

ST. AUGUSTINE PORT, WATERWAY & BEACH DISTRICT
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
Tuesday, July 17, 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, July 17, 2018.

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 Benjamin, and Commissioners Tom Rivers and Chris Way were in attendance. Chairman Jerry Dixon and Commissioner Mark Helman 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. She reported the District has spent a total of \$315,516 this year for all operating expenses and projects including \$17,987 for marine law enforcement, \$10,027 for removal of derelict vessels, \$150,000 for repair of the City Marina, \$14,900 for channel marker repairs, \$24,120 for removal of hurricane debris from the bay, and \$92,822 in operating in operating expenses. Total funds on deposit equal \$2,115,963, and no further tax revenue is expected until November, 2018. The separate fund for the Summer Haven River received a reimbursement in the amount of \$352,000 from St. Johns County this month, bringing the account to \$360,774.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

There were no additions or corrections to the minutes of the June 19, 2018 meeting.

A motion by Vice-Chairman Benjamin to approve the minutes of the June 19, 2018 regular meeting was seconded by Commissioner Rivers and passed unanimously.

6. ENGINEERING REPORT:

Mike Trudnak delivered the engineering report on behalf of Taylor Engineering. He said the District finally received the \$352,000 reimbursement from St. Johns County for emergency repair of the Hurricane Matthew breach at Summer Haven. He said these funds and others recently approved by the Florida legislature will allow the restoration project to resume and proceed to completion. He then presented for approval Change Order No. 7 to Taylor's contract for administration of the project providing for the use of these funds. He also requested authorization to use the \$450,000 legislative grant when the funds are available.

Secretary-Treasurer Kemper explained that the District's contract with FDEP for the restoration calls for funds to be advanced to the District rather than paid after invoicing FDEP. With the new funds, FDEP is requesting that invoices be submitted for approval by their agency prior to issuing payment to the District. FDEP representatives have assured Ms. Kemper that invoices will be paid within four weeks of submission. Vice-Chairman Benjamin then asked to review the change order and confirmed that District Counsel Mr. Bedsole had approved the change order prior to its being presented to the board.

In response to questions from Commissioner Way, Ellis Zahra said he was under the impression an additional \$650,000 would be coming from FEMA for Summer Haven River. Mr. Trudnak said FEMA has made the claim process difficult and that it will probably be denied. He also explained the approximately \$800,000 now available would allow the project to be completed as originally planned, within four months of re-starting. Rich Turnbull, the contractor, said his company would be able to return to the site in August to begin the final phase of work.

In response to questions by Mr. Zahra, Mr. Trudnak said FDEP is now requiring the new beach berm receive sea oat plantings on only the seaward side. This is because the agency is requiring west side of the berm to be left bare for a least tern habitat. He said this is good because it is less expensive and placing more sand on the west side of the berm will prevent loss of sand in the ocean in the event of another storm.

Mr. Zahra said FWC has roped off part of the project area for least terns even though the birds departed after only a few days. He also noted cars are parking on the staging area beside A1A on the weekends and possibly driving over vegetation. Mr. Trudnak said the restoration contractor is required to return the site to its original condition at the end of the job and that appropriate signage will be posted at that time limiting access. Mr. Trudnak also said the nesting area posted by FWC has already been opened up for continued project work and that FWC simply failed to remove the signage.

A motion by Vice-Chairman Benjamin to approve Change Order No. 7 to the Taylor contract for administration of the Summer Haven River restoration project was seconded by Commissioner Way and passed unanimously.

A motion by Vice-Chairman Benjamin to authorize Taylor Engineering to use the 2018 grant funds of \$450,000 recently approved by the Florida Legislature to finish the Summer Haven River restoration project without coming back to the board for further

approval was seconded by Commissioner Way and passed unanimously.

Regarding the north beaches, Mr. Trudnak said the Corps of Engineers was recently awarded 34 million dollars for renourishment of the north beaches and is planning to obtain most of the sand for the project from the inner harbor's flood shoal. He said the funds will be available next fiscal year.

