

Tybee Island Beach Task Force Minutes

March 15, 2007

Members Present: Cecil DeLorme, Henry Levy, Harvey Ferrelle, Mary McCracken, Walter Parker, Freda Rutherford, Wick Searcy, William Sprague, Mark Smith, John Wylly, and Lou Off

Ex-Officos Present: Dan Parrott, ACOE; Jason Buelterman, Mayor; Paul Wolff, City Council; Diane Schleicher, City Manager

Members Absent: Berta Adam (E), Helen Downing (E), and Amy Lanier

Visitors: Kevin Haas, GA Tech Consultant

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

Lou provided information from several Coastal Connections published by Marlowe and Company concerning FY 2008 budget proposal for the Corps of Engineers concerning beach projects in need of funding and action on the WRDA (Water Resources Development Act). Lou handed out a copy of the FY 2008 Federal Beach Projects and Studies.

Lou talked about the article that was in the Savannah Morning News titled "Port teammates" where Governor Sonny Perdue and Governor Mark Sanford signed a pact to jointly run a port on the South Carolina side of the Savannah River. Lou felt that the important thing would be for the Mayor and Council to go on record saying that if South Carolina comes on board then they need to be supporting Tybee for sand as well. There was a motion from Henry Levy that a formal letter be written from the Beach Task Force to Mayor and Council asking them to go on record concerning this. There was a second by Bill Sprague. It was voted on and approved. Lou will write the letter and send it to the Mayor and Council on behalf of the Beach Task Force.

Paul Ordeal will be leaving Marlowe and Company to go to work with the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

Lou requested the SEG provide Tybee assurance they won't cut the plan to place spoil material in the Tybee near shore. GA Conservancy, Will Pearson and Sierra Club, Judy Jenkins, stated that they thought it was a great idea. Lou asked that the beach erosion committee, which Freda is a member, make recommendations for the record.

Lou received a handout from Alan Garrett at this meeting on an expanded Panama Canal. The SEG is now looking at 50 ft draft ships. Lou stated that they feel very comfortable that they are going to get this project done, even at the cost of 400 million dollars.

Diane Schleicher reported that Ned Durden, part of the COE feasibility study, had gotten permission from the City to begin the surveying the Tybee beach.

There was an article in the Savannah Morning News about the State forming a committee to plan to fund Beach Maintenance. This is a follow up to what Berta and Jason worked on at the Capital. Jason stated that this was not only for Tybee, but for all Georgia Beach. This is for future years. Promote this with your representative whenever you can.

If any member schedules a presentation please make sure that they know their presentation will be at the end of the meeting and they can stay to 1:30 pm.

Freda asked if Lou had the opportunity to talk with Erik about the presentation of Hilton Head – immobilizing at the same time. Lou stated that he had and Erik had sent a letter at Diane's request for the cost of a non government re-nourishment of our beaches. He was assuming 1 million cubic yards would be 8 – 8.5 million dollars which is not much different from the COE estimate, but again this doesn't factor in saving money by mobilization of equipment with Hilton Head.

Dan Parrott, ACOE, presented his monthly report. See attached Copy for details.

Lou had requested from Hampton at the last meeting a report on how much and what type of material had been dredged from the bar channel. Jason stated that he would like to see the type and quantity of material taken. Lou stated that last year about 80,000 cubic feet of beach quality sand was taken out to sea. Lou got a sample two years ago and once he spread it out it was the color of our sand within three days. If the material could be separated as they were dredging then we could get this material for our beaches easier. Separation and putting it on shore is much more expensive. Lou stated until it is a requirement of the contract the contractor will not bid it as long as it is only a contingency.

According to Dan Parrot, the administration does support beach re-nourishment when it has been shown to be an impact from a coastal federal project. Jason stated that if the project is not funded until Sept, Oct, or Nov it will not help us in 08. Dan stated that we will have the answer by July.

Lou asked if anyone has given any thought to what the Jasper County Port Development impact would do to Tybee and would South Carolina be obligated to beach erosion on Tybee. There is a provision that if there is a deepening project then the new port authority will cost share from the Bar Channel up to Jasper County and the GPA will cost share the remainder. So there will be a new entity to be a cost share sponsor and new responsibilities.

There was discussion that the Fort Screven Seawall needs to be removed before the re-nourishment. Dan stated that James Dalton will be visiting the district on April 9th. He will represent all SAD in Washington. Dan is showing him all COE projects and he will bring him out to Tybee at low tide to view the area.

This completed the COE report.

Henry motioned for the February Minutes to be approved. Bill Sprague seconded. Minutes approved.

Sand Relocation Procedures were approved at the last council meeting. Freda stated that Jan, DNR, stated that we could get a permit for moving the sand that goes to the south in the winter time to another location. Sea Island has a 5 year permit to move sand. This is a separate procedure than the sand maintenance procedure now approved. What could be done to apply for this permit? Lou stated that since the Sand Relocation Procedure has been approved a committee should be formed to establish the next step. He will talk with Berta on this. Freda stated we need to know what to do to get a permit to get that sand back.

Bill updated the Task Force on his permit process. DNR met in Feb and they approved to move the sand dunes back to where they belong. There is a 1 month waiting period to see if anyone objects to this. That date ends on March 26th and the process on moving the sand back to its location will begin on March 27th.

There was no Georgia Salt Marsh Presentation.

Meeting adjourned.