

BEACH & SHORE PRESERVATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Indian River County (IRC) Beach and Shore Preservation Advisory Committee (BSPAC) met at 3:00 PM on **Monday, April 19, 2021**, in Building B, Conference Room B1-501, 1800 27th St, Vero Beach, FL. You may hear meeting audio and review the agenda and minutes on the IRC website: www.ircgov.com/Boards/BSPC/2021.

Members present

David Barney, Chairman, BCC Appointee
William “Tuck” Ferrell, Vice Chairman, BCC Appointee
Robbie Brackett, City of Vero Beach Appointee
David Cox, BCC Appointee
Christian Hendricks, Town of Indian River Shores Appointee
Inocensia Hernandez, City of Fellsmere Appointee (*via Zoom; not counted for quorum*)
Paul Knapp, Town of Orchid Appointee
David Morgan, BCC Appointee
Francisco San Miguel, BCC Appointee
Commissioner Joe Earman, BCC Representative (non-voting member)

Members absent

Fred Jones, City of Sebastian Appointee
Mark Tripson, BCC Appointee

IRC staff present

Kylie Ariotti, Beach Program Specialist
Quintin Bergman, Environmental Specialist
Eric Charest, Natural Resources Manager
Kevin Kirwin, Director, Parks & Recreation
Molly Klinepeter, Lagoon Plan Environmental Specialist
Rich Szyrka, Director of Public Works
Ed Offutt, Commissioner Assistant, Recording Secretary

Others present

Steve Boehning, Principal Engineer at Coastal Waterways; Local Rep to FL Inland Nav. Dist. (*via Zoom*)
James Gray, Executive Director, Sebastian Inlet District (*via Zoom*)
Paul Hart, General Manager, Disney's Vero Beach Resort

Call to Order

(3:00 PM) Chairman Barney called the meeting to order and noted that a quorum was present.

Moment of Silence

(3:00 PM) Commissioner Earman asked for a moment of silence to remember the wife of committee member Mark Tripson, who'd passed suddenly of the weekend.

Approval of Minutes from March 15, 2021

(3:01 PM) ON MOTION BY Mr. Hendricks, SECONDED BY Mr. Ferrell, the members voted unanimously (9-0) to approve the minutes of March 15, 2021, as presented.

Legislative Update – Ms. Keenan

(3:00 PM) Ms. Keenan described the progress of numerous Florida House and Senate bills that could affect IRC's beaches. She specifically mentioned that beach project funding had been agreed upon between the House and the Senate in the amount of \$100M, a figure that included funding for the County's Sector 3 Phase 2 efforts. Ms. Keenan also highlighted the passing of multiple bills to address sea level rise resilience, and other bills that would allow local governments to regulate the use of e-bikes on beaches and employ drones to monitor coastal areas. (See Attachment 1 for a full summary of Ms. Keenan's report.) As she spoke, Chairman Barney asked if over \$100M of annual resilience funding passed by the Legislature would require annual approval for expenditure, and Ms. Keenan replied that it would not. Mr. Hendricks surmised that another bill which would have provided more funding to monitor eroded beaches had died in committee, and Ms. Keenan confirmed his assumption. Finally, Commissioner Earman said he'd met the County's beach lobbyists and was impressed by their efforts; he added that all communities seem to have the same problems, especially in regard to easements.

Coastal Division Updates

A. Round Island Beach Access Project – Mr. Charest

(3:12 PM) Mr. Charest revealed that the Round Island project had been awarded to Dickerson Florida, Inc., by the BCC. (See Attachment 2 for a summary of Mr. Charest's report.) Chairman Barney asked for the effort's expected time of completion, but Mr. Charest said it was currently unknown before adding that he would attempt to get an update for the next meeting.

B. Derelict Vessel Removal – Mr. Charest

(3:14 PM) Mr. Charest specified that the staff had received authorization letters from the Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission (FWC) to remove four derelict vessels. (See Attachment 2 for a summary of Mr. Charest's report.) Responding to a question from Commissioner Earman, he noted that grant funding approval had proceeded at a faster pace than usual. Dr. Cox asked for confirmation that \$8K would cover the cost of all four vessels, and Mr. Charest responded in the affirmative, assuring the BSPAC that the contractor would use "best practices" for all removals.

C. Local Gov't Funding Requests (LGFR) Grant Application – Mr. Charest

(3:17 PM) In light of Ms. Keenan's report, Mr. Charest said he had no further details to add on this topic.

D. Sector 4 Critically Eroded Area – Mr. Charest

(3:17 PM) After the committee members had asked for further explanation regarding last month's Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) rejection of Sector 4 as a critically-eroded area, Mr. Charest affirmed that FDEP's most recent analysis did not reflect Sector 4 upland areas as threatened by storm erosion. (See Attachment 2 for a summary of Mr. Charest's report.)

E. Beach Preservation Plan (BPP) – Mr. Charest

(3:19 PM) Mr. Charest disclosed that the final version of the BPP, with all suggestions for improvements adjudicated, was ready for BCC approval. (See Attachment 2 for a summary of Mr. Charest's report.)

F. IRC Beach Restoration Project Updates – Mr. Charest

(3:20 PM) Mr. Charest began this segment by mentioning the County had received a \$326K "matching grant" from the FDEP for additional monitoring of Sector 5 erosion. He then reviewed the Sector 3

easement status, noting that the data was currently unchanged but that work continued to encourage maximum participation. (See Attachment 2 for a summary of Mr. Charest's report.)

