

ST. AUGUSTINE PORT, WATERWAY & BEACH DISTRICT

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING

Tuesday, December 21, 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, December 21, 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, Commissioners Tom Rivers, Jay Bliss and Herb Rippe were in attendance. Jerry Dixon was absent. The meeting was also attended by: Dennis Bell, Secretary-Treasurer, District Attorney James Bedsole, and Joe Wagner of Taylor Engineering.

SECRETARY-TREASURER'S REPORT

Dennis Bell delivered the report. The District has committed funds of \$406,370 of which \$66,153 have been spent, and net funds available as of October 31, 2010 totaled \$1,385,545. All but \$5,603 of expected tax revenue for tax year 2010 have now been received.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion by Commissioner Bliss, seconded by Chairman Benjamin to accept the minutes of the November 16, 2010 regular meeting was unanimously approved.

ENGINEERING REPORT

The engineering report was presented by Joe Wagner of Taylor Engineering. He reported the District has permits for the San Sebastian River dredging from both FDEP and the Corps of Engineers and that FDEP is withholding final approval pending expiration of the public comment period. He also reported the Salt Run dredging was complete except for reinstallation of signage. 33,000 cubic yards of material was removed from the Salt Run channel in Phase II of the dredging operation.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Financial Assistance - Lynx Ship Costs - Commissioner Rippe

Commissioner Rippe discussed the fact the tall ship Lynx had recently come to the City Marina and that representatives of its non-profit corporate owner had asked for help paying slip rent. Mia Brewer and Leann Gordon appeared on behalf of the Lynx and made a video presentation. Jim Piggott of the City of St. Augustine said the city had given Lynx a discounted slip rate. Commissioner Rippe said the Lynx offers tours to school groups and draws tourists to our area. Commissioner Benjamin said giving the Lynx foundation money was outside the District's chartered purpose.

A motion by Commissioner Rippe, seconded by Commissioner Rivers to pay one month slip rent for the Lynx failed by a vote of 2 to 2.

B. Approval of Taylor Engineering Contract

This item was tabled until the next meeting.

C. Boats anchored near Doug Crane Boat Ramp

Commissioner Bliss reported there are now eleven vessels anchored near the Intracoastal Waterway south of the State Road 312 bridge. He recounted the history of difficulties and high expense in removing derelict vessels from District waters. He suggested the District simply purchase derelict vessels using local marinas and contractors. In particular, he asked

the board to consider as a test, the purchase of a forty foot wooden vessel now for sale. He said St. Augustine Marina has agreed to pull the vessel from the water for \$500 and hold it pending disposal.

Commissioner Benjamin said derelict vessels may be dumped in District waters more often if the District begins to buy all of them. Lt. Zukowski, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, added that documentation of ownership of derelict vessels is often the problem that delays the disposal process.

A motion by Commissioner Bliss to purchase and dispose of the vessel died for lack of a second.

D. Debris Removal

Commissioner Bliss reported a recent incident in which a section of concrete floating dock beached at the home of John Moritz, 3045 4th Street, North Beach. The dock was towed to the Vilano Boat Ramp where the county removed it. Pier 88 Diving Company moved the dock section from the Moritz home to the boat ramp but have not been paid the \$200 cost of towing.

A motion by Commissioner Bliss, seconded by Commissioner Rivers to pay the \$200 tow cost passed unanimously.

A motion by Commissioner Rippe, seconded by Commissioner Bliss to give the Chairman and Vice Chairman standing authority to commit District funds of up to \$500 per incident for emergency removal of floating debris passed unanimously.

E. Workshop Meeting

A motion by Commissioner Bliss, seconded by Commissioner Benjamin to set a public workshop meeting in January, 2011 passed unanimously, and Assistant Secretary Elyse Kemper was directed to schedule the meeting, prepare the agenda and advertise the same.

F. Mooring Fields Impact on Marinas

Chairman Benjamin introduced Donnie Douglas of Rivers Edge Marina, who said the mooring fields recently established by the City of St. Augustine are competing for transient

and permanent slip space at commercial marinas like his. He suggested the city raise its prices to lessen competition with private marinas and increase revenue. Mark Hallum of Conch House Marina said the city's prices are driving rental rates down in the private market. Jim Piggott, Director of General Services for the city of St. Augustine said the city's rates are about average for municipal rents in other Florida cities having mooring fields. He said the city had also established lower rates for local owners and that the city staff often refers transient boaters to Mr. Douglas' marina.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Lt. Steve Fricke, SAPD, reported their marine officers are now trained in the use of a defibrillator which will be carried aboard their patrol boat. He reiterated identification and notification of derelict vessel owners is usually the greatest source of delay in the removal process. He said vessels within channels may be removed immediately as hazards to navigation and that next year the city will have an open purchase order for removals which will eliminate the bid process.

Officers Steven Zukowsky and Mike Pedonti reported FWC officials have met with city officials regarding the regulation of anchoring outside of the mooring fields. The city is implementing a pilot project which will allow regulation of anchoring throughout the city limits. After three years, FWC will review the results and propose state regulations based on local efforts.

Consultant Ken Krauter offered to facilitate the upcoming strategic planning workshop and a consensus of Board members agreed to allow Mr. Krauter to prepare an appropriate agenda.

Vivid Media consultant Philip Alia reported the Christmas Regatta of Lights, funded in part by the District, was a very well-received event. Crowds were large and the exposure gained by the District's advertising was good despite the fact the District's name was not announced often enough. Chairman Benjamin said he did not think the expense was justified by the District charter or was worth the exposure it gives the District. Commissioner Rippe questioned why local merchants were not supporting the event monetarily as it draws many visitors to the bayfront.

Pierre Pierce appeared on behalf of the Friends of the GTM Reserve to distribute information regarding the Shell Bluff area of Guana. Shell Bluff and the old coquina well located there are threatened by shoreline erosion, according to Mr. Pierce.

COMMENTS BY COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Bliss expressed his disappointment that no one from the Airport Authority had attended to speak to the Board about the proposed barge terminal and dredging study under way at St. Augustine Airport. In response to a question by Commissioner Rivers about boats anchoring outside the city mooring field, Commissioner Bliss said all navigable waters are open to anchoring.

NEXT MEETING

Chairman Benjamin announced the next regular meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, January 18, 2011 at 3:00 p.m. in the same location.

ADJOURN:

The meeting was adjourned by Chairman Benjamin at 4:50 p.m.

Secretary-Treasurer

Chairman