

St. Augustine Port, Waterway and Beach District

Minutes of Regular Meeting

Tuesday, May 23, 2006

The Regular Meeting of the Port, Waterway & Beach District was held in the St. Augustine Beach City Commission Meeting Room, 2200 AlA South, St. Augustine Beach, Florida on Tuesday, May 23, 2006.

The Meeting was called to order by Chairman Jack McGuinness at 4:00 p.m.

Present were Elyse Kemper from Donovan, Bell & Associates called the roll. Commissioners Barry Benjamin, Jerry Dixon and Tom Rivers were in attendance. Vice-Chairman Rick Gleeson arrived a few minutes late. Also in attendance were the Port's Attorney, Geoff Dobson and Engineering Consultant Rajesh Srinivas from Taylor Engineering. In attendance from the public: Assistant Secretary Debbie Paterson and her Husband Jim, Walt Matthews, Ben Rich from the St. Johns County Commission, Max Royle of the City of St. Augustine Beach, Shorty Robbins from St. Johns County Recreation and Parks, Jay Bliss, Carl Blow, John Regan from the City of St. Augustine, Joe Boles, City of St. Augustine Commissioner, Commander Steve Fricke from the St. Augustine Police Department and Mr. Bailey.

**MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

**MARCH 21, 2006** - No changes

**APRIL 18, 2006** - Changes will be made to reflect all Commissioners present with the exception of Jerry Dixon.

**FINANCIAL REPORTS**

Presented by Ms. Kemper with handouts, summarizing Net Funds Available, amounts spent on Budgeted projects, and taxes received.

Chairman Jack McGuinness asked that future Financial Reports include interest earned from State Board of Administration for period covered.

Ms. Kemper clarified amounts spent thus far on Sea Oats Project.

**ENGINEERING REPORT**

Rajesh Srinivas of Taylor Engineering gave update on the Lighthouse Park Improvement Project. Project is in design and permitting phase for replacement of floating dock. City needs to sign off on changes in permits for reorientation of dock.

Ms. Kemper clarified amount spent thus far on this project.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**SECRETARIAL SERVICES**

Chairman Jack McGuinness indicated that Mrs. Paterson has served as the Assistant Secretary for as long as he has been on the Board and he has been on the Board for 16 years. He praised her excellent and good service - "always available...when the Commissioners needed her - to answer this or to look up this or to look up that. Unfortunately, in the last year, she's suffered a certain amount of both personal and family health problems, not to her fault, certainly, and that has caused a

little bit of a problem but I think from talking to her, she's ready to get back...and continue to serve like she's always had. I've invited her here today so she can give us an update on her situation and where she stands".

Mrs. Paterson took the podium and noted that the fate of her capacity depended on this Meeting. She indicated she couldn't recall the exact year she became the Port's Assistant Secretary, however, it was before David Ponce was on the Board, before Eddy Mussallem was re-appointed by the Governor and before Taylor Engineering ever came on Board. She introduced herself to Carl Blow whom she had never met and recognized Jay Bliss who both attested to her assistance whenever they asked for it. Jay Bliss had met her at the Port's office to review the Master Plans and she indicated that although her Husband couldn't do much more as he is now fully disabled, it was his idea to put copies of them at the libraries, which was done. She went on to list the items for which she is responsible and were carried out even with all the family stress going on in her life as she was caregiver for her Mother and her Husband. She indicated that being caregiver for two people and running two households probably broke down her ability to fight off illness herself. She indicated in answer to a question from Chairman McGuinness at the last Meeting, he wondered how Rotary was handling things (without Debbie's assistance) that she had given up Rotary even though it was her largest paying customer and she had worked for that organization for 21 years - their Board had understood and lightened her load but there was a new guy moving up in the chairs and he added 10-12 more items to her list of items of what she did for that organization so she resigned, although it broke her heart. She asked if the Commissioners had any questions.

Chairman Jack McGuinness thanked Mrs. Paterson for being in attendance and enlightening the Commissioners on her present ability to carry out her duties.

Commissioner Jerry Dixon praised Mrs. Paterson and indicated he was very pleased with her abilities but he thought she still needed e-mail capabilities.

