

Tybee Island Beach Task Force Minutes

February 15th, 2007

Members Present: Berta Adams, Cecil DeLorme, Amy Lanier, Henry Levy, Harvey Ferelle, Mary McCracken, Walter Parker, Freda Rutherford, William Sprague, Mark Smith, John Wylly, and Lou Off.

Ex-Officis Present: Diane Schleicher, City Manager; Paul Wolff; Dan Parrott, (US Army Corp of Engineers).

Members Absent: Helen Downing (E), Wick Searcy (E)

Visitors: Jill Huntington, DNR; Scott Liggett, Town Engineer, Hilton Head Island; Kevin Haas, Georgia Tech; Commander David Murk, US Coastguard.

Lou Off called the meeting to order.

Lou Off introduced the two new members. Harvey Ferelle and Mark Smith
Dick Magune has resigned.

Lou Off introduced the members and visitors.

Lou Off read news letter from Washington. The article read "Hundreds of projects reflect control beach renourishment navigation environmental restoration were once again short-changed. Budget funds Corp at \$4.87 billion which is \$458 million below FY2006 levels. Budget proposes \$22 million for beach projects compared to \$46 million requested last year. Congress approved \$122 million. The projects were cut in half. The projects included one for Illinois, \$9 million; New Jersey, \$256,000; New York, \$12.65 million; and South Carolina, \$218,000. Dan Parrott stated the plus-up last year for beach renourishment was largely in response to all the hurricanes in Florida and the Gulf coast.

Lou Off stated that on January 31, 2007 someone requested that all the army Corp districts submit a work plan for the 2007 budget. There is a new democratic congress, no budget approved and a new budget for 2008 upon them. They approved a continuing resolution to keep the government under operation. The Savannah district has a request in there but it was only a request for \$125,000 for study money and not our renourishment money. The work plan is to be negotiated with Congress this month in February. COE was confused as to whether our project was a new start or a continuing construction. Marlow and Company were very instrumental in working with headquarters and Dan. On the first of February, Jason was in touch with Kingston's office and with the folks in Washington and the Corp and he was quite optimistic. With Dan's help, we got the renourishment in the work plan. Our Atlanta division took it out because it didn't fit into the criteria. The fed was going to fund the 2007 budget to the limits of the 2006 budget and also had some verbiage in there about the criteria for the 2007 budget was what was in the 2006 budget. Headquarters wanted a list from the districts without a lot of thought to what the criteria and rules and regulations were. No one knew what they were. Marlow and Company were dealing with the top people at Corp headquarters. Headquarters was saying no new starts and we were saying that we are not a new start but a continuing project from 1975. Again the southern division was not helping. The northern division was putting in projects left and right. Marlow had a concern that we weren't going to get anything because we weren't putting anything in. Marlow was dealing with Headquarters '02 which is the man under Paul Woodley. There was a lot of information sent by ASPBA. Renourishments would only be in the 2007 budget but they were in the 2006 budget. 2006 budget were already funded and finished. There was a big misunderstanding. On February 9, 2007, Marlow sent an email to Jason and myself stating Headquarters did have our renourishment in the work plan that was being considered. The south Atlantic division still rejects it, the district had included it and so we don't know what is going on.

Dan Parrott stated that Congress, if they didn't have a budget, told the Corp to tell them how to spend the money for the remainder of the year. They had added some criteria to us and that criteria keeps changing. Indications are that we do have the federal share of the Channel Impact Study. Since we have an agreement, they gave us additional money to fully fund the federal share of that project.

Lou Off said that since the mid 1990's OMB has not included any renourishment projects in the budget. This has been the administration stance and congress has refunded them. Up until last year we were getting about 80%-90% of the projects put back into the budget through our congressionals.

Diane Schleicher and Jason Buelterman are going to Washington, DC on February 28, 2007. They will meet up with Jack Kingston, John Barrow, Sanford Bishop, Saxby Chambliss, Eric Johnson, and Johnny Isakson. Diane Schleicher will be blogging Jack Kingston through U-Tube.

CRA – The president did sign the CRA Budget. It did not have any detail in it but has 5.2 billion dollars to spend.

Jason is working on accounting not only continuing to get the \$150,000 a year there but trying to increase that.

At Chatham Co. Day in Atlanta, Jason and Berta had a meeting with the Lieutenant Governor.

