



Topsail Island
Shoreline Protection Commission



REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Friday, June 22, 2023, 2:00 PM
Surf City Town Hall

Commission Members Present

Steve Smith, Chair
Mike Benson, Vice Chair
Teresa Batts
Larry Combs
Fred Fontana
William Snyder
Larry Strother
David Ward
Hiram Williams

Associates Present

Carla Citarelli, Surf City Town Clerk
Kathy Zagzebski, Karen Beasley Turtle
Hospital

Virtual

Connie Wilson, TISPC State Advocate
Doug Shipley, Topsail Beach Town Manager
Roger Gwinn, Ferguson Group
Chris Griffin, Ferguson Group
Joonsoo Yi, Ferguson Group

Guests

John Gunter, TB Councilman
John Gardner, NTB BISAC
John Koloski, SC Councilman
Tom Leonard, NTB Alderman
Tom Staker, TB stakeholder

I. **Call to Order & Greetings**

Chairman Smith called the meeting at order at 2:00 p.m. Chairman Smith welcome the commission members, associates, and guests in the audience and online.

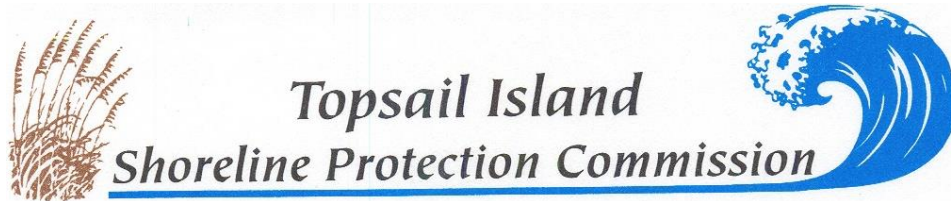
II. **Public Comments**

None were made.

III. **Approval of Agenda**

He noted NC Fish & Wildlife reps flight was delayed so their presentation will be postponed to the August meeting He also noted that several liaisons including Congressman Mike McIntyre, Federal Advocate, Kerri Allen, Coastal Federation, and Kathleen Riely, NCBIWAs would not be able to present their reports in person.

David Ward made a motion to approve the agenda. Mayor Batts seconded the motion, and it was carried unanimously.



IV. [Approval of Minutes for February and April 2023](#)

Larry Strother made a motion to approve both sets of minutes. Fred Fontana seconded the motion, and it was carried unanimously.

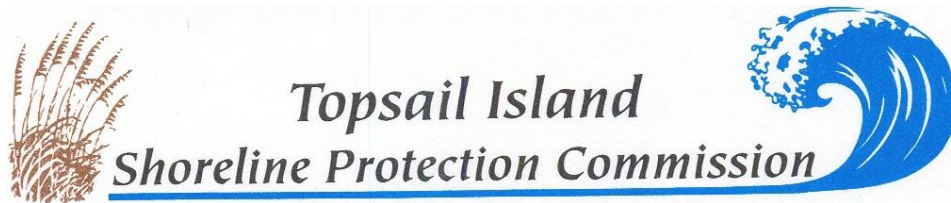
V. [Presentation by NC Fish & Wildlife](#)

As mentioned, this item is tabled until the August meeting. This will cover shell fish leasing and FLOTUS.

VI. [Consultant & Partners Reviews](#)

- a. Federal Legislation Activities – As Congressman Mike McIntyre could not be present, Chairman Smith asked commission members if they had any questions regarding the Congressman McIntyre’s monthly federal advocate report. No questions about the report were asked. (see report on the TISPC website)

