

ST. AUGUSTINE PORT, WATERWAY & BEACH DISTRICT
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
Tuesday, December 20, 2016

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 20, 2016.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Dixon called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of the United States of America followed.

3. ROLL CALL

Chairman Jerry Dixon, Commissioner Tom Rivers, Commissioner Mark Helman and Commissioner Chris Way were in attendance. Vice-Chairman Barry Benjamin was absent. The meeting was also attended by Ken Craig of Taylor Engineering, District Counsel Jim Bedsole and Secretary-Treasurer Elyse Kemper.

4. SECRETARY-TREASURER'S REPORT

Secretary-Treasurer Kemper delivered the financial report. As of November 30, 2016, the District has spent committed funds for St. Augustine and St. Johns County Sheriff's Office overtime pay totaling \$3,751 plus \$5,000 for new computers for the Sheriff's Office Marine Unit. The balance of District funds on deposit on that date totaled \$1.735 million. After November 30, about \$647,000 was spent for the repairs and restoration of the Summer Haven River, all of which funds will be reimbursed by the State of Florida through the District's agreement with the Department of Environmental Protection. District funds on deposit total about \$900,000 as of today's date. Tax revenue of \$281,903 has been received this year with \$175,162 more expected.

In response to questions by Commissioners Dixon and Helman, Ms. Kemper said the \$10,000 slated for debris removal has not been paid to the City of St. Augustine yet, and that the lump sum promised by FDEP for the Summer Haven River has not been delivered to the District yet.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion by Commissioner Rivers to approve the minutes of the regular meeting held on November 30, 2016, was seconded by Commissioner Helman and passed unanimously.

6. ENGINEERING REPORT

Ken Craig delivered the engineering report on behalf of Taylor Engineering. Mr. Craig said missing marker R-14 in Salt Run has been replaced. He then reported the new breach south of Matanzas Inlet was finally closed on November 30, 2016, and the contractor has begun work on the restoration of the Summer Haven River. He said the work is on schedule even though the least tern mitigation site has experienced problems from the numerous gopher tortoises inhabiting the site. Completion of the restoration project is still expected to occur by April 30, 2017.

Chairman Dixon said he was contacted by officials from St. Johns County who requested assistance in replacing sand within the right-of-way for Old A1A south of Matanzas Inlet. The road was damaged during Hurricane Matthew and vehicle access to some homes is impossible. Chairman Dixon said he asked the county to pay the cost of the extra fill and directed Mr. Craig to prepare a cost estimate for delivery to the county.

Mr. Craig said the permit for placing sand north of St. Augustine Inlet remains on hold while the Corps of Engineers modifies its current dredge permit to allow sand placement to the north. Chairman Dixon said he wrote a letter to DEP requesting the permit modification to allow sand placement on Vilano and South Ponte Vedra beaches.

7. OLD BUSINESS : NONE

8. NEW BUSINESS: NONE

9. PUBLIC COMMENT:

Chairman Dixon asked Carl Blow, St. Johns County representative to the Florida Inland Navigation District, to update the board on current local projects. Mr. Blow explained that FIND and the Corps were about to start the maintenance dredging of the flood shoal inside St. Augustine Inlet when Hurricane Matthew arrived and caused significant damage to beaches north of the inlet. This prompted the Corps to seek a modification of its permit so as to allow the placement of all of the approximately 200,000 cubic yards of dredge material along a 5,000-foot section of A1A North between markers R-112 and R-117 where the beach now touches the highway. He said the contractor has agreed to hold mobilization free of charge while the modification is processed. The eventual cost of moving sand north will undoubtedly be greater than the previously planned placement on Anastasia State Park. Easements for placement of the sand will be required from about fourteen separate property owners in the affected areas.

After the hurricane, the Corps surveyed the federal channel at St. Augustine Inlet. Mr. Blow said results show very little change in the depth of the channel. He added that the county has asked FIND to place dredge sand from the Intracoastal Waterway near Matanzas Inlet on the right-of-way of Old A1A. This slight modification to the job should not greatly increase the costs. Chairman Dixon said the county is responsible for filling the breach and should reimburse FIND and the Port for the expense as sand was transported to the breach instead

of to the berm, as planned. Mr. Blow said the county may receive emergency funds from FEMA and could possibly use these funds to repair the breach. He added that FEMA is reimbursing hurricane damages in south Florida at the rate of seventy-five percent.