Berta Adams –I had an appointment with the Lt. Governor already so Jason and I went together. It worked out really well. Burk Day set up the meeting with Casey Cagle, and his aide, Asst. Chief Deputy of Staff, Russell Carlson. We explained the problems that we were running into with the federal budget and not being able to depend on getting the money within the time that we needed to get in that 7-10 year cycle. We are looking now at 8-9 years if we can get some money. We brought to his attention, the statement that he made that he would support Tybee and try to help us. Also, we brought up the fact that a few years ago when Governor Barnes was in office, we had talked about the idea of a dedicated fund for renourishment for all of Georgia's coastal communities, Tybee, St. Simon, and Jekyll Island. Governor Barnes was interested in that and was favorable to it but he threw it back on us to find the funding mechanism for it. Governor Cagle said that it was a good plan and we do need to find a funding source. We were never able to identify anything but at the state level they would say that this won't work because this town in N. Georgia has opposition to that kind of program and it interferes with something that they are doing. We don't have the broad picture. We said to him that his office needs to come up with the source. He agreed to put money in the budget for a plan. We said that we did not want a plan. We wanted something that would put money in the budget to develop a funding plan for Tybee's renourishment. We would have a source of money that would feed a dedicated fund that would be available to us. He was not receptive to the concept of linking all of the island communities together. Each island community needs to decide renourishment for itself. He was going to talk to Eric Johnson, and Burk Day and he was going to present this proposal to them so that there would be some money put into this state budget for the purpose of locating and identifying funding sources for beach renourishment and establishing a plan.

Mark Smith brought up the fact that there has been an amendment to the hotel/motel law that allows another penny to be collected in Chatham Co. to support the Eli Whitney Museum at Port Wentworth. All the hotel/motel taxes have to be authorized at the state level before they can be collected at the local level. There is another penny that has been authorized out there for that dedicated purpose. There has been some discussion over the last couple of years whether they would allow the municipalities to go ahead and implement that tax for a purpose other than the Eli Whitney Museum. It has to go through the state legislature. Lou asked Mark Smith to look into that option. You need to approach the legislature. Paul Wolff asked Mark to look into it. Mark said he didn't think anyone would oppose doing it on Tybee Island but that county-wide there would be opposition.

Dan Parrott – Presented Monthly Report on Core Action Status Summary Sheet (Copy Attached)

Savannah/Brunswick Channel Maintenance Contract

Contract was awarded to Mason Dredging on 7 December at a total cost of \$4,035,000. Mason Dredging began offshore dredging in Brunswick on 20 December 2006. However, after 4 turtles were killed by the hopper dredge, the dredge demobilized to another job in Mississippi. Work may restart in February, based on water temperature. Lou wanted to know how far they got with the dredging. Hampton did not know.

Work began in the Savannah Harbor on 13 January 2007 and was completed on 5 February 2007. No turtles were taken by relocation dredging or by the dredge. Three 12 inch rifled mortar rounds were picked up in the hopper dredge arm. The rounds were transported to Ft. Stewart by EOD and after being made safe will be transferred to Tybee for display at Ft. Screven.

Lou wanted a report on how much material was dredged and any kind of estimates of how much quality beach sand

that was dredged. Dan Parrot is working on that report.

Coastal Zone Management Implementation

A decision document has been started for internal ACOE review. Georgia DNR Meeting on 20 February, 2007. This is an internal document by the ACOE of all the Division Chiefs, up through the Colonel. This is an effort to bring everyone together on the decision. Lou also asked if they needed anyone for the Beach Task Force to be there. Hampton said the Lyle will let him know.

An Analysis examining several alternatives for harbor dredging to meet CAM requirements was prepared. After completion of a technical review, Senior Planners in Mobile suggested another alternative should be added to the analysis. The suggested analysis is being developed and added to the document. The added work will add about two weeks to the schedule. This Alternatives Analysis will become a part of the Savannah Harbor Dredge Material Management Plan, which has to be approved by South Atlantic Division. The approved Savannah Harbor Dredge Material Management Plan will be the basis for any additional funds that would be needed to implement the changes because of the new CZM requirements. This report will be sent to our division office for approval.

FY07 CRA Funding

The Continuing Resolution (CRA) is in effect until the end of the Fiscal year. Funding levels are highly uncertain and will be based on negotiations between the Administration and the new Congress in early January on the new set of CRA rules.

Berta said that this impacts us a couple of ways. The first being as long as they have that continuing resolution in effect, we do not know how to operate. The other impact is the State of Georgia has a program (The Peach Care Program) to provide medical services to children. There is a certain amount of funding that comes out of the federal budget to fund that program. That is on hold, too. The state of GA will have to make up that short-fall or eliminate the program if there is no federal funding. Therefore the state budget will have less excess funds available. Lou Off suggests that we hold tight and do nothing with the state until we know more from the feds.

There will not be a FY07 Energy and Water bill this year. Indications are that the Government will be funded by a Continuing Resolution from 15 February 2007 to the end of September 2007. Funding levels during this period is highly uncertain, and will be based on the results of the negotiations between the administration and the new Congress in early January on the new set of CRA rules. The actual level of FY07 funding remains as "close hold" information until the CRA bill gets signed.

FY08 President's Budget Funding

The FY08 President's Budget is still being developed and will be released on 6 February, 2007.

Jason stated he will be going to Washington on 20 February, 2007. Need all the help we can get and is trying to get the Governor to make some calls for us.

The FY08 President's Budget request for FY08 is now public. There are no study funds for the continuation of the Channel Impacts Feasibility Study or for the FY2008 Renourishment.

Brunswick Harbor Deepening

The Brunswick Harbor Deepening Project is ongoing. With less than full capability this FY during the CRA, the Brunswick Harbor Deepening Project will not be completed this fiscal year, and will continue into next FY for the completion of the Turning Basin and its associated environmental mitigation. \$6.4 million was included in the President's Budget request for FY2008.