- b. NC State Legislation Activities - Connie Wilson Consulting – Connie Wilson
Ms. Wilson reported that many bills are being tracked for the TISPC in Raleigh. This has been a long session which means the state budget is delayed until July. The big debate is recurring funding for important programs. Senate and House budgets have items favorable to the coast thanks in part to Senators Jackson and Lee with \$10 million non-recurring for the Coastal Storm Damage Mitigation Fund for each year of the biennium for a total of \$20M. There is \$5M for the Resilient Coastal Communities Program. The North Carolina Coastal Federation is up for \$2M for their living shoreline projects and \$500K is for the fishery debris removal and derelict vessel disposal. A Surf City provision for Discharges of Highly Treated Wastewater is also included. There is \$5M for the Great Trails State Program. Up to \$25M is earmarked in the Senate budget to the Golden L.E.A.F. to provide \$2M local government grants for flood mitigation and recovery projects. There is \$3M to provide matching grants to local government to implement water resource development projects. Also, there is \$8.3M and \$3M in first and second budget years for Water Resources Development Projects to match federal funds for projects including navigation, water management, flood mitigation and beach renourishment. Finally for the coast, \$20M to the Division of Emergency Management for long-term recovery and mitigation grants. The Coastal Storm Damage Mitigation Fund has support. There is concern in budget language for the Shallow Draft Inlet Fund that the rules do not prohibit the Army Corps of Engineers from receiving these funds without involving input from municipalities. However, this is being opposed so that only municipalities and counties continue to be eligible as the fund was originally intended by the legislature. Also, language to speed up the issuing of permits for navigation projects. This is language in the budget to ban the use of non-encapsulated polystyrene in floating structures on the coast. Senator Lazzara introduced SB 465 to make this ban state law. Senator Sanderson helped to

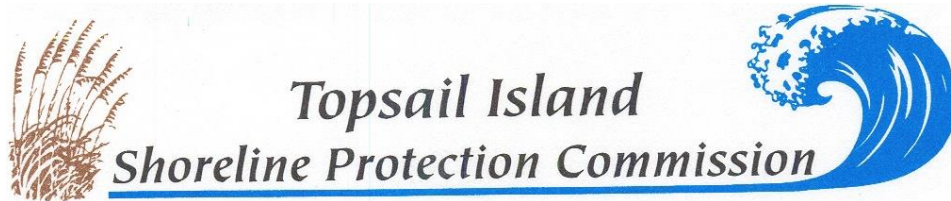


preserve the Shallow Draft Inlet Fund by opposing NC Fish & Wildlife Commission efforts to secure some of these funds for their specific projects. The special Topsail Beach license plate option is still in progress.

- c. North Carolina Coastal Federation – Kerri Allen
Chairman Smith noted in Kerri's absent that the federation is opposing changes in wetland rules. These rules could change the way municipalities, industry, and agricultural users discharge effluent into wetlands. A lot of work will be needed to resolve these proposed rule changes.
- d. North Carolina Beach, Inlet and Waterway Association – Kathleen Riely
In Kathleen's absence, Chairman Smith noted the Spring Conference presentations and Spring newsletter are available at:
 - i. Newsletter link: https://www.ncbiwa.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/NCBIWA_4_print_revised.pdf
 - ii. Spring Conference Presentation link: <https://www.ncbiwa.org/events/past-events/>
- e. Turtle Hospital – Kathy Zagzebski
Ms. Zagzebski reported that there are 36 turtle nests on Topsail Island with 18 in NTB, 11 in TB, and 7 in SC. First hatchings in July. Turtle Talks ongoing weekly in all three towns. Hospital is busy and full of turtles (19). We have rehabilitated many patients, with eight released in Surf City and yesterday, nine were released in N. Topsail Beach. The public really enjoys these releases. Maybe we will have a third released in Topsail Island as part of our 25th anniversary. A lot of anniversary activities are happening including our 'Lights Out' program to encourage oceanfront property owners to turn off porch lights or purchase 'turtle friendly lights' through the hospital. A grant is in hand to replace two lights at 25 homes on a first come basis. We have 66 new patients this year which is high for us. Tours are going well and sold out at least a week ahead of time. There is an island-wide beach clean up this Saturday in coordination with Coastal Clean Up. Our 25th anniversary gala is July 16th with information on our website.

VII. Old Business & Updates

- a. Beach Clean Update –
Chairman Smith said the effort continues through the Realtor's Association and they will distribute information to their renters. Pender County did receive an award for their part in the Beach Clean program. Tammy Proctor, Pender County Tourism Director provided each town with a Beach Clean flag to fly at their respective Town Halls.
- b. RCCP additional update/discussion



Chairman Smith reported that all three towns submitted an application but have not received any notifications of award.

c. Derelict Vessel Legislation

As Connie Smith reported this legislation is now law. Chairman Smith will be coordinating with the three towns and two counties to develop a unified ban for Topsail Island and associated waterways. There may be some state funding for removal.

d. Project – Dr. Moore – Predicting Results of Resilience Projects

Chairman Smith said she will not hear on funding until August. In addition, East Carolina University's Coastal Program would like to get involved with TISPC.

e. CRC Meeting Review

Chairman Smith noted that the notes from the meeting were in our monthly packet. Question raised on the Oak Island 30-yr plan that was approved even though offshore borrow areas were not shown to be sufficient for a 30-yr period, but enough work had been done on a proposed terminal groin to show the Commission intent.

