

Tybee Island Beach Task Force Minutes

June 21, 2007

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

Ex-Officicos Present: Kelie Moore, DNR; Dan Parrott, COE; Paul Wolff, City Council; Diane Schleicher, City Manager

Members Absent: Helen Downing, Mary McCracken (E), Wick Searcy (E) (out of town)

Visitors: Kevin Haas, Ph.D., GA Tech Consultant, Jimmy Burke, Wanda Doyle, City Council.

Lou called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Lou provided information from the June 18th and June 12th issue of the Coastal Connections published by Marlowe. See attached copies. He also Read an email provided by Freda Rutherford regarding an aging weather satellite.

Mayor Jason Buelterman sent a letter to the Georgia Ports Authority (GPA). Requesting financial information. GPA sent a copy of their annual public notification. This was not adequate and the Mayor will follow up on that.

The Mayor is in Fernandina Beach, which is in a similar situation as the Tybee Island Beach, being down drift from a maintained federal channel. Mayor Beulterman sent an email to Lou which requested a letter from the COE stating that there is an impact on Tybee Island from the channel. This letter will be in advance of the channel impact study. The letter will be included with another package that he will be sending to Washington, DC, next week.

Mayor Buelterman was in Washington, DC, on June 6, 2007. He met with Sen. Isakson, House Representatives Kingston and Barrow and staffers from Sen. Chambliss and Sanford Bishop. They all seem committed to our funding request. A staffer at the State, Energy and Water Appropriations Sub-Committee said that our representatives have been staying on top of our cause. Mayor Buelterman also met COE Head Civilian, Gary Lowe. This meeting was in response to the Sea Wall and channel impact study. A commitment from the COE that if Congress appropriates our dollars, the COE will act quickly so that renourishment can take place this winter.

Mayor Buelterman, Berta Adams, Mary McCracken and Lou Off met with Georgia Lt. Governor Casey Cagle on June 7, 2007. We asked that he urge our Washington, DC representatives to obtain the necessary funding for our re-nourishment. Also to work with to secure state money and DNR permitting if the federal money does not come through. He requested we develop a long-term plan. Lou said that we suggested names of individuals that we would like to see on a Senate Committee to develop a long-term funding source. Berta Adams was impressed with Lt. Governor Cagle's knowledge of our problem.

Mayor Buelterman met with the Governor's Chief of Staff on June 8, 2007. This meeting was based on "what if" scenarios in case we do not get federal funding.

Lou mentioned that Tybee was in a publication named "The Hill", which is in every congressional office. This article was about Mayor Buelterman's You Tube video and the way he used the technology to secure funds for beach re-nourishment.

Lou asked for a motion to approve the May 2007 Minutes. With a correction to a quote made by Henry Levy, a motion to approve the May 2007 Minutes was made by Walter Parker and William Sprague seconded the motion. The quote correction was made and the revised minutes were distributed and placed in the BTF 2007 Minute Book.

Lou explained the source of the aerial photo of Tybee Island taken a week before.

COE May Report

Dan Parrott presented the Corps Actions and Status Report, dated June 21, 2007. See attached report for more information.

Tybee Coastal Zone Management Implementation

This program will allow for near-shore placement every three years, which will comply with the spirit and the law of the Coastal Zone Management. The COE says that over a 50 (fifty) year period, it will not cost any more money than now being spent on channel maintenance. If a surge of money is not given every three years, we will have to set some money aside. Dan said the COE would like to get started as soon as possible. Henry Levy asked what assurance we have that near shore placement will reach the beach. Dan said it will cut down on waves and decrease storm damages. The sand is not good enough to place on the beach. The placement will be as engineered by ERDC to be the most benefit to Tybee. Dan said that there may be only a small amount of sand reaching the beach and it could even close up Lazaretto Creek. Dan said it would be about 1.5 million yards of material placed every 3 (three) years. Berta stressed that this process is not a replacement for Beach Renourishment. Dan said that SAD, Atlanta is looking at this very carefully, because this will set precedence for the rest of the South East. This process will not take place until 2009.

Channel Impacts Feasibility Study

Dan said the first part of this Study will be ready in July 2007. The Study is going back to 1865 profiles. The Study compares shorelines of Tybee Island and will determine how much beach and near shore would still be in place had the harbor expansions not taken place.

Water Resource Development Act of 2007 (WRDA)

Attached is a copy of Senate version of WRDA, which has been updated and includes Tybee Island, Georgia. This gives authority to Secretary of the Army, Woodley, to treat Tybee Island as a Section 111. If this version is passed, it will give high stature and funding without having to go back to Congress for mitigation alternatives. Mark Smith suggested that someone from Tybee needs to be at the meeting to lobby for the Section 111. This version of WRDA also, does away with the project cooperation agreements (PCA).

Tybee Island Shore Protection Project

\$139,000 left over from last year. Page 3 (three) of Corps Actions and Status report is a list of items that need to be completed in order to facilitate the 2008 re-nourishment. This list will be completed in a timely manner to avoid the Sea Turtle nesting season and the tourist season.