Mr. Blow said the FIND board will meet January 20, 2017 in St. Augustine and will host a public outreach at the City Marina on the evening January 19, 2017.

In response to questions by Commissioner Helman, Mr. Blow said work will continue on local artificial reefs after right whale calving season ends. He said 1,500 tons of concrete is on a barge in Green Cove Springs ready for dumping offshore. He also said FIND maintains an emergency fund for hurricane damage repair and/or cleanup for which local governments may apply.

In response to a question by Ken Craig, Mr. Blow said to this knowledge, the Corps of Engineers has not performed a survey of Matanzas Inlet since Hurricane Matthew.

Jim Piggott, Director of General Services, City of St. Augustine, spoke to clarify that the funds pledged by the District for floating debris removal will be limited to the collection and disposal of debris from private docks only, not from city facilities. He then distributed a list of topics for the city's annual grant requests to the Port and FIND for a total of \$600,000. These projects include dredging Salt Run, funding a fire boat, a police boat, and a kayak launch. If the city applies for the grants, Mr. Piggott said he will return to the board with an interlocal funding agreement for the board's approval.

Ellis Zahra, Friends of the Summer Haven River, said Florida Chief Financial Officer Jeffrey Atwater recently met with Commissioner Rivers, Mr. Zahra and representatives of Taylor Engineering to review the work site. He said CFO Atwater is very interested in the project and especially in any problems the Port may have obtaining the legislative grant money. Mr. Zahra said he appreciates that the Port has extended its own funds in order to keep the project on schedule. Mr. Zahra requested, and Chairman Dixon agreed, that Mr. Zahra was authorized to speak directly to CFO Atwater if there is any problem with funding.

Mr. Zahra further noted that St. Johns County relied upon the auspices and resources of the Port District to close the recent breach even though the sand used to fill it was supposed to be used for the restoration project. He said his organization's interest is in keeping the remainder of the sand on the restoration project. St. Johns County has now requested that more of the sand be used to rebuild the roadbed for Old A1A where Hurricane Matthew washed it out.

Chairman Dixon said he would like to see FIND allow the Port to use some of their sand to make up for what was placed in the breach. Mr. Craig said the FIND sand from the Intracoastal Waterway is planned to go in south of the restoration project and that moving it north into the restoration area will be easy and better than taking sand from SJ-1, which will be expensive. Chairman Dixon reiterated that the Port needs FIND sand to compensate for sand intended for the restoration project but is instead being used by the county.

Linda Ginn, FOTSHR, questioned how the various permits along the Summer Haven River can be modified to allow sand from the Intracoastal to be re-routed to the county property or

to the restoration project. Mr. Craig said the FIND area is to the south of the restoration project and the county's site is north of it. In order to modify the placement template, the Corps will need to modify their permit. Mr. Blow commented that FIND will send the sand wherever the Port and the county decide to place it. Chairman Dixon said as soon as the quantity of sand needed to rebuild Old A1A is known, the county can modify its permit.

Lt. Steve Zukowski, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC), reported the repair to the breach appeared to be holding and that he visits the site once a week. He said the site of the restoration project is also regularly visited by officers from the species management agency of FWC. He said vessel owners are generally responding to requests to remove or relocate vessels sunken or shifted by the hurricane. Also, the Regatta of Lights on December 10, 2016 went very smoothly and was enjoyed by a large crowd onshore.

In response to a question from Commissioner Rivers, Lt. Zukowski said there have not been any recent reports of nuisance alligators at Guana Lake and that licensed hunters have told him there are very few there. Commissioner Helman remarked that a sunken vessel lies in the area between the Butler Park Boat Ramp channel and the Intracoastal Waterway. Lt. Zukowski said the boat is in deep water and has not been catalogued because it is not usually visible.

10. COMMENTS BY COMMISSIONERS:

Commissioner Rivers thanked Linda Ginn for the gift of a Christmas ornament. He said he enjoyed serving as a judge at the Regatta of Lights.

NEXT MEETING

Chairman Dixon announced the next meeting of the board will be held at 3:00 p.m. on January 17, 2017 in the St. Augustine Beach City Commission Room.

ADJOURN:

There being no further business, Chairman Dixon adjourned the meeting at 4:45 p.m.

Secretary-Treasurer

Chairman