G. Sea Turtle Updates – Mr. Bergman

(3:23 PM) Mr. Bergman revealed that six turtle nests had appeared on IRC beaches so far this nesting season, and that strong numbers were expected in 2021. (See Attachment 2 for a summary of Mr. Bergman's report.)

H. IRC Beach Construction Projects – Ms. Ariotti

(3:24 PM) Ms. Ariotti summarized that sand placement work in Sector 3 Phase 1 was planned to finish by April 21st, although it was authorized to continue until as late as April 30th, if needed. (See Attachment 2 for a summary of Ms. Ariotti's report.) She reported that a higher density of dune plantings, spaced at 9", had been arranged, including sea oats, dune sunflowers, and railroad vines. Mr. Ferrell offered his compliments on the overall appearance of the work, highlighting the quality of the vegetation and the slope of the dunes. He stated a desire for those residents who own beachfront property but haven't approved their easements to walk on the improved areas, and remarked that real estate values and insurance rates were both positively affected by the project.

(3:29 PM) Mr. Hart followed with three questions. First, he asked whether all Sector 3 Phase 1 properties had given approval for the work, and Ms. Ariotti replied that there had been a single unsigned easement south of Treasure Shores Park. Second, Mr. Hart wondered whether the easement breakdown table for Sector 3 in the Coastal Division handout (included as Attachment 2 to these minutes) combined the data for Phases 1 and 2, and Ms. Ariotti confirmed that it did. Finally, he sought to confirm that the goal for Sector 3 Phase 2 remained 90% of easements returned, and Mr. Charest stated that 90% was viewed as a minimum threshold, with a higher number desired.

(3:32 PM) Mr. Knapp thanked the Coastal Division team for the excellent presentation and then mentioned the value of properly maintaining the dune plantings, declaring that the Town of Orchid was seeking to hire a professional landscaper for this purpose. Chairman Barney asserted that the County should use photos of the completed dunes on its website to advertise the project's successful completion, and Ms. Ariotti replied that the staff was hoping to use drone footage, as opposed to still photos.

Update from the Sebastian Inlet District (SID) – Mr. Gray

(3:34 PM) Mr. Gray made a suggestion that the County staff convene a "lessons learned committee" covering the latest beach renourishment efforts. He also reported that (1) the SID had hired a new public relations associate, Adria Carey Perez; (2) the SID was performing post-construction monitoring in Sector 1; and (3) County Attorney Dylan Reingold would be speaking at a Florida Shore & Beach Preservation Association seminar on June 9, 2021, regarding customary use and public beach access in Florida.

Status of County Beach Parks – Mr. Kirwin

(3:37 PM) Mr. Kirwin announced that facility repair projects were continuing at those County beach parks closed for beach renourishment efforts. He added that more bike racks had been added at beach parks, and one bike repair station installed. Finally, he reported that all open beach parks were seeing high usage rates. Commissioner Earman asked specifically about Golden Sands Park, and Mr. Kirwin responded that it would be open on either April 21st or 22nd but then close again on April 30th for a short time. Commissioner Earman also inquired about installation of the High Frequency Radar antennas from the Florida Institute of Technology, and Mr. Kirwin disclosed that work was proceeding sequentially. Dr. Cox asked whether the new bike racks had adequate capacity to meet the expected demand (Mr. Kirwin

assured him they would), and recommended that all bike racks be moved away from the shoreline and restroom areas to protect citizens' sometimes sizable investments in their bicycles.

Commissioner's Matters – Commissioner Earman

(3:41 PM) Commissioner Earman expressed his pleasure at seeing the Legislature set beach project funding at the \$100M level, and also for the promising start to turtle season. He announced Mr. Boehning's appointment to the Florida Inland Navigation District Board of Commissioners and offered him congratulations.

Committee Members Matters

(3:43 PM) Mr. Morgan expressed support for using Facebook as a communications tool to show the progress of beach renourishment activities in IRC; he encouraged the County staff to "make a big deal out of (these efforts)." Chairman Barney concurred, wondering if adequate information about Sector 3 Phase 1 had been provided to the local press. Commissioner Earman mentioned an initiative to update and improve the County's website, and disclosed that the County Administrator supported the use of remotely-piloted aircraft ("drones") to monitor local beaches. Mr. Ferrell thought a stronger public relations effort was an excellent idea, and reemphasized that the new dune construction protected both the barrier island and the mainland while also supporting sea turtle nesting. Chairman Barney added that the dune project also protected State Road A1A and the County's water and sewer infrastructure. Mr. Ferrell commented that "if the barrier island is over-washed, everything is gone."

Chairman's Matters

(3:50 PM) There were none.

Public Discussion Items

(3:50 PM) There were none.

Adjournment

(3:50 PM) With no further business, Chairman Barney adjourned the meeting.

The next meeting of the BSPAC is scheduled for **May 17, 2021, at 3:00 PM**, in Building B, Conference Room B1-501, at 1800 27th Street, Vero Beach, FL.

Attachments

Attachment 1 – Legislative Update (slide presentation), April 19, 2021 (K. Keenan)

Attachment 2 -- Beach and Shore Advisory Committee Updates from the Coastal Engineering Division, April 19, 2021 (E. Charest)