

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

**MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING**

**Tuesday, January 19, 2010**

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, January 19, 2010.

**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, Vice-Chairman Carl Blow, Commissioner Jay Bliss and Commissioner Tom Rivers were in attendance. Commissioner Jerry Dixon was absent. The meeting was also attended by the following staff: Dennis Bell, Secretary-Treasurer, Elyse Kemper, Assistant Secretary-Treasurer, District Attorney James E. Bedsole; Dr. Rajesh Srinivas of Taylor Engineering.

**SECRETARY-TREASURER'S REPORT**

Secretary-Treasurer, Dennis Bell, said that as of December 31, 2009, funds committed to projects totaled \$222,500, of which \$114,517 has been spent, funds in the bank total \$2,083,345, of which \$107,983 is committed, leaving \$1,975,362 in available funds.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING HELD ON Tuesday, December 15, 2009**

Regular minutes of the meeting of Tuesday, December 15, 2009, were presented.

**A motion by Chairman Benjamin and seconded by Commissioner Rivers to approve the minutes of the December 15, 2009 meeting, was unanimously approved.**

**KEN KRAUTER, CONSULTANT**

Mr. Krauter indicated he had nothing to discuss at this time.

**ENGINEERING REPORT**

Dr. Rajesh Srinivas of Taylor Engineering reported on the progress of the City Mooring Field which he said is now permitted and ready for construction. He also reported that the dredging of Salt Run began December 30, 2009 and that 2,300 cubic yards of material had already been removed. Taylor will be going back to FDEP for a permit to use mechanical dredging throughout Salt Run, as the current permit requires hydraulic dredging in certain portions. In response to a question by Commissioner Bliss, Dr. Srinivas said the dredging should be completed in April, 2010. He also stated Taylor's contract to oversee the job last only ninety (90) days and that they may need to ask for additional time and funds, perhaps by the next regular meeting.

Taylor has responded to FDEP's prior request for additional information as to the use of mechanical dredging in the San Sebastian River and that further information will be provided to all agencies regarding the use of Luhrs as an off-loading site for mechanical dredge material.

Commissioner Blow said he has been working with FDEP, along with City and County representatives, to obtain permission for the use of mechanical dredging instead of the hydraulic dredging now required by the permit. He said FDEP requires hydraulic dredging where contamination is an issue, but that tests showed no contamination in the San Sebastian. The spoil area needed for hydraulic dredging is unavailable in the San Sebastian and FDEP's turbidity standards can easily be met with mechanical dredging techniques.

Dr. Srinivas then distributed a letter dated January 18, 2010 from Steve Schropp requesting an additional \$3,285 in scope of services allowance for San Sebastian permit revisions, for additional information expenses to FDEP and other agencies for that project, and for a request for modification of the Salt Run dredging to allow mechanical dredging.

**A motion by Chairman Benjamin, seconded by Commissioner Rivers to approve Taylor Engineering's request for additional scope of work funds per the Steve Schropp letter of January 18, 2010 was unanimously approved.**

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **A. Philip Alia, Vivid Media Concepts - Questionnaire**

Mr. Alia said he was accepting any questions or additional information regarding the questionnaire previously provided to each board member. He said feedback from the press release last year was still coming in. He asked to be notified when the new rescue boats arrive. Another press release is planned for March, 2010 release and the annual blessing of the fleet is expected to take place March 28, 2010. He said they are moving the website to their server and are updating the site. He reiterated that gaining exposure for the Port at any point-of-entry to waterways or anywhere the Port has contributed funds is key to obtaining publicity.

Commissioner Rivers suggested the board release a very short press item after each meeting to emphasize actions taken by the Port. Mr. Alia agreed this would be a good idea and that he would do it.

### **B. Sgt. Dale Mitchell, re: 911 Waterway Signage Agreement**

Chairman Benjamin distributed a draft of the proposed interlocal agreement for the provision of funds for 911 address signage previously approved by the board. Mr. Bedsole said the agreement was legally acceptable. He added that the board may want to add some language regarding the use of the Port's logo on the signs and other promotional credit, but that this matter did not need to come before the board again for approval.

**A motion by Chairman Barry Benjamin, seconded by Commissioner Bliss to approve the interlocal agreement for 911 signage was unanimously approved.**

### **C. Bob Moore, Inlet Dredging**

Mr. Moore said he had spoken with an engineer for the Corps of Engineers about placing sand on the north beaches and had been told FDEP would not permit it because of the Inlet Management Plan restricted the use of dredge sand to the beaches south of the inlet. He also pointed out that the Port's 2005 Master Plan required the Port to update the Inlet Management Plan to mitigate beach erosion caused by the inlet.