Mrs. Paterson explained that a lot of confidential information was stored on her computer. Chairman McGuinness had indicated last year that Port could purchase a Dell computer for the office but she said she only needed a typewriter at the office to type labels for files. She noted that if Port wanted to purchase a computer or a laptop with Internet capabilities and run a phone line into her office, she would be happy to comply, but that her identity had been stolen twice in the past, long before the Internet came into the vast thing it is now. Discussion followed.

Chairman McGuinness noted he thought Mrs. Paterson had her health problems pretty much behind her and her Husband had "come to grips with his situation". He appreciated her presence at the Meeting.

It was Commissioner Barry Benjamin's desire to have Mrs. Paterson go back and do the Minutes herself (the longer, more detailed version). Discussion followed.

Chairman Jack McGuinness thanked Mrs. Paterson for coming to the Meeting and business will go on "as usual" concerning her duties.

#### **FT. MOSE PROJECT**

Shorty Robbins of St. Johns County Recreation and Parks gave updates on design and engineering fees requested. She clarified that this was a State project and construction funds would come from grant sources and not County funds.

Commissioner Dixon thought that \$40,000.00 was excessive relative to services to be provided.

Chairman McGuinness suggested renegotiating a price and pursue a quote from Taylor Engineering.

#### **COUNTY BOAT RAMPS**

Ms. Robbins also reported that bulletin boards have been ordered for 7 County Boat Ramps.

Board of County Commissioners entered into a long-term lease for the North Beach Boat Ramp. There will be a doublewide ramp with a lot of parking. The site is at the Old Oscar's Restaurant.

The Vilano Ramp Improvement Project will start soon with improvement to parking including control of parking on the right-of-way on the north side of A1A.

Ms. Robbins will give us an update at the next meeting on landscaping design improvements for the ramp.

#### **MATANZAS INLET SIGNS**

Dr. Rajesh Srinivas of Taylor Engineering presented a new larger sign design which made them much more legible from a further distance. Taylor Engineering will submit application to the State for erection on the bridge piling.

#### **SEA OATS PROJECT**

Dr. Srinivas of Taylor Engineering gave update. Contract has been awarded, a pre-construction meeting held with representatives from each entity involved except State Parks Department. City of St. Augustine Beach will complete the section from 3<sup>rd</sup> Street to 10<sup>th</sup> Street under a separate contract at the same time. Project will start in early August and take only 3 days to complete.

#### **PUBLIC ACCESS SITUATION**

Commissioner Jerry Dixon indicated he had brought it up previously because the City of St. Augustine had Planning and Zoning Board applications for Oyster Creek Marina. He stated that there are only 3 marinas within the City's limits. He explained the State's level is to "obviously to find land to build a Marina, to permit a Marina is very lengthy and costly. It's cheaper to buy a public Marina and convert it to a private Marina with condos and if you're a millionaire, you can buy the house and have a condo and there's no more public access". His initial concern when he brought it up was the loss of Oyster Creek. The City Planning and Zoning Board "over a series of meetings working with the applicant, reached a compromise where...80 slips...maintained and can be rented out, not sold, they are maintaining a restaurant and public access on the waterway...they are going to be building a boardwalk..." His concern was losing boat slips. Discussion followed.

#### **DOCK LIGHT ORDINANCE**

Commissioner Barry Benjamin updated status. County Legal Department is reviewing and an additional meeting with Commissioner Benjamin and boating interests will be held to fine tune wording. It will also be coordinated with City Attorney.

#### **HARBOR MANAGEMENT PLAN**

Citizen Jay Bliss requested that in any Harbor Management Plan adopted by the Port and the City of St. Augustine that the area north of the Bridge of Lions be an anchoring free area for transient boaters and that taxpayers be allowed to install

their own moorings by lease from the City according to accepted standards and inspections set in such a Harbor Management Plan.

Commissioner Joe Boles reiterated the City of St. Augustine's position on the need for a Harbor Management Plan in that the Port Authority is the entity to go forward with it. There was no indication from him that the City would cost-share with the Port Authority on the Scope of Work for permitting the mooring fields. After much discussion, **Commissioner Barry Benjamin motioned to approve the funds for the Scope of Work necessary for mooring field permitting with a 2<sup>nd</sup> by Commissioner Jerry Dixon. Motion passed unanimously.**

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **NO WAKE ZONE BUOYS**

Commander Steve Fricke of St. Augustine Police Department indicated that one of the No Wake Zone buoys south of the Bridge of Lions will be moved because it is in the channel. It has been hit 3 times already. Florida Fish and Wildlife Commissions will move it after the Bridge of Lions work starts. Also the City will be taking an aggressive enforcement of the No Wake Zone areas this summer.

