

ST. AUGUSTINE PORT, WATERWAY & BEACH DISTRICT
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
Tuesday, January 16, 2024

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 16, 2024.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Matt Brown 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. INVOCATION

The Invocation was given by Commissioner Thomson.

4. ROLL CALL

Chairman Matt Brown, Commissioner Tom Rivers, Commissioner Linda Thomson, and Commissioner Nicholas Binder were present in person. The meeting was also attended in person by Secretary-Treasurer Elyse Kemper and Clay Meek, General Counsel for the District. Ken Craig of Taylor Engineering, District Engineers, was present in person as well.

5. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

A Motion to adopt and approve the agenda was made by Commissioner Rivers, seconded by Commissioner Binder, and passed by a 4-0 vote.

6. PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

7. GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVE COMMENTS

Patrick Harvey of the St. Augustine Police Marine Operations Unit briefly advised that the overtime payments for this fiscal year was mostly for overtime incurred last year that did not get submitted until after October 1, 2023.

Eric Mauldin, St. Augustine Municipal Marina Harbormaster, indicated the Marina Breakwater dock repairs were almost complete

and should be done by the end of February. He also advised that the planned historic tall ship was expected to arrive by February 1, 2024. Finally, he indicated that the Salt Run sign inspections report should be done by the next meeting.

8. SECRETARY-TREASURER'S REPORT

Secretary-Treasurer Kemper then delivered the financial report. As of December 31, 2023, the District spent: \$4,070 for overtime hours of police officers of the City of St. Augustine; \$5,036 for overtime hours of deputies of the St. Johns County Sheriff's Department; \$2,844 for derelict boats; and, \$188,925 for unspecified marine projects. The State Board of Administration account had a balance of \$24,861. The Operating Account had \$849,828 as of December 31, 2023. The money market account had \$0 in the reserve for projects and \$1,119,200 in amounts not reserved for projects. Taxes received as of December 31, 2023, were \$264,872 for the current year and the balance of the remaining expected tax income was \$561,177.

9. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A needed correction of changing "council" to "commission" was noted by Commissioner Rivers. A Motion to approve the minutes of the December 19, 2023, regular meeting with that revision was made by Commissioner Rivers, seconded by Commissioner Thomson, and passed by a 4-0 vote.

10. ENGINEERING REPORT

Ken Craig reminded of the FIND social and Board meetings happening later in the week. Mr. Craig indicated the Summer Haven dredging and sand placement on the beach had been increased and extended. The St. Augustine shore protection project was expected to start in the next 30 to 45 days.

11. OLD BUSINESS

A. SR A1A Trail Project Development Update

Commissioner Thomson gave an overview of information and literature from a meeting she attended within the last six weeks regarding the project. The long-term goal was to develop a pedestrian walkway from Magnolia Avenue to 24th Street. Comment and discussion was had regarding planning and the unknown timeline for finishing it. There was question and discussion among

Commissioners regarding the potential changes to sidewalk widths and interaction with and possible attempted use by golf carts.

B. Summer Haven Update

Linda Ginn gave an update on Summer Haven and the Entera Report given to the County Commission. She mentioned the public recreational, environmental, and educational values that the river provides. She introduced Denise Cochran who discussed the recreational values and uses in the Summer Haven area. Ms. Cochran outlined many recreational uses and indicated that the area is used by local residents, school groups, day-trippers, vacationers, and local businesses. Through review of 252 signatures recently collected over about 2 hours, it was determined that 125 signature were St. Johns County residents. The remaining 127 signatures were from throughout Florida and a number of states.

A request was made for the District to continue to hold the previously designated \$90,000.00 to potentially be used for matching grant requests once the Summer Haven study process by the County is completed. It was confirmed that the District's remaining committed funds for Summer Haven are \$83,493.00 and that those funds remain committed. Accordingly, no new action was needed by the Commission.

12. NEW BUSINESS

A. Discussion Re: De-Obligation of Committed but Unused Funds

Commissioner Binder started the discussion by reviewing a recent public document of the City of St. Augustine Beach that appeared to indicate that the \$25,000.00 approved for the Ocean Hammock Park boardwalk project was deducted from the sums not yet spent on beach walkovers and that funds allocated by the District to beach walkovers remained committed in some way. That raised an additional general question of ensuring that any unused money allocated to any project or grant was recaptured and accounted for.

It was reviewed that, regardless of what may appear in the minutes of the City of St. Augustine Beach, the process at the District's December 19, 2023, meeting had been clear and that any unused District funds allocated to the beach walkovers as of December 19, 2023, were no longer obligated or committed to that project. After

that was done at the December 19, 2023, meeting, a new action was taken to approve the \$25,000.00 for the Ocean Hammock Park boardwalk project.

The general concern of ensuring that unused allocated funds are not outstanding was discussed next. It was confirmed that all funds stay with the District until appropriate documentation of the expenditure has been received. So, no unused funds can be outside the District's control. Also, the current grant application utilized by the District makes it clear that any grant approval is good for one year unless specifically stated otherwise and that commitment of any grant funds not used within that year expires and is no longer valid.

13. PUBLIC COMMENT

Sgt. Jason Kroul of St. Johns County Sheriff's Marine and Agricultural Unit introduced himself to the Commission and indicated he and the unit were available 24/7 for any issues within their purview.

Eric Cochran described his perception of the condition of the public spaces in the Summer Haven area.

14. COMMENTS BY COMMISSIONERS

Commissioners thanked all of the public who appeared and gave their interest and views. Commissioner Binder suggested continuing to gather petition signatures to make their voices better heard.

15. NEXT MEETING

February 20, 2024, was announced as the next regular meeting date. As such, the **next regular meeting will be at 3:00, p.m., on February 20, 2024**, at the St. Augustine Beach City Commission Meeting Room, 2200 A1A South, St. Augustine Beach, Florida.

16. ADJOURN

There being no further business, Chairman Matt Brown adjourned the meeting at 3:38, p.m.

Secretary-Treasurer

Commission Chairman Brown