



REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, January 27, 2022, 2:00 PM

Commission Members Present

Steve Smith, Chair
Mike Benson, Vice Chair
Teresa Batts
Ed Broadhurst
Larry Combs
Fred Fontana
Jade Litcher
Mark Price
David Ward

Virtual

Don Harte
Hiram Williams

Associates Virtual

Billy Christ, Rep. Rouzer's Office
Scott Franko, Greater Topsail Area Chamber of Commerce
John Gunter, Commissioner, Topsail Beach
Mike McIntyre, TISPC Advocate
Stephanie Missert, TISPC Advocate

Associates Present

Kerri Allen, NC Coastal Federation
Morton Blanchard, TB Commissioner
Kyle Breuer, Town Manager, Surf City
Carla Citarelli, Town Clerk, Surf City
Alice Derian, Town Manager, North Topsail Beach
Mayor Doug Medlin, Surf City
Mike Rose, Town Manager, Topsail Beach
William Snyder, Incoming Chair, TB BIS
Tom Staker, TB resident
Mr. and Mrs. Carla Torrey, NTB
Kathy Zagzebski, Karen Beasley Sea Turtle Rescue and Rehabilitation Center

Associates Virtual con't

Tammy Proctor, Pender County
Amy Passaretti, Port City Daily
Kathleen Riely, NCBIWA
Connie Wilson, TISPC Advocate
Tim Zizack, Commissioner, Topsail Beach
India Mackinson, Recording Clerk

I. **Call to Order & Greetings**

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Smith at 2:00 pm. Chairman Smith welcomed both those in the audience especially new attendees as well as those who were attending virtually.

II. **Public Comments**

No public comments were made



Topsail Island

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III. Approval of Agenda

A motion was made to approve the agenda by David Ward and seconded by Mike Benson. The motion was approved unanimously.

IV. Approval of Minutes for December 5, 2021

A motion was made to approve the December 5th minutes by Ed Broadhurst and seconded by Jade Litcher. The motion was approved unanimously.

V. Consultant & Partners Reviews

A. Ward and Smith Attorneys – See report

Mr. McIntyre reported that the government will continue operating through February 18th. There is hope that the government will come up with a final budget soon. If there is a further delay, then we will continue to operate under the budget from last year. The government is also approaching 2023 fiscal year discussions, which will be proposed by mid-March. The American Rescue Plan now gives guidance for local communities to use the funding for a larger range of uses, including water, sewer, and broadband infrastructure. Towns can confirm accounts and documentation in the Treasury portal. The first reporting deadline is April 30th, and then reporting will be due annually. Looking at the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, the president has requested the coordinator for those programs to have local and state contacts appointed by state governors. The Army Corps released its fiscal work plan for 2022 in January. Sen. Tillis reported \$3 million for New River Inlet dredging and \$520,000 for Topsail Inlet dredging. The Rufa Red Knot designation public comment period will be reopened for at least 45 days. U.S. Fish and Wildlife will incorporate new information received last year. The CBRA changes to remove 2.5 acres in North Topsail Beach have not happened yet. It would be an incremental positive step. Mr. McIntyre said he will be pushing senators hard on larger CBRA changes. On CBRA sand borrowing, he is unsure of an administrative solution but is working on a legislative solution. Mr. McIntyre asked each town to submit a representative to Stephanie Missert to discuss federal storm damage recovery coordination (FEMA). With the National Flood Insurance Program, once a final bill is put in place, committees will look at how to improve the program. Mr. McIntyre said he is hoping to continue working with the Commission and is working to put together a report on the IJJA. Chairman Smith asked if there will be virtual conferences this year with congressional officials. Mr. McIntyre said Covid-19 cases have surged in D.C., so virtual meetings are currently the only option.

B. [Connie Wilson Consulting – See report](#)

Ms. Wilson reported the funds in her November and December newsletter, which includes funds from ARPA and the state. The funds include those from the Department of Environmental Quality, which said it is interested in communities looking into regional water and waste infrastructure. The utility reserve is a recurring fund with \$350 million for grant money. In February 2022, the application materials will be released. The Golden LEAF Flood Mitigation Recovery program has \$25 million for local governments for projects including the repair or construction of stormwater infrastructure. The application period is right now. The Land and Water Trust administered by DNCR has \$75 million for the calendar year of 2021. This money goes to land acquisition, stormwater, or planning projects. The funding application closes February 1st. At least 70% of that money goes to land acquisitions. The Transportation Infrastructure Resilience fund has \$15 million for grants to facilitate natural disaster resilience. For this fund, decisions have not made yet due to controversy over language in budget. The Volunteer Fire Department Fund has \$35,000 grants for equipment which opens March 1. The Streamflow Rehabilitation Program has \$30 million to help with drainage infrastructure. There is also \$40 million for the Coastal Storm Damage Mitigation Fund, with \$20 million allocated to Oak Island. Mr. Breuer said this report helps with capital improvement plans and funding ideas. He said the project portfolio they are putting together with the NC-RCCP will help with securing funding for those projects. Mr. Rose and Ms. Derian also thanked Ms. Wilson for putting this information together.