VIII. New Items

a. Rentals

David Ward said rentals were down in the first quarter and down about 4.7% for summer as people have more options now. Others reported the same in Topsail Beach. Water usage is an indicator of rentals and new businesses and is up. We have 80,000 weekly visitors coming to the island. A new BIMP plan is in the works as we need an update on stats.

b. Federal Flood Maps

Chairman Smith reported maps out for Pender County. Each municipality will have a chance to respond for approval. There are several flood maps, but these will set insurance rates after a 7-year delay in release.

c. New Topsail Inlet Navigation

Chairman Smith noted that this topic will be covered in the town report by Manager Shipley.

IX. Town's Local Projects/Direction –

a. North Topsail Beach – Alice Derian

Mike Benson gave the report for Manager Derian. FEMA beach nourishment work in town has paused for turtle season. In the south end of town approximately 400,000 cy of truck-hauled sand was placed in the beach berm with another 100K+ to go once the project resumes in November. In the north end of town, a Corps project placed 160K cy of truck-hauled sand, a FEMA project placed about 25K cy and a state grant will be used to place about 20K cy this fall. The dune restoration work at Onslow County Beach Access 4 was wrapped up including the planting of sea oats and bitter panicum. Manager Derian sent her thanks to the NC Coastal Federation for their effort to fund the removal of the rigging of an abandoned shrimp boat in the New River Inlet that had attracted beach visitors to walk out over dangerous shoals for a closer look. We will also have a hurricane preparedness workshop next Monday, June 26th that includes representatives from the NWS and the Onslow County EMS as well as representatives from all three utilities that serve NTB. Finally, signs have been installed in Ocean City to denote recognition as a “Historic Community” on the Civil Rights Trail.

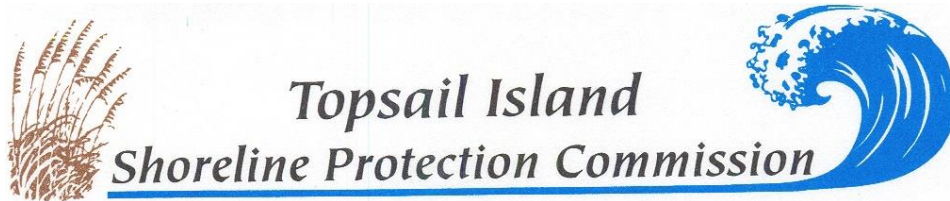
b. Surf City – Kyle Breuer

Carla Citarelli reported ongoing work on the South Shore Drive storm water project is funded and work to be done before that street is resurfaced in the fall. No word yet on our RCCP grant. Work progresses on the Corps economic analysis and the Corps will be starting vibrocore analysis offshore for our federal project. Chairman Smith noted that perpetual easements required by the Corps should be in the town's name so that other town needs in the future will be under town control. Fireworks at Soundside Park July 3rd.

c. Topsail Beach – Doug Shipley

Mr. Shipley reported an update on dock work at sound end of town but not sure of timeline. New Topsail Inlet has navigation issues, so we put in emergency request to Oregon Inlet Task Force to get Ms. Katie dredge to stop by on her return to Dare County, but our permit request will not be able to accommodate this dredge, so we are looking to other alternatives. However, the Merritt is now being requested from the Corps. The town hopes the est. \$180K local share of cost for emergency dredging can be split among Surf City and Pender County. Mr. Snyder noted that has been four years since we last dredged the inlet.

X. Meetings & Conference



- a. CRC - August 23-24, 2023 – The Aloft at Coastline Center, 501 Nutt Street, Wilmington, NC
- b. NCBIWA – November 16-17, 2023 – The Aloft, Wilmington, NC
- c. The commercial fishermen in our area would like to set up a New Topsail Inlet Association for New Topsail Inlet with a meeting set for July 10th at 4PM at the Assembly Building to discuss.
- d. Congressman Murphy will host the second WATERS SUMMIT in Greenville on October 11th.

XI. [Public/Commission Comments](#)

XII. [Next Meeting – Thursday, August 31, 2023 – Surf City Town Hall](#)

XIII. [Adjournment](#)

Mr. Williams made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Ward seconded the motion, and it was carried.