7. OLD BUSINESS:

A. FASD Legislative Forum.

Commissioner Rivers said the Florida Association of Special Districts will be hosting a legislative forum in the Fall and that he would like to attend the event at District expense. He said the meeting will be important for the District's plans to expand county-wide, and that the District already serves many areas outside its boundaries but is unable to receive revenue from the entire county because of its outdated boundary lines.

A motion by Vice-Chairman Benjamin to fund Commissioner Rivers on a trip to the FASD legislative forum was seconded by Commissioner Way and passed unanimously.

8. NEW BUSINESS:

A. Proposed Millage Rate

Secretary-Treasurer Kemper presented information to the board on proposed millage rates for fiscal year 2018-2019. She said use of last year's millage rate will result in an increase in revenue without raising the tax rate. The alternative is using the roll-back rate which will bring in approximately the same revenue as last year. She recommended the board adopt last year's rate as the tentative tax rate because it can be lowered before final adoption if necessary, but cannot be raised once a tentative rate is chosen.

A motion by Commissioner Rivers to adopt last year's millage rate of 0.0638 mils as the tentative millage rate for fiscal year 2018-2019 was seconded by Commissioner Way and passed unanimously.

9. GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVE COMMENTS:

Jim Piggott, Director of General Services, City of St. Augustine, requested a commitment from the board to fund twenty-five percent (25%) of the cost of removing seven derelict vessels identified by the City. He said the City will request the remaining seventy-five percent (75%) from the Florida Inland Navigation District. The total requested is \$6,927.00.

A motion by Vice-Chairman Benjamin to approve the payment of matching funds of \$6,927.00 for derelict vessel removal by the City of St. Augustine was seconded by

Commissioner Way and passed unanimously.

Carl Blow, St. Johns County representative to the Florida Inland Navigation District, said Congressman John Rutherford was successful in obtaining \$36.8 million for restoration of Vilano Beach and South Ponte Vedra Beach. He said the Corps plans to take the sand from the inner harbor between the Vilano Boat Ramp and Porpoise Point, and that extending dredging to the north end of Salt Run and south toward the city mooring field is also possible. He said obtaining permits for the project will take a year. The Corps has presented the plans to the county and will be appearing before the board soon. He added FIND will dredge the St. Augustine Inlet/Intracoastal intersection soon and placed sand on sections of Anastasia State Park. He said the Corps had planned to use offshore sites to renourish the north beaches but decided on using the inner harbor because sand will eventually leak through the north groin of the inlet back into the harbor. Reducing the size of the flood shoal will assist with that problem.

Cpl. Josh Underwood, SJSO Marine Unit, reported his agency spent 129 hours on the water last month, responded to 56 calls, issued 32 warnings, 8 citations, and assisted with July 4th water traffic control. He said FWC will be installing no-wake zone buoys around local bridges in August. In response to questions from Commissioner Rivers, Cpl. Underwood said navigation lights and marine safety devices, such as life jackets, are the most common subjects of citations.

Lt. Steve Zukowsky, FWC, said his agency refused to install regulatory signs on local bridges or on pilings because of the expense and the likelihood of frequent replacement. Instead, new buoys will be installed soon with the correct anchors. Divers from FWC have examined the many sunken boats south of the SR 312 Bridge and have determined the hulls are all too deteriorated to remove and that none of them is a hazard to navigation. He said FWC and USCG recently cooperated in an action to inspect marine lighting. An unusual problem is the night-time use of bright flood lights by flounder giggers. He said operating a vessel with the flood lights on is a violation because it blinds other boaters.

A recent serious accident occurred when a boat towing a person on a tube turned and caused the tube to hit a piling. The tube rider broke an arm and hip. The captain is facing several charges in the accident.

10. **PUBLIC COMMENT: NONE**

11. **COMMENTS BY COMMISSIONERS:**

Vice-Chairman Benjamin announced he would be assuming the duties of Chairman in Chairman Dixon's extended absence and suggested Commissioner Helman be named Vice-

Chairman. The board unanimously approved this suggestion.

12. NEXT MEETING

Chairman Benjamin announced the next meeting of the board will be held at 3:00 p.m. on Tuesday, August 14, 2018, in the St. Augustine Beach City Commission Room.

ADJOURN:

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

Secretary-Treasurer

Chairman

wk/rg/port/minutes-2018/Minutes7-17-18 meeting