

ST. AUGUSTINE PORT, WATERWAY & BEACH DISTRICT

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING

Tuesday, June 19, 2012

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, June 19, 2012.

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 Herb Rippe, Jay Bliss and Barry Benjamin, were in attendance. The meeting was also attended by District Counsel Jim Bedsole, Dr. Steve Schropp of Taylor Engineering and Secretary-Treasurer Elyse Kemper.

SECRETARY-TREASURER'S REPORT

The report was delivered by Elyse Kemper. Secretary-Treasurer Kemper reported funds available to the District as of May 31, 2012 were \$1,808,701. After deducting funds committed and funds held by the State Board of Administration, net available funds total \$1,636,378. Taxes received to May 31 equal \$366,650 with expected further tax income of \$1,605.00 for this year. Ms. Kemper said the District accounts at the Bank of St. Augustine would soon be transferred to another bank because of federal regulatory changes affecting the Bank of St. Augustine.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Bliss moved to approve the minutes of the April 17, 2012 and May 15, 2012 regular meetings. His motion was seconded by Commissioner Benjamin and passed unanimously.

ENGINEERING REPORT

Dr. Steve Schropp delivered the report on behalf of Taylor Engineering. He said the Florida Department of Environmental Protection had not completed its new Inlet Management Plan but that he expected it to be released soon. He also reported that the replacement for Salt Run Marker No. 1 had been installed by the contractor and that he was informed by Commissioner Bliss that Marker No. 11 may have a problem now. Finally, he said the draft permit application was ready for review by the Friends of Summer Haven River and that the application would next be forwarded to FDEP for their consideration.

OLD BUSINESS

Chairman Dixon reported St. Johns County Fire and Rescue had spent less than was projected for the jet skis funded by the District and that a refund will be forthcoming. Commissioner Rippe questioned the amount of the refund and Secretary-Treasurer Kemper said it would be about \$3,000.00

Wil Smith, Director of Recreation for St. Johns County, said the Vilano Boat Dock is nearly complete except for signage prohibiting swimming and fishing. When opened, the funding grant for the dock will be closed and the excess funds returned to the District. Mr. Smith said recent presentations to the Florida Inland Navigation District (FIND) went well and he expects FIND to approve funds for the dredging of the Vilano Boat Ramp which now is an annual requirement. In response to questions by Commissioner Rippe, Mr. Smith said the County allows commercial barges to use the Vilano Boat Ramp free of charge because there is no commercial port facility in St. Augustine. He added that the various commercial users are not able to dredge the basin in exchange for their use because of permit restrictions. Dr. Schropp added that permit conditions always require surveys and supervision which would not be possible if dredging services were volunteered or donated.

NEW BUSINESS

St. Johns County Beach Services Manager Bill Zeitf presented a report on the county's beaches. He said the two biggest issues for his office are safety and beach access. He said there are nine vehicle ramps and in excess of ninety pedestrian accesses to beaches. There were more than one million visitors to the beaches in 2011. He said keeping cars and people separated is a paramount concern and that, in 2011, there were no car accidents or deaths on the beach or in the water. Five full-time deputies patrol the beaches on ATVs from 7:30 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. daily, seven days a week. Last year, the beach was closed four times to cars because of flooded ramps, which affected beach revenue.

Commissioner Rippe asked why vehicular access to the beach is gradually being curtailed. Mr. Zeitf said access to the beach north of the inlet is limited by the County's conservation management plan but that permits are available on-line for use by four-wheel drive owners. The inlet and Porpoise Point area are limited access because of flooding at high tide and because of federal protection during tern nesting season. The Fort Matanzas property is controlled by the federal government and St. Johns County has no control over its use.

Commissioner Bliss commented that while inlet dredging has made the beach area on Porpoise Point smaller, the contractor has allowed more access by shrinking the size of the designated work area.

The Commission agreed they would like to have a report quarterly on the status of the beaches and asked Mr. Zeitf to come again.

PUBLIC COMMENT

FWC Lt. Steve Zukowski reported violations of all types were down for the past month because of bad weather and resulting lack of boaters. He said there were several accidents including a grounding at Anastasia State Park, a grounding at Devil's Elbow, and an injury at Crane Park.

COMMENTS BY COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Rippe said he has not noticed any improvement yet in conditions at the inlet because there are continuing to be boaters grounded on shoals and near buoys.

NEXT MEETING

The Chairman announced the next regular meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, July 17, 2012, at 3:00 p.m. in the same location.

ADJOURN:

There being no further business, Chairman Dixon adjourned the meeting at 4:30 p.m.

Secretary-Treasurer

Chairman