

**ST. AUGUSTINE PORT, WATERWAY & BEACH DISTRICT**

**MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING**

**Tuesday, April 19, 2011**

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 19, 2011.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman 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, Commissioners Barry Benjamin, Tom Rivers, Jay Bliss and Herb Rippe were in attendance. The meeting was also attended by: Elyse Kemper, Assistant Secretary-Treasurer, District Attorney James Bedsole, and Dr. Steve Schropp of Taylor Engineering.

**SECRETARY-TREASURER'S REPORT**

Assistant Secretary-Treasurer, Elyse Kemper, delivered the report. Taxes received to date total \$358,500 with \$36,016 still expected. Funds available comprised of the Florida Board of Administration Funds A and B, the Bank of St. Augustine operating account and CDS, total \$1,924,150. Total funds committed equal \$406,370 of which \$100,177 have been spent, making net funds available \$1,571,334.

Commissioner Dixon asked why \$100,000 committed to the Salt Run Dredging Phase II had not been delivered to the City of St. Augustine. Ms. Kemper said the District had not yet received an invoice from the city. Jim Piggott, City of St. Augustine, said he would check on the invoice and inform the Treasurer.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

No amendments to the Minutes as presented.

**A motion by Commissioner Benjamin, seconded by Chairman Dixon to approve the minutes for the meeting of March 15, 2011, as presented, was unanimously passed.**

## **ENGINEERING REPORT**

Dr. Steve Schropp delivered the engineering report on behalf of Taylor Engineering. He presented the results of the survey of the Summer Haven River consisting of maps and details comparing the river's present condition to a survey done by the St. Johns River Water Management District in 2004. He said about one thousand feet of the river have been inundated by sand as deep as ten feet in some areas. Other areas of the river have actually deepened since 2004. The volume of sand in-filling the river since 2004 is approximately 200,000 cubic yards. This volume represents the maximum to be removed in any rehabilitation project. Dr. Schropp said a minimum channel ten feet deep by twenty feet wide would be needed to restore flow. Building a channel this size would require removal of approximately 60,000 cubic yards of sand. These maximum and minimum amounts represent the probable upper and lower range of restoration alternatives.

He said he has conferred with members of the Summer Haven community and that they favor the maximum removal alternative. He has also contacted FDEP for a meeting with their representatives and hopes to get their considerations on the restoration within the next two to three weeks.

Chairman Dixon asked if the minimum alternative was feasible. Dr. Schropp said probably not, but the example was useful to set a possible range of remedies. Commissioner Rippe asked about the probable cost of restoration. Dr. Schropp said the cost would depend on a number of factors including the extent of removal, method of removal and method of disposal.

Linda Ginn thanked the Board for its support and assistance. She said a non-profit corporation had been established to take donations for restoration work and that she intends to attend the meetings with FDEP. Chairman Dixon added he received a letter of support for the project from County Commissioner Mark Miner.

Deven King-Cardenes, a Summer Haven resident, said the 2004 data used by Dr. Schropp was good, but that the silting of the river had begun many years prior to 2004. She said she hopes FDEP and the Board will consider that fact in determining the extent of the rehabilitation work.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **A. Update re: Vision Statement - Ken Krauter.**

Ken Krauter said the Vision Statement had been finalized at the previous regular meeting but that his request to create a derelict vessel policy had never been approved. Chairman Dixon said recent changes in law enforcement procedures may make it unnecessary to have such a policy and that he favored delaying development of a policy at this time.

Commissioner Bliss said the City had quickly removed a vessel which recently sank in Salt Run. He said the derelict vessel on the beach north of the 312 bridge was due to be removed by a contractor very soon, but that it had been there since November, 2010. Commissioner Bliss said he thought the District had no need for a policy on derelict vessels.

Michelle Perry, St. Augustine Police Department, said new rules have made removal of derelicts easier. She said the contractor was waiting for a favorable tide and weather conditions to remove the vessel near the 312 bridge.

