

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, April 25, 2019, 2:00 PM

Topsail Beach Town Hall

820 S Anderson Blvd, Topsail Beach, NC 28445

Members Present:

Steve Smith, Chair
Mike Benson, Co-Chair
David Ward
Hiram Williams
Jerry Heid

Members cont.

Larry Combs
Richard Peters
Teresa Batts
Mark Price

Liaisons and Guests:

Mike McIntyre

1. **Call to Order & Greetings**

The Meeting was called to order at 2 PM by Chairman Smith.

2. **Public Comments**

No public comments were made.

3. **Approval of Agenda**

Mr. Peters made a motion to approve the agenda as submitted. Seconded by Mr. Williams, the motion carried.

4. **Approval of Minutes**

Chairman Smith corrected a spelling error.

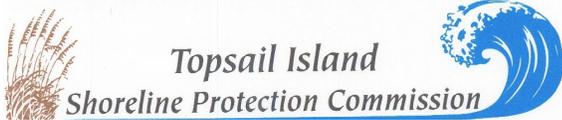
Mr. Peters made a motion to approve the minutes of March 28, 2019 as amended. Seconded by Mr. Heid, the motion passed.

5. **Consultant/Lobbyist/Partners**

a) Poyner Spruill Attorneys – Mike McIntyre

Mr. McIntyre thanked Chairman Smith and the others who arranged a tour of the Island for he and two members of the Ferguson Group Staff earlier in the day. He introduced Roger Gwinn and Stephanie Missert, Representatives of the Ferguson Group present. He talked about how important it was for them to see the Island being they are the ones who do the monitoring of legislation in Washington DC on a daily basis. He added that being familiar with the Island will help them to better understand the Island’s needs.

Mr. McIntyre reviewed his Legislative update with the Committee Members explaining some of the items in detail. He said, finally they have received the details of the President’s budget so now once Congress returns from Easter recess they can really begin to dive into the budget, which is when the real work begins. He reminded the Commission Members that the President’s budget is only a recommendation, Congress is the one that will decide what is included and ultimately vote on it. Mr. McIntyre spoke about the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) budget which unfortunately has been reduced by \$2.17 billion from last year. However, on the positive side, the budget does



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include funding for the operation and maintenance of the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway and the New River Inlet and \$27 million for preparedness and training of Corps staff to enable them to assist communities during a disaster situation. Mr. McIntyre spoke about the \$1.301 billion included for the Construction Account which the USACE could transfer some of those appropriated funds to a non-federal sponsor that decides to construct a project on their own. He said we will just have to see if Congress agrees with that as we get into the full session.

Mr. McIntyre talked about the Department of Commerce budget requesting a 7% increase which is good but the details of the budget talk about reducing funding for key programs such as the Coastal Mapping program and completely eliminates funding for other programs and research. He noted that the budget also eliminates the National Sea Grant program.

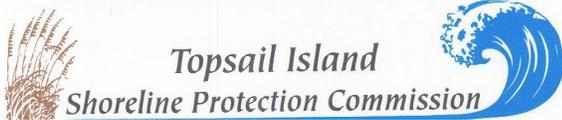
Mr. McIntyre spoke about the Disaster Aid Package which is being put together now and so far, includes consideration for projects like the Surf City/NTB project. He then talked about the Flood Mitigation Revolving Loan Fund and how they are working in the background with Members of the Senate to include language in the bill that would explicitly allow for beach nourishment and dune restoration.

Mr. McIntyre then updated the Committee on the issues that directly impact Topsail Island.

Changes to the CBRA maps in North Topsail Beach - He stated that discussions continue with Senate offices regarding final language and timing for reintroduction of the North Topsail Beach CBRA mapping bill and he will update accordingly.

Using sand from the Inlet CBRA areas for beach nourishment - Mr. McIntyre stated that the issue is gaining attention from the US House, noting that Representative(s) Jeff Van Drew and Garrett Graves could be key allies on the subject. He said because of all of the attention there could be a hearing on the issue as soon as the next 2-3 months, which would be a major step forward. Chairman Smith stated that representatives from the NC Audubon Society have reached out to Topsail Beach in hopes of setting up a meeting to learn more about the issue. Mr. McIntyre said the Town needs to make sure they understand it's not mining sand; it is borrowing it. He said the Audubon Society believes there has not been enough research conducted yet, but not only has Topsail Beach done it's research, it has practiced it. So, Topsail Beach is really on the cutting edge of this.

Federal funding for the approved Surf City/North Topsail Beach project - Mr. McIntyre said they are following several courses of action to see which one leads to the funding first. These options include going through the regular appropriations process and working



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with the Corps to make sure it continues to be on the top of their work project list and is included in whatever Disaster Aid package is approved by Congress.

Mr. McIntyre, Mr. Gwinn and Ms. Missert then answered questions from the Committee members.

b) Connie Wilson Consulting – Connie Wilson

Chairman Smith stated that Ms. Wilson couldn't attend the meeting but he highlighted some items on her report that had been distributed earlier. Chairman Smith stated that there has been proposed legislative changes to SB95 (the \$5 million grant managed by Resource Institute for Topsail Island) which would change the way the money is distributed to the three Towns, but it is not law yet. He added that there are two bills proposed on taxes that have been hard to get through in the past, but we will have to follow them through the process to see what happens. He noted that the money generated from those taxes would be used for beach related things.

c) United States Army Corps of Engineering (USACE) – Pam Castens

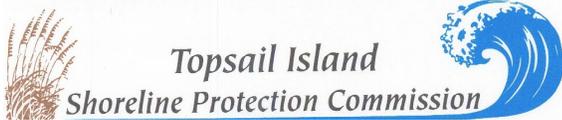
Chairman Smith stated that he received a note from Ms. Castens that said she couldn't attend the meeting but asked him to remind Surf City and North Topsail Beach that it is time to do a cost estimate update for their project, which is required every 2 years. Chairman Smith said there will be a cost associated with the update so it's something the Towns need to plan for now as they are preparing their budget.

d) North Carolina Beach, Inlet & Waterway Association (NCBIWA) – Kathleen Riely

Chairman Smith stated that Ms. Riely sends her regrets for not being able to make the meeting. Chairman Smith reminded everyone about the upcoming NCBIWA conference in Emerald Isle.

