

ST. AUGUSTINE PORT, WATERWAY & BEACH DISTRICT
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
Tuesday, May 17, 2016

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, May 17, 2016.

CALL TO ORDER

Jerry Dixon called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

ROLL CALL

Chairman Jerry Dixon, Vice-Chairman Barry Benjamin and Commissioners Mark Helman, were in attendance. Commissioners Rivers and Hennessey were absent. The meeting was also attended by Ken Craig of Taylor Engineering, District Counsel Jim Bedsole and Secretary-Treasurer Elyse Kemper.

SECRETARY-TREASURER'S REPORT

Secretary-Treasurer Kemper delivered the financial report to the Board. She reported that with the payment last month of invoices totaling \$117,910 for the Summer Haven River project, the District has spent \$305,893 in the 2015-2016 fiscal year, including \$63,985 in previously committed expenses. As of April 30, 2016, net funds available for use totaled \$2,011,727, with revenues of \$11,840 still expected.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion by Commissioner Helman to approve the minutes of the April 19, 2016 regular meetings, seconded by Vice-Chairman Benjamin, was unanimously passed.

ENGINEERING REPORT

Ken Craig delivered the engineering report on behalf of Taylor Engineering. Mr. Craig said sand samples are being collected in response to requests for additional information from FDEP to complete the application for a design modification on the Summer Haven River restoration project. Taylor is also coordinating a grant application to the Florida Inland Navigation District for funds for the same project. He also noted that some Summer Haven area residents have requested that designers consider improved pedestrian access to the beach from area homes.

Regarding the South Ponte Vedra-Vilano Beach permit, Mr. Craig said Taylor is now conducting turbidity field tests in response to requests for additional information from FDEP. In response to a question by Chairman Dixon, Mr. Craig said the permit is only the initial step required to actually transport and deposit sand from any inlet dredge project to the north beaches. He said any method of transport besides off-shore deposit will require extensive work to route pumping lines and obtain access easements allowing the use of this method, which has been the traditional one used by FIND.

Chairman Dixon said the District agreed to obtain a permit for the North Beaches project but that the District does not have the resources to do anything more for the project than the permit phase.

OLD BUSINESS:

A) South Ponte Vedra/Vilano Beach Permitting - Chairman Jerry Dixon

Chairman Dixon said the scheduled dredging of the Intracoastal Waterway in a joint project by FIND and the Corps of Engineers may possibly fail to take place because of an objection to it filed by parties from the north beaches community. He said it is his understanding the funding will expire soon unless it is used and that the opportunity will be lost because of this litigation. He said the District offered to pay for the permit out of concern for the plight of property owners in the north beaches and because the county has repeatedly refused to sponsor the necessary permit applications for both the north beaches and the Summer Haven River. He said the District has learned through the Summer Haven River restoration that the permitting process is long and expensive, and that actually sponsoring a project is a tremendous burden on the District even where, as with the Summer Haven River, the community fully cooperates with every agency.

As a result, he said he has changed his position regarding any sponsorship of a permit for the South Ponte Vedra-Vilano Beach project, and believes the District should suspend the permit application process at the present time. He said the project will clearly be beyond the resources of the District and will require funding by a larger agency with greater ability to obtain and administer the extensive easements and logistical arrangements necessary to implement the project.

A motion by Chairman Dixon to halt and suspend work on the pending FDEP permit application for the South Ponte Vedra-Vilano Beach restoration project, seconded by Commissioner Helman, was passed unanimously on a roll-call vote.

After the vote, Chairman Dixon said he still supports the position that the District pay to obtain the permit, but that he will no longer support the District's sponsorship of it.

In a related matter, Secretary-Treasurer Kemper said her firm has been required to provide many hours of service on the Summer Haven River Project which hours are outside of, and in addition to, the services contemplated by their contract with the District. As a result, Ms. Kemper requested leave from the board to charge such time on an hourly basis at the rate of fifty dollars (\$50.00) per hour.

A motion by Commissioner Helman to approve the request, seconded by Vice-Chairman Benjamin, was unanimously passed.

NEW BUSINESS: NONE

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Linda Chambliss appeared on behalf of the South Ponte Vedra-Vilano Beach association and thanked the board for their support of the permit process to date. She said the situation is complex and that she believes a solution will be found. Chairman Dixon said that the District's actions were not personal, but the District can no longer volunteer to hold the permit. He said it is clear now the project is far beyond the capabilities of the District to carry out.

Commander Barry Fox, St. Augustine Police Department, said he is taking over the derelict vessel program from retiring Steve Fricke and that the only pending issue is the disposal of the vessel at Crane Park. Chairman Dixon and Vice-Chairman Benjamin commented on the lasting success of the derelict removal program and its reputation as the most successful in Florida.

In response to questions from Chairman Dixon, Jim Piggot, City of St. Augustine, said obtaining permanent public access to the San Sebastian River would increase funding from FIND from the present 50% up to 75% of total project cost. The City currently has an easement for the temporary placement of dredge material on the former Luhrs site which has been critical to dredging the San Sebastian.

COMMENTS BY COMMISSIONERS: NONE

NEXT MEETING

Chairman Dixon announced the next regular meeting will be held at 3:00 p.m. on June 21, 2016 in the same location.

ADJOURN:

There being no further business, Chairman Dixon adjourned the meeting at 3:40 p.m.

Secretary-Treasurer

Chairman