

ST. AUGUSTINE PORT, WATERWAY & BEACH DISTRICT
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
Tuesday, March 21, 2017

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, March 21, 2017.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Vice-Chairman Barry Benjamin called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

3. ROLL CALL

Vice-Chairman Barry Benjamin, Commissioner Tom Rivers, Commissioner Mark Helman and Commissioner Chris Way were in attendance. Chairman Jerry Dixon was absent. The meeting was also attended by Ken Craig 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 February 28, 2017, the District has spent \$5,699 in marine law enforcement overtime, \$62,315 in operating expenses, and \$14,150 in non-committed expenses, for a grand total of \$82,164 since October 1, 2016. Net funds available for use by the District total \$1,756,095 and expected remaining tax revenue is \$43,988.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion by Commissioner Rivers to approve the minutes of the regular meetings held on January 17, 2017 and February 21, 2017, was seconded by Vice-Chairman Benjamin and passed unanimously.

6. ENGINEERING REPORT

Ken Craig delivered the engineering report on behalf of Taylor Engineering. Mr. Craig said the least tern mitigation site at the Summer Haven River restoration project is complete and has been approved by the officials of the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) with only a final inspection required. He reported the excavation of the Summer

Haven River is proceeding on schedule and may be completed by the end of May, 2017. Also, dredge sand from the Intracoastal Waterway is being placed south of the District's area on the beach adjacent to Old A1A by the contractor for FIND and will be completed by April 15, 2017.

7. **OLD BUSINESS : NONE**

8. **NEW BUSINESS:**

A. **Lift Funding Request City Marina - Tabled**

B. **Vilano Beach Sand Placement - Carl Blow.**

St. Johns County FIND Commissioner Carl Blow delivered a report on the progress of efforts to shift sand placement from the joint FIND/USACE project in the Intracoastal Waterway to areas of need created by Hurricane Matthew. At Summer Haven, FIND has provided \$119,000 to shift sand placement northward along Old A1A. Work there began March 13, 2017 and will be completed by April 15, 2017. He said the only unusual incident so far has been correspondence received from the University of Florida regarding the contractor's alleged parking of equipment on land owned by UF. He said the contractor has been instructed to correct any actual problem.

FIND is also providing \$300,000 to shift the placement of sand from the Intracoastal project at St. Augustine Inlet to beaches north of the inlet. The sand was originally to be placed on Anastasia State Park beaches but, through a change order, will be moved to an area along Highway A1A North critically eroded by Hurricane Matthew. He added USACE has received enough emergency funding to move an additional 170,000 cubic yards of sand from the federal channel at St. Augustine Inlet. The project will place a total of 240,000 cubic yards of sand in the area between 3252 A1A North and 4300 A1A North and will add 50 feet of width to the beach in this approximately one mile-long area.

He said surveys of the current beach began March 13, 2017 and pipe laying will begin on the beach on March 27, 2017. Sand pumping will start around April 17, 2017, and will complete in early May. He said St. Johns County has obtained the temporary work area easements necessary to route pipes along the beach from the inlet north to the placement area, a total of 154 easements in two weeks. He said the county has done a great job and that USACE and FDEP have acted with impressive speed to make this possible.

Permanent easements for public access to the beach will be required to obtain permanent beach renourishment funding according to information provided by Mr. Craig.

Carl Blow also provided the board a copy of the Federal Register from March 15, 2017 announcing the City of St. Augustine has asked the U.S. Coast Guard to alter the opening schedule for the Bridge of Lions to help alleviate traffic problems caused by mid-afternoon openings.

9. GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVE COMMENTS:

Officer Josh Underwood, St. Johns County Sheriff's Office Marine Unit, reported the unit spent 120 man-hours on the water last month performing inspections, issuing warnings and citations, and assisting boaters in distress. He said his unit had also located a new derelict vessel in the San Sebastian River and that they are leading a public outreach program to provide all boating children with life jackets.

Jim Piggott, City of St. Augustine, said the city has provided boat slips to SJSO and FWC as a public service. He reported the city's position on the issue of state-wide rules for waterways is unique because the city has ownership of the bay bottom within city limits and wants to continue to have control within this area. In the pilot program conducted by FWC, the rules adopted by most of the other cities did not work as well as St. Augustine's. He said it is unfair that boaters have to adjust to different rules in each city, but that unifying these rules will be difficult.

Lt. Steve Zukowski, FWC, thanked SJSO for its assistance with derelict vessels and boating accidents. He said a full-time dedicated marine unit is a huge help to FWC and they appreciate it. In response to a question by Commissioner Helman, Lt. Zukowski said an officer was sent to look for the sunken boat near the Butler Beach Ramp but could not locate the vessel. The Blessing of the Fleet will take place on Palm Sunday, April 9, 2017, at the City Marina. He said FWC, SJSO and the City Police will have boats there to assist.

10. PUBLIC COMMENT

FIND Commissioner Carl Blow commented that the inner harbor between the Vilano Bridge and the Bridge of Lions has filled up with sand and should be studied for potential use as a future source of beach renourishment sand. He said the litigation over the north beaches has made the USACE shy away from continuing to use the ebb shoal as a source for beach sand. USACE is now studying offshore sources which, if utilized, would be very expensive. He said the bay is mainly a recreational area and that its value for that is being lost by the in-filling of sand. He said studies should be done to determine the amount and quality of sand in the bay and that, if good enough, it should in the future be the primary source of beach renourishment sand.

Ken Craig said surveying the bay between the Bridge of Lions and the Usina Bridge received some attention during the recent visit of marine engineering cadets from the U.S. Naval Academy who collected some of the kinds of data which will be necessary to determine if the bay could be a useful borrow site. Commissioners expressed an interest in having Taylor Engineering provide further information to the board on this topic.

11. COMMENTS BY COMMISSIONERS:

Chris Way said he was impressed by the speed with which the Vilano Beach sand project had been organized and thanked FIND Commissioner Blow for leading the effort.

NEXT MEETING

Vice-Chairman Benjamin announced the next meeting of the board will be held at 3:00 p.m. on April 18, 2017 in the St. Augustine Beach City Commission Room.

ADJOURN:

There being no further business, Vice-Chairman Benjamin adjourned the meeting at 4:04 p.m.

Secretary-Treasurer

Chairman

wk/rg/port/minutes-2017/Minutes 3-21-17 meeting