Savannah Harbor Expansion GRR and Tier II EIS:

The Draft Savannah Harbor Expansion GRR and Tier II EIS will be completed in FY2007, pending the receipt of at least \$1,100,000 in FY07 funds. There is \$700,000 in the President's Budget request for the finalization and approvals

of the GRR and Tier II EIS by the four Federal agencies.

Ft Screven Old Seawall Demolition

After a careful review of the project documentation, it still may be possible for another DERP project to be approved, subject to the availability of funds. In January 2007, the Savannah District will review all available documentation in order to ascertain the eligibility of the area for another DERP project at Ft. Screven. The joint review has been scheduled for 20 Feb 2007. Lou asked who is in the joint review with? Dan stated that it is the people in planning.

Tybee LRR Cost Breakdown

The Corps will be working with our audit department on getting a check cut in early 2007 to refund the City of Tybee for their excess contributed funds.

Dan was prepared to give a check for the \$3,000-\$4,000 dollars left over however; we had some auditors that had some questions. Dan will have the check as soon as possible.

Channel Impacts Feasibility Study

The Feasibility Study Cost Hare Agreement was signed on 11 January at the City Council Meeting. \$125,000 of GPA funds has been received from GPA on behalf of the City of Tybee Island. The Corp funds has anticipates that the remainder of the FY07 Federal share of \$205,850 will be provided via the FY07 CRA. The total estimated cost of the Phase I Study (including 15% contingencies) is \$411,700, with a draft completed by the end of July 2007. Col Held's Change of Command ceremony is now set for 29 June 2007. It will be outdoors at Telfair Square. Lou asked if there is a schedule for doing this work yet? Dan stated that he will have a detailed schedule for when it will be ready and I've asked him to develop a communication plan. We don't want to be surprised by the outcome. Will try to find a way so that everyone knows what the preliminary results are early on.

Lou asked about the survey the near shore. Noah is going to do the survey. Also, GA Tech can do the survey as well. Dan Parrott - We do have survey capability in house. We can employ them if we could do get to it in time. The New commander is Ed Kertis. Lou Off asked will the study be ready by July? Dan said that we should have the numbers by then.

Lou Off- stated that the Sand Relocation Procedure was changed and is on the City Council agenda for approval.

Henry Levy – Motion to approve the January 22, 2007 minutes. ?? Seconded.

Lou Off - This is our annual meeting. We need to elect a new chairman and vice chairman.

Berta Adams nominated Lou Off for Chairman of the Beach Task Force.

Freda Rutherford seconded.

Lou Off nominated Amy Lanier for Vice Chairman in training under our present Vice Chairman Berta Adams.

Henry Levy seconded.

Motion to closed nominations.

John Major seconded.

All in favor, Unanimous.

Lou Off - introduced Scott Liggett for a presentation on the Hilton Head Island Renourishment Program.

Scott Liggett gave presentation on Hilton Heads Beach Renourishment program and then gave a short video presentation. The Beach Management Program has been in place for quite some time. The first restoration was in 1990 funded largely by the State of South Carolina. In 1993, the City Council instituted a Beach Preservation Team. South Carolina allows local communities to enact up to a 3% accommodations tax for local tourism related projects. Two percent for us today generates over 4 million dollars a year. That is our funding source. 1997 was our first renourishment after the original restoration. We monitor the sand twice a year in April and October.

Lou introduced Commander David Murk, US Coast Guard.

He gave a short presentation on his duties and responsibilities. His two main commercial ports are Savannah and Brunswick.

Mary McCracken had some questions and concerns. After observing the ships coming and going for over seven years, the ships used to go very slow and now they go very fast. She asked if there are any regulations on the speed of the ships? Commander Murk said that there are not any regulations on speed. The pilots are hired to move ships and know the river. Some speed restrictions have been put in place in the past. He cannot place speed restrictions on ships because of different characteristics of each ship. They all handle differently. They have to maintain a certain speed based on circumstances. Tommy Brown is the Master Pilot. Henry Levy suggested that we can put restrictions not on speed but surge and wake. It's up to them to figure out how to keep it down. Commander Murk said that is very hard to determine how much surge and wake the ships are putting off. Before moving into the regulatory realm, we need to have a discussion with the pilots. Lou Off made a suggestion to Commander Murk to generate between the DNR, Coast Guard, ship pilots and a representative of Tybee, a way of looking at this problem. He will come back in 90 days and report on progress. Commander David W. Murk, Commanding Officer, U.S. Coast Guard, Juliette G. Low Federal Building, 100 W. Oglethorpe Ave., Suite 1017, Savannah, GA 31401, Tel: (912) 652-4353, Fax: (912) 652-4180. Email: David.W.Murk@uscg.mil

Old Business: Membership changes, Chairman, Vice Chairman elections, by-Laws.

New Business: Freda Rutherford wanted to draw attention to Jason Buelterman's new mayor's picture on the wall.

Meeting Adjourned