

ST. AUGUSTINE PORT, WATERWAY & BEACH DISTRICT

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING

Wednesday, September 18, 2013

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 Wednesday, September 18, 2013.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Barry Benjamin 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 Barry Benjamin, Commissioners Herb Rippe and Jay Bliss were in attendance. Commissioner Dixon arrived at 3:10 p.m. Commissioner Hennessey arrived at 3:50 p.m. The meeting was also attended by Dr. Steve Schropp of Taylor Engineering, District Counsel Jim Bedsole and Secretary-Treasurer Elyse Kemper.

SECRETARY-TREASURER'S REPORT

Secretary-Treasurer Kemper delivered the report. As of August 31, 2013, the District has spent \$15,444 in committed funds, \$106,713 in operating expenses, and a net of \$92,911 in non-committed funds, for a grand total of \$215,068. Of expected tax income of \$370,155 for 2012-2013, only \$54 remains uncollected. On September 16, 2013, the District had net funds of \$1,665,836 available for use.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Bliss questioned whether Commissioner Hennessey had attended the July 16, 2013 meeting and asked Mr. Bedsole to confirm that fact. He also said his name should be in the roll-call section as he attended the July meeting.

Upon motion by Chairman Benjamin, seconded by Commissioner Dixon, the minutes of the regular meeting of August 20, 2013 and the public hearing of September 4, 2013 were unanimously approved.

Consideration of the minutes for the July 16, 2013 meeting was tabled until the next regular meeting.

ENGINEERING REPORT

Dr. Steve Schropp delivered the engineering report on behalf of Taylor Engineering. He said the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) should approve the permit application for the Summer Haven River restoration this week and that the draft permit should be issued by mid-December at the latest. The Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) is waiting for a review of the application by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service before giving USACE approval.

Commissioner Dixon asked whether the Friends of Summer Haven River organization had begun to raise money for the project. Dr. Schropp said they were waiting for a permit prior to asking for money. Dr. Schropp said he has already received calls from parties interested in bidding on the planned work.

He then reported the USACE has awarded a contract for the up-coming inlet dredging and that a pre-construction conference is scheduled for next week. He said he believes dredging will begin by the end of September. In response to questions by Commissioners Dixon, Bliss and Rippe, Dr. Schropp said all of the sand taken will be placed in Anastasia State Park. He said FDEP has not responded to the input it received from the Board as to the draft Inlet Management Plan. Commissioner Rippe asked Dr. Schropp to contact FDEP regarding its progress on the new IMP.

In response to a question by Commissioner Rippe, Dr. Schropp said all of the sand scheduled to be removed from the inlet during the up-coming project will come from the federally-authorized channel, only, and that the dredging will likely proceed until funds are exhausted.

OLD BUSINESS

A. Discussion regarding District Application for Assistance. This item was tabled until the next regular meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Discussion regarding purchase of new recording software. Ms. Kemper reported she has located a digital system capable of replacing the cassette tapes now used to record the Board's meetings and that the system and all the accompanying equipment will cost less than \$700. Additionally, a new system will require replacement of the District's only laptop computer which is dated and incompatible with current programs.

A motion by Chairman Benjamin, seconded by Commissioner Bliss, to approve spending a maximum of \$1,500.00 for the new recording equipment and a laptop computer, was unanimously approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Commander Steve Fricke, St. Augustine Police Department (SAPD), reported the recent Mumford event had a maximum crowd count of 23,600 people in attendance. For the first time, the City of St. Augustine (COSA) contracted with a water taxi to shuttle visitors between the City Marina and the Vilano Boat Dock. A total of 11,600 passes were sold for all land and water shuttles. He added that the City would very soon be taking possession of the 100th derelict vessel from District waters. He said this had been made possible because of funding provided by the District for police overtime pay and for derelict vessel removal.

Lt. Steve Zukowski, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC), reported investigators have concluded the accident in Matanzas Bay which claimed the lives of two boaters on Memorial Day evening occurred in part because the boat's operator was impaired. He also said FWC wants to add idle speed zone signage on the Vilano Bridge and Vilano Pier because the buoys marking the area now are difficult to see.

COMMENTS BY COMMISSIONERS. Commissioner Bliss said he was concerned that money committed to overtime pay for the Sheriff's Marine Unit had been used instead for EPIRBs and PFDs for the officers in the Marine Unit. He said the money should have remained reserved for the purpose of increasing police presence on the water and that the Sheriff has a huge budget compared to the District. He said District funds should be reserved for projects such as dredging. Commissioner Dixon said the Sheriff's Office has not spent all of the \$15,000 allocated to it, and that spending District money for officer safety should be allowed.

NEXT MEETING

Chairman Benjamin announced the next meeting will be October 15, 2013 at 3:00 p.m., and the final hearing on the budget and millage for 2013-2014 would start at 5:05 today (September 18, 2013).

ADJOURN:

There being no further business, Chairman Benjamin adjourned the meeting at 4:00 p.m.

Secretary-Treasurer

Chairman

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