

## Tybee Island Beach Task Force Minutes

May 17, 2007

**Members Present:** Berta Adams, Cecil DeLorme, Amy Lanier, Henry Levy, Harvey Ferrelle, Freda Rutherford, Wick Searcy, William Sprague, Lou Off

**Ex-Officis Present:** Jill Huntington, DNR; Dan Parrott, COE; Paul Wolff, City Council; Diane Schleicher, City Manager

**Members Absent:** Helen Downing, Mary McCracken(E), Walter Parker (in Atlanta for the Republican Convention), Mark Smith, John Wylly

**Visitors:** Kevin Haas, Ph.D., GA Tech Consultant, Trip Tollison, Pat Ferrelle, Jimmy Burke

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

Bill Sprague reported on the dune that is overtaking his house. In February he was given a permit with a requirement to wait 30 (thirty) days. At which time he was then required to obtain a permit from the COE, which took 3 (three) weeks. The project has moved the sand approximately 50 feet away from his house. Sea Oats will be planted, but a sand fence is still needed. It is a work in progress.

Lou introduced Donna Kaplan who will be replacing Beverly Roberts (and Janice Elliott) for the Beach Task Force.

Lou asked for a motion to approve the April 2007 Minutes. Freda Rutherford motioned to accept the April Minutes and Bill Sprague seconded the motion.

Lou provided information from the May 8<sup>th</sup> and May 14<sup>th</sup> issue of the Coastal Connections published by Marlowe.  
See attached copies.

Lou read information that was given to him by Paul Wolff. Miami Beach is running out of sand. Offshore sources of sand are being depleted due to 30 (thirty) years of dredging. Local Miami leaders must look elsewhere for sand. This search is including foreign sources such as the Bahamas (and other foreign offers). There is a problem with this foreign search as the Federal Government prohibits use of foreign sources until a domestic search is exhausted.

Lou mentioned the two articles that ran in the Savannah Morning News, regarding the beach erosion.

Lou said that he, Mayor Jason Buelterman, Diane Schleicher and Berta Adams met with Burke Day on May 16, 2007. Burke and Jason are very concerned about the erosion and are going back to the State for assistance. At which time, if we do not get federal money the proverbial ball will be in their court. Mayor Buelterman spoke with Eric Johnson today which yielded contacts. Jason is in the process of trying to set up meetings with Governor Perdue, House Speaker Glenn Richardson and Lt. Governor Casey Cagle.

Wick Searcy had a long conversation with Rep. Jack Hill concerning beach re-nourishment and the expansion of the harbor. Lou asked Wick to call Mayor Buelterman to inform him and have Jason make contact. This action may result in state monies for beach re-nourishment.

Lou said that Mayor Buelterman spoke with Senator Isakson. This resulted in the Senator's assurance that he will do as much as he can to get sand for Tybee. Senator Chambliss will be here on May 30<sup>th</sup> to see the beach erosion personally. Trip Tollison said that he is trying to arrange a fly-over tour in a National Guard helicopter.

Trip questioned getting out of the federally sponsored program and the possibility of the State funding our re-nourishment projects. If doing so would eliminate the COE from being involved. It was stated that permits would still be required from the COE. It was also determined that costs would be reduced because we would not be required to have the multiple studies.

### **COE May Report**

Dan Parrott present the Corps Actions and Status Report, dated 17 May 2007. See attached report for more information.

### **Savannah Channel Maintenance Contract:**

The Savannah Entrance Channel was completed on schedule. No samples were taken. Therefore, the quality is unknown.

### **Coastal Zone Management**

Lou stated that our consultant has said this will never help our beach. We would like the ERDC position on what help this would do for our beach. Dan Parrot said that most of the impact is the deflation of the Ebb-tide Delta. Dan provided reference maps, Bathymetry, dated from 1854 through 2006/2007. These maps compared the Ebb-tide Delta and the deflation. The Bathymetry shows a sand loss of 6 – 9 feet in depth. Henry Levy requested to go on record that the COE is causing the problems by dredging the channels. Lou responded that we are trying to correct that and, we are currently waiting on the studies. Berta Adams clarified that this project is not necessarily a re-nourishment project, but is replacing what ERDC thinks has been depleted. Dan said that placing the material near shore complies with CZM, if less costly than placing material on shore. Lou said that this needs to be reviewed by Eric Olsen, Bill Bailey, and Brad Gane. Kevin stated that this On Shore project will be bad, because the dredge remnants will be mostly garbage. However, near shore placement will be better quality and during the summer months some of the sand will come ashore. Kevin asked what the Corp samples consisted of and Dan responded that the sand was mostly silt.

### **Channel Impacts Feasibility Study**

The report is due by the end of July, according to Dan Parrott. Lou asked if we could get a written schedule. We want a statement so that we can evaluate it as far as what will it do for our beaches. Dan said he can get a report as it relates to harbor expansion. Dan stated that the burden of proof for harbor expansion is: does it comply with CZM? And is it the least cost effective way to dig the harbor deeper? In response to Lou's question regarding how this will benefit Tybee, Dan suggested that he can get an analysis with prediction of if and how it will benefit Tybee. But if it does not benefit Tybee, it does not change the Harbor Expansion project. Henry Levy stated the project is exacerbating the beach erosion.