FY08 Funding

No funds for Tybee Island are in the OMB FY08 Funding Budget. The Water and Energy bill that is in the House may allow for funds for Tybee through the COE. We will know during the first week of July what the outcome is.

Jasper County Port Development

Dan had a meeting last week with the Bi-State Task Force. They are going to drop their condemnation lawsuit with the Georgia DOT. They are going to re-evaluate with studies to determine where there would be the least environmental impact.

Paul Wolff asked Dan why there is no silt fence on the land where the COE is working. Dan said they are not exempt from the rule and he will check on the condition/status.

Brunswick Harbor Deepening

The deepening will be completed at the end of September.

Savannah Harbor Expansion

Dan said the current schedule calls for the Record of Decision by March 2009 (Corps Actions and Status report states May 2008). The Georgia Ports Authority has the right to make decisions on this project because they chose to do the studies themselves. But they have to wait for approval from a variety of resource agencies which has caused over a 10-year delay.

Savannah Channel Maintenance Contract

The Dredge Arlington is in the upper harbor near the Savannah Sugar Refinery and will be moving down towards the GPA Garden City Docks.

Ft. Screven Old Seawall Demolition

The removal of the remaining seawall and groins at the old Fort Screven site is not eligible for removal under the DERP-FUDS program. We do have an opportunity to get it named as a Section 206 Study with cost share. Dan said that we would have to write a letter to the COE requesting consideration for Section 206 and speak with Jack Kingston about getting a named study or project. It will be cost-shared 65/35, but has to be named in an energy or water bill before we can get funds for it.

Dan announced that Col. Ed Kertis will take command on June 29, 2007. He may be able to attend a BTF meeting in August.

Lou stressed to everyone to contact their Congressman to make sure we get money for 2008.

During our May 2007 meeting, there was a discussion made about moving sand, Diane Schleicher will update us on the outcome.

Georgia Tech did a study after TS Andrea. Kevin Haas, PhD presented the facts that are in his report dated June 11, 2007 (attached). According to the quick study, Tybee Island has lost approximately 60,000 (sixty-thousand) cubic yards of sand between the two federal groins. The south tip has an estimated loss of 25,000 (twenty-five) thousand cubic yards of sand. Sediment analysis is being done and a sample will be presented at the next BTF meeting.

The Ship Wake Study has not indicated a very large wake as ships go by. They will try to arrange another survey during a spring tide.

Henry Levy stated that we have lost about 20-30 feet of sand during high tide and that 2nd Street has an 18" berm. This berm creates a hazard to the Sea Turtles who are trying to nest.

Letter from Erik Olsen (see attached), a follow-up to meeting with Diane Schleicher; Brad Gane; Ann Thran and Bubba Hughes, Esq.; was reviewed. Wanda Doyle reported the thatch issue is being debated, removal versus relocating. Berta confirmed the status of thatch being a natural resource that should not be removed but relocated and used for erosion prevention. There is a concern of the thatch creating a hazard in walking areas, due to tripping or trapping of dangerous debris. Jim Burke suggests thatch be placed in specific areas. Henry Levy remarked that the thatch could be placed in 45 degree angles to assist Sea Turtles. Harvey Ferrelle brought up the safety issue of debris within the thatch and suggested we find out the procedures used in Fernandina Beach, which has a similar problem but keep the beach free of trash/thatch. Lou said that the DNR will not allow the removal without a "one-time" removal permit. Jim Burke stated that Skidaway Institute believes there is no value to thatch and we ought to pull it off the beach.

Scarp repair was discussed and Kellie Moore said that the issue was still being reviewed at DNR.

Lou mentioned that we should try to get State money to remove the Metal Groin/sea wall prior to re-nourishment.

The meeting with Lt. Governor Casey Cagle, led to the decision to plan a Beach Sand Summit, between the COE, DNR, Erik Olsen and Tybee Island. A possibility a state owned dredge for use in the Inter-coastal Waterway and beach nourishments will be discussed.

A letter from Brad Gane to Bill Bailey, US COE, was reviewed (see attached).

Berta Adams spoke of her suggestion to Lt. Governor Casey Cagle to have a fund that is generated by various entities that use the Savannah River. The contributions by all parties would benefit Tybee beaches, since the entities using the Savannah River are reaping the rewards of constant dredging but causing beach erosion. GPA would be considered a source as it is 60 percent of the Savannah River traffic, therefore, should contribute the most to a permanent fund.

Diane Schleicher spoke of her meeting with Erik Olsen. The severe drop-off of the beach in front of Marlin Monroe's was discussed, and the area now has a lifeguard stand.

The Sand Procedure that was drafted last year does not meet the requirement of Brad Ganes' office. It was stated that the process needs to be reviewed and approved. Diane will be submitting a request for a general 5 (five) year permit in lieu of the original draft document which will be revised. Kellie requested a signed copy of the February 22nd letter.

Lou asked for clarification on scarp removal as it is a requirement of the feds. Diane said that we cannot remove the scarps. We are waiting for clarification from Brad. Diane said we also want to complete the Mobi Mats so that we will be ADA compliant.

Diane will send the letter from the COE concerning the sea wall removal to Burke Day to try and generate state funding for sea wall removal. It is a very definite public safety issue.

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned.