



MINUTES
Regular Meeting – May 15, 2023
BEACH & SHORE PRESERVATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

John Heanue – Town of Orchid Appointee
Inocensia Hernandez – City of Fellsmere Appointee
Fred Jones – City of Sebastian Appointee
Ray Neville – City of Vero Beach Appointee
Mary Alice Smith – Town of IRS Appointee

David Cox – BCC Appointee
Shelby Graziani – BCC Appointee
David Morgan – BCC Appointee
Francisco San Miguel – BCC Appointee
Michael Sole – BCC Appointee

William Ferrell, Jr. – BCC Appointee, Chairman
Joseph Earman – Commissioner, District 3, Commission Liaison

The **Beach & Shore Preservation Advisory Committee** met at 3:00 PM on Monday, May 15, 2023, in room B1-501 of County Administration Building B, located at 1800 27th Street in Vero Beach.

MINUTES

1. Call to Order

Chairman William Ferrell, Jr. called the May 15, 2023 meeting of the Beach & Shore Advisory Committee to order at 3:00 pm.

2. Roll Call

Members Present

William Ferrell, Jr., Chairman BCC Appointee
John Heanue, Town of Orchid Appointee
Fred Jones, City of Sebastian Appointee
Ray Neville, City of Vero Beach Appointee
Mary Alice Smith, Town of Indian River Shores Appointee
David Cox, BCC Appointee
Shelby Graziani, BCC Appointee
David Morgan, BCC Appointee
Michael Sole, BCC Appointee
Francisco San Miguel, BCC Appointee
Inocensia Hernandez, City of Fellsmere Appointee
Commissioner Joseph Earman, BCC Liaison

Members Absent

None

Also Present

Eric Charest, Indian River County Natural Resources Manager
Rich Szpyrka, Indian River County Director of Public Works
Maura Stokes, Indian River County Recording Secretary

3. Approval of Minutes

ON MOTION by Michael Sole, SECONDED by David Morgan, the members voted unanimously to approve the Minutes of April 17, 2023.

4. Coastal Division Updates, including Beach Restoration Projects

Eric Charest, Natural Resources Manager gave a presentation on the Indian River County Beach Restoration Projects. During the meeting, the group discussed various topics related to beach preservation and restoration. They explored the difference between FEMA's assessment of sand loss and the county's permitted template, and explored other funding options. The group also discussed the limitations of FEMA's depth of closure program and the county's efforts to provide more accurate loss estimates through damage assessment reports. Mr. Charest provided updates on the progress of damage assessment reports and funding for Sectors 3 and 5, as well as the amended option number three for the Sector 7 project and efforts to obtain necessary easements.

The group also discussed the need for aggressive advocacy on behalf of county residents in Sector 4 with DEP regarding erosion, and the source of funding for beach preservation plan. The committee also discussed the ongoing request to have Sector 4 looked at for a critically eroded area and the preliminary statement from the DEP that the erosion limits did not reach any of the upland buildings in Sector 4. The group explored the feasibility and funding of a beach restoration project for Sector 4, and provided updates on various beach projects including playgrounds, sewer projects, and repairs. Lastly, the group provided an update on sea turtle nesting counts and education and outreach efforts.

A. Sector 5 Update – Vero Beach

(Location: Sea Watch south to Riomar Beach Access 3.1 miles)

The county continues to work with FEMA and DEP on funding for a project completed in 2020, and a post-hurricane damage assessment report is under review to obtain federal and state funds for future projects, including estimated losses based on a FEMA approach.

The post-hurricane Ian and Nicole damage assessment report is under review. These are reports that the Board of County Commissioners had approved back in the December. These reports consider surveys performed by the county's consultant for surveys and as well as other criteria and are to be used to further the county's efforts in obtaining federal and state funds for future projects. That draft report is currently in a review process of Sector 5.

FEMA's assessment of the loss of sand within Sector 5, is about 13,000 cubic yards of sand lost. FEMA considers sand that is within the system down to the 'depth of closure' as still in the system. It may be gone from the dune or the dry beach, but it is still technically in the system according to FEMA.

FEMA will only fund what they identify as their loss, which means they will only look down to the depth of closure, resulting in a big difference between what the county considers a full template and the 112,000 cubic yards of sand currently available.

The DEP's evaluation on sand loss volumes is still pending, but funding was made available in December through a \$100 million grant. The team is keeping their options open and the funding availability is dependent on the depth of closure.

The post construction monitoring that they are doing in sector five from their placement in 2020 has several years left and has already been approved by the Board of County Commissioners to cover for pre-construction monitoring, which means they don't have to do it again. This would allow for placement of sand within Sector 5 as early as November 2023 if funding becomes available.