Commissioner Blow said the beach erosion problem is addressed by a shore protection group at ACOE, and that the engineer Mr. Moore had spoken with was with the group which focuses on navigation projects, not beaches.

Chairman Benjamin suggested Mr. Moore condense his goals for beach erosion and present those to the County because the County is the local sponsor for all beach projects. He also suggested that, since no one seems to know whether the inlet is causing all the beach erosion, that Mr. Moore and his group simply pursue a permit to place sand on the north beaches, first, and address the causation issue later when more information will be available. Mr. Moore said their current goal is to update and implement the IMP to promote the orderly flow of sand past the inlet and that the existing jetty does not work.

Dr. Srinivas said three problems now exist: erosion of the south beaches; erosion of the north beaches; and, inlet maintenance. Historically, erosion has been worst south of the inlet and this problem has received the most attention. Lately, the north beaches and Summer Haven have been studied by ACOE but a county-wide study will not be complete for at least two years. Any plan to dredge the inlet and place the sand collected there on the north beaches will require a new permit application and money appropriated to do it. Funding is always split in ratio between federal and local money. The St. Augustine Beach renourishment is paid for by 75% federal funds because of the high value infrastructure existing there. He said funding for a project in any other area will probably receive a different ratio requiring a higher proportion of local money. He suggested the best approach to the north beaches erosion problem is to update the IMP, support the ACOE feasibility study for the entire county, and work with elected officials to get sand sent to the north beaches during the next inlet dredging cycle.

Chris Thompkins, St. Johns County Engineer, said the county has no objection to the placement of sand on the north beaches, but that every coastal county in Florida is fighting for erosion control dollars and it would not be wise to interrupt the projects now planned for renourishment of St. Augustine Beach because the funding could be lost. Applying now for a permit change to allow sand to be sent northward would endanger the entire eight million dollar project. The St. Augustine Beach project is scheduled to be completed in November, 2010 and his office is trying to help by organizing an approach to the north beaches problem. The Port's endorsement of the County's leadership in this effort is very helpful as would be the commitment of funding. He also said the first priority for obtaining additional federal funding necessary to renourish the north beaches is a completed study of the entire county.

Commissioner Blow asked whether DOT should be involved since A1A north is threatened. Thompkins said DOT favors rip rap and sheet pilings to protect roads and was unlikely to become involved in beach renourishment. He also said the amount of sand needed for South Ponte Vedra and Vilano Beach is probably equal to St. Augustine Beach.

## **PUBLIC INPUT:**

Commander Barry Fox, St. Augustine Police Department, said all eight derelict vessels now out to bid for disposal should be removed within three months.

Officer Steve Zukowski, Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission, said the FWC now has an electronic report system which compiles derelict vessel reports into a statewide database. This will be helpful in our area as he expects an increase in derelict vessels when St. Augustine's mooring field ordinance takes effect. He also discussed a new laser radar data collection system, a possible change in speed zones, and recent fish and game infractions.

Commissioner Bliss noted that the inbound red beacons in the inlet are not working properly. Officer Zukowski said he believes they are already scheduled for repair by the Coast Guard.

Jim Piggott, City of St. Augustine, presented a spread sheet of estimated funding from the Florida Inland Navigation District for 2010/2011. Commissioner Blow said he had worked with Mr. Piggott and Will Smith of St. Johns County to consider the use of FIND funds and that neither the County nor the City has the money required to match the potentially available FIND funds.

A discussion ensued regarding the possible uses of the funds for dredging in Salt Run and the San Sebastian. A consensus of the board decided to have all parties at the next regular meeting to decide how the Port might participate.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **A. Comments by Commissioners**

Commissioner Bliss said he will be reviewing the Port's Master Plan to assess its responsibility regarding beach renourishment and the use of dredge sand. He questioned the wisdom of placing excessive amounts of sand around the St. Augustine Beach Pier. Dr. Srinivas responded by explaining that, due to the beach's contour in that area, extra sand is placed there to be distributed north and south of the pier by wave action. This process takes about nine months after sand placement and aids in protecting the adjacent beaches.

Commissioner Rivers asked legal counsel whether it would be possible to sell advertising space on the Port's website. Mr. Bedsole said he would research the matter and report at the next meeting.

**NEXT MEETING:**

The next regular meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, February 16, 2010 at 3:00 p.m. in the same location.

**ADJOURN:**

The meeting was adjourned by Chairman Benjamin.

---

Secretary-Treasurer

---

Chairman

wk/rg/port/minutes/1-19-10