B. Inlet Dredging Project - Commissioners.

Commissioner Rippe said he believed after last month's discussion that retrieving beach quality sand from the inlet channel rather than the ebb shoal would be a win-win solution to many issues, and that he had talked to the various stakeholders, all of whom were supportive. The property owners on North Beach liked it because it presented an alternative to the ebb shoal dredging they believe is damaging their beaches. The county was willing to change its plan to accommodate the need to make the inlet safe, and St. Augustine Beach will get good quality sand for renourishment.

Joe Stevenson, Public Works Director for St. Johns County, pointed out on a graphic display areas where sand is normally taken from the ebb shoal for renourishment. He said the county is willing to apply for a change in its permit to allow dredging of the interior of the inlet and the flood shoal to obtain renourishment sand prior to dredging the ebb shoal.

Commissioner Rippe said an agreement to take as much sand as possible from the inlet interior and from the flood shoal prior to dredging the ebb shoal may serve to avoid any objection from interested parties north of the inlet.

Commissioner Bliss asked why the inlet channel depicted on the graphic was located so far from the actual channel now in use. Chairman Dixon said the silting of the inlet had caused the channel to move and had filled up the actual right-of-way for the channel. He added that if the channel were not relieved, it would eventually undermine the jetty on the south side.

Dr. Srinivas supported Chairman Dixon by saying dredging will reduce water velocity in the inlet, will protect the south jetty and will reduce all hazards. He said the studies completed recently have shown dredging of the ebb shoal has no effect on beach erosion to the north. Also, the ebb shoal is the least expensive place to obtain sand and is made even more economical because federal funds pay for 80% of the cost. No other breach in the county is capable of receiving this level of funding. He said the money committed to the upcoming FIND project will remove about eighty thousand cubic yards of sand from the inlet.

Buzz Johnson, 931 Lew Boulevard, St. Augustine, complained about sand dumped in Salt Run by a broken dredge pipe several years ago. He expressed concern that the upcoming FIND project presented the same risk. Chairman Dixon assured Mr. Johnson that FIND Commissioner Carl Blow would monitor the project very closely. Mr. Johnson also reported there are three pilings in the water near the Lighthouse boat ramp which are a hazard to navigation. Commander Michelle Perry, SAPD, said her agency would investigate.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Mike Sullivan, President of the Marine Industry Association, requested the Board provide funding for the annual boat show and marine fair at the special events field. Last year's event was funded at \$4,000 and was attended by about 2,000 people. Upon questioning by Commissioner Benjamin, Mr. Sullivan said there are no other sponsors for the show, but that the industry contributed about twelve thousand dollars of its own funds last year. Commissioner Benjamin said their request was too great. Chairman Dixon suggested they get \$2,500.00

**Commissioner Rivers moved to provide \$5,000.00 in funds. His motion was seconded by Commissioner Bliss. On a roll call vote, the motion was approved by 4-1 with Commissioner Benjamin voting against.**

Commissioner Bliss said Comanche Cove Yacht Harbor will be sponsoring National Marine Day on June 6, 2011 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and that the event did not request or receive District funds.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Officer Steve Zukowski, FWC, said new procedures have made it easier to remove derelict vessels. He also said SAPD gave a list of vessels with expired registrations to the Tax Collector and that many of the vessels have since been registered.

According to the officer, the Blessing of the Fleet went well but many of the boaters participating lacked VHF radios and good seamanship skills. He also talked about the new FWC vessel and several recent boating mishaps in the area.

## **COMMENTS BY COMMISSIONERS**

Commissioner Rippe thanked the St. Johns County Commission and staff for their support, assistance and work on the inlet dredging project. Chairman Dixon added his agreement and thanks.

Commissioner Bliss congratulated local resident, Tim Tucker and his boat Rock Star for winning the prestigious Charleston Race Week competition over a large field of boats from all over the USA. He also invited the Board to the National Marine Day festivities June 11, 2011 at Comanche Cove.

**NEXT MEETING**

The Chairman announced the next regular meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, May 17, 2011, at 3:00 p.m. in the same location.

**ADJOURN:**

There being no further business, Chairman Dixon adjourned the meeting at 4:55 p.m.

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Secretary-Treasurer

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Chairman

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