After much discussion, Berta Adams requested Dan to explain the difference between the three projects that were being discussed:

Harbor Expansion – is a one-time deal which will provide about 6ft. of material at one time which will be placed off-shore, and in the inner-tidal zone.

Ongoing O&M – is the annual dredging

Channel Impact – Study will provide percent of damaged caused by channel

**Water Resource Development Act of 2007 (WRDA):**

Waiting for Congress to work through and approve money. There hasn't been anything approved since 2000. The authorization would be for future projects only.

**FY07 Funding:**

Dan Parrot said new rules for 2007 dictate that unless a project is started during in 2006, it cannot be approved or funded. Dan confirmed that this rule is a way of limiting funding.

**FY08 Funding:**

There was no proposed funding of nourishment of Tybee Island or for the continuation of Channel Impacts Feasibility Study. Due to the process of receiving funding from The House or The Senate, money received would be the lower of the two. Therefore, if there is money in one department and no money in the other, we would receive nothing. That is the process per Dan Parrott.

Dan spoke with "Marlowe" who said Tybee was not recommended for beach re-nourishment in the 2008 budget.

The Savannah Harbor Expansion will receive all the money it needs in 2007 and 2008. They prioritize it as a High Return on Investment of National Priorities. Dan said that when Congress passed WRDA 86 it stated that recreation was not a federal interest it is a local interest. Dan claimed that federal involvement has been moving away from local work for the past 20 years.

**Ft. Screven OLD Seawall Demolition:**

The project may be eligible for Section 206 Authority for Eco-system Restoration. The Mayor should receive a letter this week. This letter will state that Tybee is not eligible for DERP's funds, and will enable Tybee to seek funds from a federal source. Or, if approved for Section 206 for aquatic restoration the COE will fund (cost-share) 65%, if its budgeted.

**Tybee LRR Cost Breakdown:**

Still working on the refund. Refund is not bearing interest.

Dan Parrott's report is finished. Berta Adams, thanked Dan in advance for his assurance that the report would be ready in July 2007.

**Add to Agenda 4A Inter Island Sand Replacement**

At the request of Mayor Buelterman, Lou amended the May 17, 2007 agenda. The Mayor would like the Beach Task Force Committee to consider moving sand under emergency conditions.

The motion: The Beach Task Force is in favor of the City of Tybee Island proceeding with asking Eric Olsen to check out what could be done and how to do it; legally determine the lines of

property ownership of the beach which could be in the way; have DNR oversee it and give us a permit, and have the COE give a permit without further study or cost. Freda, seconded the motion. The motion was approved by Berta, Harvey, Lou, Freda, Amy, Henry, and Wick. The motion was opposed by Cecil with clarification that his opposition was due to working without a study.

Henry Levy stressed that no work can be done by the Government on private property. Diane Schleicher suggested that beach-side property owners be given a demonstration or meeting so that they fully understand the legalities of moving sand and actual work by the government on their properties.

Excess sand has been volunteered by MaryAnn Hines and Tybee Straits. Both parties have submitted a letter to Diane Schleicher requesting the relocation (and donation) of excess sand from their property.

Lou asked Jill Huntington if the Sand Management Plan had been signed. Jill responded that the DNR has not signed it to date. Diane Schleicher requested a receipt confirmation from Jill, verifying the DNR has in fact received it.

#### **SEG Harbor Expansion:**

Meeting was held May 1, 2007, during the meeting Kelly Moore said that DNR needed more time. Lou had a conversation with Brad Gane and DNR, which yielded that the COE still does not agree with DNR about location in the channel and grain size that falls under the CZM. Lou has asked Brad Gane to push the issue. Lou spoke with Rep. Burke Day who is going to contact Neil Holcomb and find out why it has not been solved. Jill stated that Kelley and Brad are reviewing the paperwork, but do not believe they have all the information from the COE. As soon as they receive all of the information they will complete the review, June 11, 2007 is their target date.

Lou has asked Bill Sprague to work Walter Parker on the Jasper Co., SC project, if it progresses.

Permanent State funding is being lobbied by Amy, Berta, Lou and Mark. Lou asked Jill to follow-up on the Sand Management Procedure and obtaining the necessary signatures. This will be a platform for moving sand.

City Council members have requested the removal of thatch on the beach from the recent storm. The possibilities were discussed of city liability, process for removal and the legality of removing based on DNR rules. Jill will find out the information from DNR and notify Diane Schleicher.

Freda brought up the possibility of Offshore Windmills and Offshore Turbine Berms. Jill said there is a 5 year feasibility study. Freda wants to make sure that Tybee Island is not blind-sided by future plans.

Henry Levy presented a motion: Whereas the erosion that is occurring on Tybee is a direct result of the COE dredging the channel, we have no faith in the COE in the re-nourishment of Tybee beach and would like to sue the federal government and the COE for the damage they have done to Tybee. This motion was not seconded. Motion denied.

Slide show of sand loss caused by the recent Tropical Storm (Andrea) was presented by Diane Schleicher.

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned.