

ST. AUGUSTINE PORT, WATERWAY & BEACH DISTRICT
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
Tuesday, April 18, 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, April 18, 2017.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Vice-Chairman Barry Benjamin called the meeting to order at 3:10 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 March 31, 2017, the District had spent \$86,086, including \$19,849 in committed and non-committed funds, and \$66,237 in operating expenses. The budget contains unspent funds of \$427,301 committed for projects in 2016-2017 fiscal year. Tax revenues to date equal \$457,125 with about \$18,727 more expected.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

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

6. ENGINEERING REPORT

Ken Craig delivered the engineering report on behalf of Taylor Engineering. Mr. Craig said the project at Summer Haven River is moving along well and should be completed by early June, 2017, if weather remains favorable. The least tern mitigation site is complete and Mike Trudnak and Elyse Kemper are working on the next distribution of legislative money. He also asked the board to approve Change Order Number 4 for the Summer Haven River

project which would extend the completion date to June 2, 2017, and provide \$35,550 for the additional earthwork needed at the least tern mitigation site.

A motion by Vice-Chairman Benjamin to approve Change Order Number 4 for the addition of \$35,550 to the contract price and extending the closing date of the Summer Haven River restoration project to June 2, 2017, was seconded by Commissioner Way and unanimously passed.

In response to questions from Commissioner Helman, Mr. Craig said the Naval Academy students who recently visited St. Augustine had collected valuable bathymetric data about Matanzas Bay which Taylor intends to use. He said he would review the data as it relates to using Matanzas Bay as a source for future beach renourishment sand and give the board a report next month.

7. **OLD BUSINESS : NONE**

8. **NEW BUSINESS:**

A. **Lift Funding Request City Marina**

Corporal Josh Underwood, St. Johns County Sheriff's Office, said his organization needs a boat lift for their patrol vessel docked at the City Marina. He described a lift which floats and is portable and can be moved to safety in the event of bad weather. The lift floats but is submerged to accept a vessel, then refloats to lift the vessel out of the water. He said this style of lift is also valuable because the dry-dock capability improves the agency's ability to maintain the vessel. The cost of the unit is \$39,775.00 installed, which St. Johns County Sheriff's Office is requesting from the District. In response to questions from the board, Corporal Underwood said the lift is needed because of the failure of the multiple-agency boatlift previously planned for the Vilano Boat Ramp. Commissioner Way volunteered to research a less expensive alternative lift. Vice-Chairman Benjamin then tabled the request until the next meeting pending more information on pricing.

Later in the meeting, Jim Piggott, Director of the General Services for the City of St. Augustine, addressed the board regarding the boat lift request and suggested that, if the board intended to fund the purchase of a lift but perhaps an alternative style, commissioners approve the purchase price of this lift with the caveat that research will be done to determine if an alternative is available for less. Vice-Chairman Benjamin said he would not be opposed to reconsidering the request. Commissioner Helman questioned Ms. Kemper about this year's budget. She said expected expenditures already exceed expected revenue for the year. A discussion followed regarding the use of reserve funds and the District's responsibility as sponsor of St. Augustine Inlet and its commitment to maintaining the navigation channels in Salt Run and the San Sebastian River.

Commissioner Way said the reserve may be larger than is actually required for emergency maintenance purposes. He said the board should set a target for the reserve and cease spending each year when the reserve is reached. Commissioner Helman asked Mr. Craig to research the amount of funds foreseeably required for an emergency such as storm damage

to the inlet, Salt Run or the San Sebastian River. Mr. Craig said many agencies have emergency plans in addition to emergency funds, and that he would present the board with a survey of those as a comparison for the board's use in determining an adequate reserve.

Commissioner Rivers said the cost of emergency dredging and breach repairs such as those caused by Hurricane Matthew are so expensive the District's reserve seems far too small. He reported he recently spoke with the St. Johns County legislative delegation and believes nothing will happen this year on the issue of making the District a county-wide taxing authority. Vice-Chairman Benjamin said he was in favor of buying the boatlift because of the need for rapid response on local waterways and the failure of the Vilano Boat Ramp lift project.

A motion by Vice-Chairman Benjamin to approve the request by St. Johns County Sheriff's Office for a floating-style boat lift for the City Marina with a maximum price of \$39,744.21 was seconded by Commissioner Rivers. Commissioner Way will research alternative brands and pricing to finalize the purchase price. The motion was unanimously approved in a roll-call vote.

9. GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVE COMMENTS:

St. Johns County FIND Commissioner Carl Blow reported Find's maintenance dredging of the Intracoastal Waterway at Matanzas Inlet is complete. More than 430,000 cubic yards of sand were placed on the beach between Summer Haven and Marineland. The dredge has been moved to St. Augustine Inlet to begin work there. According the Corps of Engineers, only 35,000 cubic yards of sand will be available from the inlet's federal navigation channel. Together with sand taken from the Intracoastal Waterway, a total of about 200,000 cubic yards will be placed on the beach north of the inlet. Less sand than previously projected is available from the inlet because of time limits on the contractor and the dredge boat's design, which will not allow dredging on the seaward side of the inlet. Mr. Blow added the Corps is also planning to examine the jetty at the St. Augustine Inlet to determine if it is possible to make the jetty more resistant to sand leakage.

Jim Piggott, Director of General Services for the City of St. Augustine, responded to questions by Commissioner Rivers regarding rules for anchoring boats near boat ramps. Mr. Piggott said anchored boats are required to be at least 100 feet from the mooring field but that there is no required clearance from boat ramps as long as access is not blocked. He said statewide rules recently proposed by FWC will prohibit anchoring within 150 feet of a boat ramp. Dredging of the Dolphin Drive basin will begin May 1, 2017, then move to Salt Run, and then to the city seawall July 5 through 15, 2017.

Corporal Josh Underwood said the Sheriff's Office Marine Unit spent 144 man-hours on the water last month and issued 14 warnings and citations, assisted in five marine emergencies, discovered a new derelict vessel, and investigated several burglaries of vessels. In the coming month, SJSO will be conducting marine sanitation device testing. Sgt. Keith Oke, SJSO, added that having a full-time presence on the water allows officers to obtain important information to combat crimes on boats, such as the recent burglaries.

Lt. Steve Zukowski, FWC, said the Blessing of the Fleet went well this year, but that there were a few problems with the small boats in the event. There were no accidents.

10. PUBLIC COMMENT

Stuart Dornblaser, 1050 Cedar Cove Drive, St. Augustine, thanked Carl Blow for spearheading the successful effort to get sand onto the beach north of the inlet. He said the effort would not have been possible if it had not been for Mr. Blow. He said the north beaches will need much more sand to repair all the damage from Hurricane Matthew.

11. COMMENTS BY COMMISSIONERS:

Commissioner Helman said he will send a letter to FWC regarding the need for floating buoys in local no-wake zones.

NEXT MEETING

Vice-Chairman Benjamin announced the next meeting of the board will be held at 3:00 p.m. on May 16, 2017 in the St. Augustine Beach City Commission Room.

ADJOURN:

There being no further business, Vice-Chairman Benjamin adjourned the meeting at 4:40 p.m.

Secretary-Treasurer

Chairman