. Customs and FWC of inshore and offshore areas. He reported many vessels are now transiting south as winter sets in.

10. PUBLIC COMMENT: NONE

11. COMMENTS BY COMMISSIONERS:

Chairman Dixon thanked Linda Ginn for recognizing the board with its efforts on the Summer Haven River Restoration. He said the District has spent about \$161,000 on the project in addition to the 3.3 million allocated by the legislature.

FIND Commissioner Blow remarked that private funds of \$90,000 recently raised by FOSHR was the result of an extraordinary effort and demonstrates their members' dedication to the project. He also asked if there was anything FIND could do to expedite identifying and quantifying beach-quality sand available in the inner harbor. Mr. Trudnak said enough data already exists to utilize that area and that USACE only awaits funding. He added that the process could possibly be expedited if FIND did advance maintenance dredging east of the Intracoastal Waterway into the flood shoal.

In response to questions from the board, Mr. Blow said work on the north beaches may eventually be funded in part by a special tax district over the entire island with a 50% match from the federal government. Mr Trudnak added that the permit application for the north beaches project is complete and is under review by FDEP.

Commissioner Helman said work has begun on rebuilding the Conch House docks and that the north section will be built first. He said the dock will be anchored to new bridge pilings which are very deep, thus the need for the large crane which can be seen on-site.

In response to questions from Commissioner Way, Linda Ginn said 15 to 20 people had donated the money FOSHR will use to keep the contractor working at Summer Haven. She said \$80,000 will be used to build more berm and \$10,000 for planting vegetation. Chairman Dixon said the county should utilize the contractor as he is on-site and could go to work immediately. Mr. Trudnak said another “super moon” is arriving January 31st and, if coupled with a northeaster, could re-open the Matthew breach. He said the ocean already flows over the berm there at high tide.

12. NEXT MEETING

Chairman Dixon announced the next meeting of the board will be held at 3:00 p.m. on Tuesday, February 20, 2018, in the St. Augustine Beach City Commission Room.

ADJOURN:

There being no further business, Chairman Dixon adjourned the meeting at 4:10 p.m.

Secretary-Treasurer

Chairman