### **DERELICT BOATS**

Commander Fricke will follow up on Commissioner Jerry Dixon's comments on a submerged boat in the San Sebastian River.

### **SALT RUN MARKERS 1 AND 2**

Commissioner Jerry Dixon said that number 1 and 2 markers still have not been replaced since being hit by the contractor involved in the last dredging and renourishment project.

Dr. Srinivas will check on the delay and report next meeting.

### **PUBLIC INPUT**

Commissioner Ben Rich, St. Johns County Commissioner and liaison to the Port, Waterway & Beach District took the podium. He apologized for not being able to attend meetings in the past, but often there are conflicts with the County. One of the things he wanted the Commission to know was that he stopped by Planning to "give you an idea as to where we are in the growth situation in the County so that you would be able to make any adjustments that you need to or be able to adjust priorities in dealing with these problems. The situation that we have as of today and although it's not right down to the exact amount of residences that we're dealing with, it is pretty darn close. Your...County Commission has approved the construction in Planned Unit Developments and DRI's of approximately 94,000 homes in St. Johns County. Of that, approximately 13.9% had been built which leaves you an unbuilt current population of current without the approval of anymore of around 75,000 homes. That pressure you can anticipate barring unusual financial downturns such as increase in increased interest rates that would possibly slow down house buying in St. Johns County...so you can be looking at the population increasing roughly at 15,000 a year. What component is the boating population? I don't know...you can anticipate from your demographics that you use for boat ownership what the pressures will be on marinas, whether privately or publicly funded". He then had to take a couple of phone calls. He went on to explain about dock space Countywide. He explained about the lease with the Usina family for the new improved boat ramp at North Beach and how it could affect in "60 years maximally and in 30 years minimally, there's a possibility that this thing could transit right back to the Usina property - the Usina family and you'll be that

much out as to the ability to not use that particular ramp anymore". He encouraged all of the Commissioners to call him with any questions and he will attempt to obtain the information that they need in a timely manner. He explained that it was all "market driven issues. The people who own the property, if they're able to get it rezoned or re-designated through the County Commission, they're going to do it..." He answered questions from the Port Commissioners regarding development in the County.

Citizen Jay Bliss took the podium once again. It was his understanding that the Conch House was still in financial difficulties (the new owners). He stated he didn't know how true it was but asked if the County and the City and the Port Commission could all act in unison at a "very instantaneous moment, if something - if that were to become available, that would be a wonderful coup for St. Johns County".

#### **COMMENTS BY COMMISSIONERS**

Commissioner Tom Rivers requested north beach erosion problem be included in the Agenda for the next meeting.

Dr. Srinivas will try to get a representative of the Corps of Engineers for the next meeting.

Commissioner Jerry Dixon commented that on the new facility at the Guana Tolomato Matanzas Natural Estuarine Reserve that it was an outstanding facility.

Commissioner Barry Benjamin asked Attorney Geoff Dobson on progress on with Legislation recompensation.

Mr. Dobson indicated that no action was taken and he was investigating other approaches.

#### **NEXT MEETING**

The next Meeting was tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, June 20<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 p.m. and tentatively July 18<sup>th</sup>, they wouldn't be meeting. In August, they begin talking about the Budget and Millage Rate.

The Meeting was adjourned by Chairman Jack McGuinness.

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Secretary-Treasurer

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Chairman

#### **SUMMARY OF ACTIONS TAKEN**

Approved:

1. Retain Debra H. Paterson Typing & Secretarial Services as Assistant Secretary for the District.
2. Asked Shorty Robbins of the St. Johns County Parks and Recreation Department to meet with Taylor Engineering for the purpose of developing Scope of Work to that of the Jones Edmunds' proposal for the Ft. Mose Boardwalk and Floating Dock Project.
3. Approved latest design and authorized Taylor Engineering to proceed with the erection of signs on the Matanzas Inlet Bridge.
4. Approved Scope of Work funds for tasks 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 of the mooring fields permit applications.
5. Approved Minutes of March 21, 2006 and April 18, 2006.