

BEACH & SHORE PRESERVATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Indian River County (IRC) Beach and Shore Preservation Advisory Committee (BSPAC) met at 3:00 PM on **Monday, March 21, 2022**, 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/BSPAC/2022.

Members present

David Barney, Chairman, BCC Appointee
Robbie Brackett, City of Vero Beach Appointee
William “Tuck” Ferrell, Vice Chairman, BCC Appointee
David Cox, BCC Appointee
Commissioner Joe Earman, BCC Representative (*non-voting member*)
Christian Hendricks, Town of Indian River Shores Appointee
Fred Jones, City of Sebastian Appointee
M.J. Benedetto (for Paul Knapp), Town of Orchid Appointee
Francisco San Miguel, BCC Appointee
Mark Tripson, BCC Appointee

Members absent

Inocensia Hernandez, City of Fellsmere Appointee
David Morgan, BCC Appointee

IRC staff present

Kylie Ariotti, Beach Program Specialist
Quintin Bergman, Environmental Specialist
Eric Charest, Natural Resources Manager
Bill DeBaal, Deputy County Attorney
Melissa Meisenburg, Lagoon Plan Environmental Specialist
Rich Szpyrka, Director of Public Works
Ed Offutt, Commissioner Assistant, Recording Secretary

Others present

Bob Auwaerter, Councilmember, Town of Indian River Shores
Paul Hart, General Manager, Disney's Vero Beach Resort
Richard Mutterback, Assistant Director, Public Works, City of Vero Beach

Call to Order

(2:59 PM) Chairman Barney called the meeting to order and noted a quorum was present.

Approval of Minutes from February 28, 2022

(2:59 PM) ON MOTION BY Dr. Cox, **SECONDED BY Mr. Tripson**, the members voted unanimously (9-0) to approve the minutes of February 28, 2022, as presented.

Coastal Division Updates

A. Sectors 3 and 5 Beach Restoration Project Updates – Ms. Ariotti

(3:00 PM) Ms. Ariotti summarized the overall success of the Sector 5 and Sector 3 Phase 1 dune planting efforts. She added that Sector 3 Phase 2 sand placements had also reached completion

on March 9th, and that dune plants in this area would be monitored throughout the warranty period. (See Attachment 1 for a full summary of Ms. Ariotti's report.) She presented a brief video of Sector 3 Phase 2 post-renourishment, taken from a remotely piloted aircraft travelling along to the length of the beach. Chairman Barney inquired about the total amount of sand placed on Sector 3 beaches (including Phases 1 and 2), and Mr. Charest reported about 520K cubic yards.

B. Sector 7 Beach Restoration Project Update – Mr. Charest

(3:08 PM) Mr. Charest announced that the BCC, after evaluating the County's Sector 7 project options in light of the currently insufficient number of approved perpetual easements being returned, had selected "Option 2" from the Public Works Department's three potential courses of action. This option directed a delay of Sector 7 work until the winter 2023-24 building window, with an associated request for a one-year funding extension on approximately \$5.5M from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and about \$300K from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP). (See Attachment 1 for a full summary of Mr. Charest's report.) He disclosed that no responses had been received thus far from FEMA or FDEP. Mr. Charest also covered the progress milestones along the County staff's road toward the "90% approved easements" goal. Mr. Tripson asked about the motivating factors cited by holdout property owners in Sector 7, and Mr. Charest replied that some disliked the perpetuity of the easement language, while others didn't see the need to renourish the beach at this time. Mr. Charest added that the location of the offshore hardbottom in the southern areas of Sector 7 necessitated the "feeder beach" approach (where sand would naturally flow from the northern stretches of Sector 7 to replenish beaches in the south), and bemoaned the fact that so many of the intractable homeowners were positioned at the head of the feeder beach area. Chairman Barney asked if the neighborhoods in these key areas were informed that 90% easement approval was required to commence renourishment activities, and Mr. Charest replied in the affirmative.

C. Indian River Lagoon Updates – Mr. Charest

(3:16 PM) Mr. Charest brought updated information regarding derelict vessels in the Indian River Lagoon, disclosing that Florida Fish and Wildlife (FWC) had authorized additional grant funds for this purpose and that the BCC had approved removal of a further six vessels. He added that the staff was prepared to move immediately upon receipt of the required document from FWC, as expected this week.

(3:17 PM) Mr. Jones referred back to the Sector 7 discussion, wondering specifically what would happen if the FEMA and FDEP funding was not re-approved. Mr. Charest replied that the County had received no funds from either party thus far, so nothing would have to be "paid back." Commissioner Earman detailed that, regardless of the extension request responses the County received from FEMA and FDEP, the matter would be returned to the BCC for further deliberation. Mr. Auwaerter lamented FDEP's disapproval of the County's request to designate Sector 4 as critically-eroded, noting that Sector 4 residents would be eager to accept the "free" sand being rejected by homeowners in Sector 7.

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

(3:20 PM) Mr. Gray was unable to attend the meeting, but he forwarded a note stating there was nothing significant to report.

Status of County Beach Parks – Ms. Ariotti

(3:21 PM) Ms. Ariotti reported all beach parks were currently open. Commissioner Earman affirmed that IRC Parks and Recreation Director Kevin Kirwin had left the County for a job with

Martin County, and that Beth Powell would serve as the acting director. Mr. Charest recounted the staff's continuing efforts to keep beachgoers off the dunes to avoid unnecessary damage.

Commissioner's Matters – Commissioner Earman

(3:23 PM) Commissioner Earman announced that the state legislative session was complete, noting that \$50M had been approved for "beaches like ours" and \$58M for state-run beach parks. He highlighted the new resources allocated for the following efforts:

- \$470M to combat flooding and sea level rise, plus \$2.4M for 25 new paid positions at FDEP's Resilient Florida Program;
- \$178M for water infrastructure improvements;
- \$239M for state parks maintenance and repair; and
- \$20M for derelict vessel removals.

Sea Turtle Updates – Mr. Bergman

(3:26 PM) Mr. Bergman reported that tides had claimed the early season leatherback turtle nest reported at the last meeting. The current IRC nest census included three loggerhead nests. Chairman Barney wondered if the sand renourishment projects might have had any impact on the early leatherback female's nesting site selection, but Mr. Bergman stated that the positioning of the nest on the dune was "normal." (See Attachment 1 for a full summary of Mr. Bergman's report.)

Committee Members Matters

(3:28 PM) Mr. Hendricks commented positively on the County's beach renourishment efforts while expressing remorse about the state of the Indian River Lagoon.

Chairman's Matters

(3:29 PM) Chairman Barney had nothing to add.

Public Discussion Items

(3:29 PM) There were none.

Adjournment

(3:29 PM) With no further business, Chairman Barney adjourned the meeting.

The next meeting of the BSPAC is scheduled for **April 18, 2022, at 3:00 PM**, in Building B, Conference Room B1-501, at 1800 27th Street, Vero Beach, FL.

Attachments

Attachment 1 -- BSPAC Updates from the Coastal Engineering Division, 3/21/22 (E. Charest)