6. NC Coastal Resources Commission (CRAC & CRC) Update – Steve Smith

Commissioner Smith handed out his notes from the last CRC meeting he attended. He reviewed the items in detail including two variance cases the Council heard. One of the variances heard was in regards to a covered deck in the 75' Inlet Hazard Area setback in the Town of North Topsail Beach. Although the Commission agreed the CAMA Officer made the right call based on current rules, the rules may need to be adjusted to handle such situations in the future. He noted that the Commission has formed a Committee to review the issue. Chairman Smith said there was a 3-hour presentation on Resilience and Climate Change. He urged everyone to stay up to date on Resiliency because he believes it will start showing up in Land Use Plans (LUP) soon.



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7. Old Business

a) Raleigh Visit – Bryan Chadwick and Steve Smith

Chairman Smith stated that a group of Town Officials went to Raleigh to talk to various lawmakers about coastal issues. He said it was a long day but feels it was worth the effort. Mr. Chadwick stated that they did discuss how slow the FEMA reimbursements are and the strain that puts on Communities and asked about other options in the future to relieve some of the financial stress after a storm. Chairman Smith said Connie Wilson is working on setting up a meeting with the Insurance Commissioner and he has also invited a Farm Bureau Representative to our next meeting to talk about what they have seen since Hurricane Florence.

b) Resource Institute (RI) Topsail Island Task Force Update

Chairman Smith stated that the Task Force met and agreed on a final list of the projects but the list has not been presented to DWQ as of yet. He noted that none of the projects are in North Topsail Beach due to the proposed changes to SB95, but depending on what happens with that they may have to come back in.

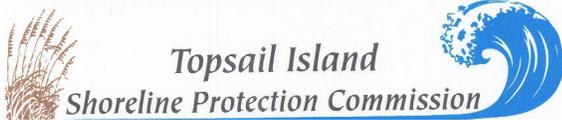
8. Town's Local Projects/Direction

a) North Topsail Beach - Bryan Chadwick

Mr. Chadwick stated that all of their Town owned crossovers have been repaired and are open to the public. He said the Town has started a Shoreline Protection work group to go over various issues facing the Town. Currently the group consists of Aldermen Leonard and Benson, but more people will be brought in later. Mr. Chadwick stated that he and Chris Gibson, of TI Coastal, will be meeting later in the day to discuss their Hurricane Matthew project that was due to begin around the time Hurricane Florence hit. He said they hope to have things in place again for the project to begin in November. Mr. Chadwick spoke about the repairs to the Town Hall that was damaged during Hurricane Florence. They are currently seeking quotes for mold removal. He said although the building can be saved, it will need to be completely gutted and then repaired. He also noted that they will be moving from the temporary Town Hall they have been in to another location. He will give out more information when things are finalized.

b) Surf City – Ashley Loftis

Assistant Manager, Stephanie Hobbs, spoke on behalf of Ms. Loftis who could not make the meeting. Ms. Hobbs stated that the Town has 6 accesses left to repair and hope to have them all open by the end of May. She added that they are 80% complete with their sand hauling project. Ms. Hobbs stated that the Town received a Golden Leaf Foundation grant in the amount of \$100,000 to go towards the repair of the Nelva Albury Park and another for \$350,000 for design of new Town Hall and EOC building.



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c) Topsail Beach – Michael Rose

Mr. Rose said the Towns Dredging/Dune Restoration project is coming to an end because there is an April 30th moratorium for all beach work. Although the project was not ideal and didn't net as much sand as planned, he still considered it a success. He added that it will help as the Town moves forward with the next Local SDR project planned for the fall. Mr. Rose stated that the Town is holding a Community Forum on May 4th to explain in detail the Local SDR project including scope, timeline and what the property owners will need to know when extending their crossovers. He also spoke about a new Town Ordinance regulating the repair and construction of private beach crossovers and how the new regulations will require them to be built 2' higher than the grade of the existing dune. Mr. Ward asked how much of the current project he anticipated being complete before the April 30th moratorium. Mr. Gibson said probably only about 50%. He added that although the projects didn't go as planned the contractors were able to close the breeches and clean up Topsail Creek, so he too considers the project a success.

9. New Items

Commissioner Smith stated that he asked the three Town Managers to get together and come up with a list of things that need to be complete before allowing residents back on the Island after a Hurricane. He said this is an effort to unify the Island with the re-entry process.

10. Open Forum

No one spoke during open forum.

11. Presentation by Robert Creel of Huesker, Inc. Makers of Geotextiles products

Commissioner Smith asked Mr. Creel to hold his presentation until after adjournment for those who would like to stay to hear the information.

12. Next Meeting

North Topsail Beach temporary Town Hall, 2 PM, May 23, 2019

13. Adjournment

Mr. Ward made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Peters and passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 3:18 p.m.