C. [North Carolina Coastal Federation –](#)

Ms. Allen reported the Federation’s support of offshore wind development. She said they will be carefully tracking it and think it can be done responsibly. They are trying to form coalition on offshore wind in NC with several NGOs. They also have \$2 million for living shorelines for governments and residents. Ms. Allen said they can put together materials for Topsail Island residents and help put them in touch with professionals. Living shorelines represent a cost savings for residents. Ms. Allen also reported that marine debris removal is ongoing, and they will be looking at prevention strategies.

D. North Carolina Beach, Inlet and Waterway Association –

Ms. Riely reported she is putting together the agenda for the May meeting. She asked anyone who has any ideas to email her. She will also be attending a meeting regarding offshore wind. The rendering of what the turbines will look like is of great interest to their members. She will share updates and information on offshore wind.

E. United States Army Corp of Engineering (USACE)

Chairman Smith said next month the Corps will remove a portion of their pier from the south end.

F. Karen Beasley Sea Turtle Rescue and Rehabilitation Center

Ms. Zagzebski reported that it is cold stun season, and they have 36 sea turtle patients. It is a slower season so far. She asked that if you see a sea turtle on the beach, you call the hospital. Last year, there were 94 patients with 40% cold stun and 16% boat strike. There were 103 turtle nests this year, which is over 10,000 sea turtle hatchlings protected. The hospital reached 6,000 children and adults with education programs last year. They will reopen for public tours in March. Orientation for beach volunteers will happen in April.

VI. Old Business

A. Goals for 2022 – See Document

B. Accomplishments for 2021

Chairman Smith said he made one slight revision and that the Commission had a good year.

C. Engagement Agreement for Mike McIntyre

Vice Chairman Benson made a motion to continue the engagement agreement. Mr. Ward seconded the motion, and it was carried.

D. Island Waste Management Project — Feb. 3rd Luncheon

Chairman Smith noted that over 90 participants have registered for the Topsail Island Environmental Management luncheon coming up next month

E. Red Knot

Chairman Smith said the public comment period will be reopened. He asked that people pay attention and make a public comment. Mr. Ward said the rule as written gives USFW control to reject beach nourishment.

VII. Town's Local Projects/Direction –

A. North Topsail Beach – Manager Alice Derian

Manager Derian reported that a truck haul project with 300,000 cy of sand will be able to restart soon. The contract with S.T. Wooten for the beach project will start in February. Town Hall has been completed and opened to the public earlier this month. There will be an open house on February 16th.

B. Surf City – Manager Kyle Breuer

Manager Breuer reported that the Corps district office is working on an elevation report. In conjunction with the RCCP, they will be putting together regional resilience projects with the NC RISE program. Mr. Breuer volunteered to be part of it in an advisory role.

C. Topsail Beach – Manager Mike Rose

Manager Rose reported that they are trying to address soundside flooding related to sea level rise and king tides. Engineers have met staff and stakeholders and will give them concept plans next week. The BIS committee is holding a workshop next week to establish priorities. The living shoreline projects are winding down. They are scheduling a soundside survey to get data for improvements. They are hoping for state funds for those projects. The budget retreat is scheduled for February. There are major projects coming down the line, including resilience efforts. They are looking at public parking options. The town received funding for emergency operation center equipment and for stormwater issues. They are preparing their emergency operations center and planning to participate in the Cape Fear Emergency Planning Conference. Chairman Smith said the average high tide is 4 feet with a king tide of 7 feet. There is a stakeholder meeting coming up, with information coming up soon to the public.

VIII. New Items

A. Shellfish Leases

Chairman Smith said NC will see more leases and wants to know how and where they will be placed. Today, there is public hearing for eight leases in Onslow County. Topsail Beach prohibits farming within city limits. Ms. Allen said the NC Coastal Federation wants to see the industry grow but not be placed in areas where there is significant user conflict. Leases improve water quality in area but also attract birds. That may increase fecal coliform in water, so leases need to be spaced out properly. Ms. Allen said they also want to make sure that aquaculture best practices are developed to keep plastic out of its materials. Councilwoman Batts expressed concerns about aesthetics and recreation use. Chairman Smith said the state has put up a lot of money for it, which will drive density, so the Commission needs to watch it and work through community needs.

B. USACE Work Plan 2022

C. TISPC Meeting Calendar

Chairman Smith said the next meeting will be in North Topsail Beach and will rotate towns from there.

D. North Carolina Budget Grant Opportunities

IX. Meetings & Conferences

A. TISPC – Topsail Island Environmental Management Luncheon – Feb. 3rd – Assembly Building

Chairman Smith said the luncheon will discuss plastics and help business leaders understand the issue. Ms. Allen will discuss nonencapsulated floating docs.

B. NC CRC – Feb. 9&10 – Beaufort – Advisory Committee on the 9th & CRC on the 10th

C. ASPBA – Mar. 29-31 – Virtual

X. Election of Chair & Vice Chair

Councilwoman Batts nominated Steve Smith for Chair and Mike Benson as Vice Chair. Mr. Ward seconded, and the motion was carried.



Topsail Island
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XI. Public/Commission Comments

No comments were made

XII. Next Meeting – February 24, 2022

XIII. Adjournment