The estimated losses for sector five range from \$2.2 million to \$8.4 million, with \$2.2 million being the cost for the FEMA 13,000 cubic yard approach and \$8.4 million being the cost for a full template. This information was shared to give everyone in the group a heads up on the process, and there is currently no guidance from FEMA on PWs. Again, Mr. Charest mentioned that they are in a better situation for sectors 3 and 5 due to post-construction monitoring, that can also double for pre-construction monitoring.

B. Sector 3 Update – Wabasso Beach

(Location: Seaview Sub. South to approx. Turtle Trail Beach Park ~6.6 miles)

The Sector 3 project is still in process and has been submitted to FEMA, with estimated losses of 92,000 to 93,000 cubic yards based on the FEMA approach, and the post-construction monitoring is also serving as pre-construction monitoring. Permits and easements are already in place for Sector 3, and options for potential projects may be presented to the Board of County Commissioners as early as November of this year if FEMA funding is approved.

Estimated volume losses based upon FEMA is approximately 92,800 cubic yards or almost 400,000 cubic yards based on Template losses. The costs are \$7.5 million for FEMA approach; and, \$26.6 million for permit Template losses.

Mr. Charest discussed estimated Federal Cost Share, grants and other options. The Post Hurricanes Ian and Nicole Damage Assessment Report was finalized and submitted to FEMA for processing.

C. Sector 7 – Porpoise Point Beach

(Location: Treasure Cove subdivision south to the Floralton Beach subdivision ~2 miles)

At the May 02, 2023 BCC Meeting, Sector 7 was discussed. As the project remains at 69% easements obtained (or in process), options were presented to the BCC that included the BSPAC Amended Option #3 approach, to determine the current project as *not constructible based on lack of sufficient stakeholder easements and request that the Board of County Commissioners direct staff to “pursue, study and examine an alternative project that could be built that is feasible.”* IRC BCC voted 3 to 2 to accept the BSPAC recommended amended Option #3.

Sector 7 estimated project volume is approximately 295,000 cubic yards of sand and approximately 53,000 native dune plantings. At the May 02, 2023 BCC meeting the Board of County Commissioners decided to again delay construction to Winter 24/25 due to lack of sufficient easements received. The BCC directed staff to pursue, study and examine an alternative project that could be built that is feasible.

D. Sector 4 – Critically Eroded Shoreline Evaluation

(Location: 0.5 mi south of Old Winter Beach Road to Surf Lane)

An excerpt from a May 2, 2023 communication from the FDEP: “...has completed the model runs of the 25-year storm erosion at each of the DEP reference monuments using SBEACH and the

post-Nicole survey data. The erosion limits did not reach any of the upland buildings in Sector 4. Based on the staff experience, this was not unexpected given the width of upland property and dune between the seaward side of the buildings and the beach. (FDEP) Kristen is assembling her work to include the model results at each DEP reference monument, and a series of pre-Nicole aerial photomaps with a line depicting the landward limits of storm erosion and the post-Nicole toe of dune.”

FEMA has determined that Sector 4 is NOT eligible for Category G or B funding assistance.

E. Sea Turtle Updates

As of May 11, 2023, there are currently 575 Loggerhead nests, 16 Leatherback nests and 0 Green Turtle nests accounted for. The nesting season is March 01 – October 31.

The first ‘Nighttime Lighting Survey’ was completed in late April. The consultant has completed the report and it has been given to Code Enforcement.

Staff has embarked on an educational campaign that included Public Service Announcements on the radio, talking to civic groups and neighborhood associations as well as visiting 5th grade – 7th grade science classes.

F. Indian River Lagoon Updates

Staff has received letters of authorization for eight derelict vessels. A Bulk Derelict Vessel Grant has been submitted for approval to Florida Fish and Wild Life Conservation Commission. Upon approval, staff will meet with the selected contractor to establish a start date and removal plan. Additionally, there are two sailboats which will come up for removal under a separate grant.

5. Update from the Sebastian Inlet District

The district is currently in the design and permitting phase to rehabilitate areas of the north and south jetties that have deteriorated and been damaged by recent storms. Specific repairs include structural maintenance, the jetty concrete decking and piles, replacement of storm-protecting armor stones, safety enhancements, jetting railings and sidewalks. completed in the next few months with construction beginning in the spring of 2024. And the district is asking for it and with the help of Senator Mayfield, Gross, and Representative Brackett, the legislature has fully funded our fiscal year 23-24 appropriation request of \$2 million for the project. The total project cost is estimated at \$5 million, and they are now awaiting final funding approving from Governor DeSantis.

6. Status of County Beach Parks

Beth Powell, Director of Parks and Recreation and Interim General Services Director was present to give an update on the status of County Beach Parks. Tracking Station, Beach Park, and Wabasso Beach, experienced quite a bit of damage during the storms. Ms. Powell stated that Coastal Engineering Services is being used to design the structures that are estimated to be completed in July. The County will wait until after sea turtle nesting season is complete before we begin any kind of repairs on that structure.

Wabasso Beach will have the repair of the ramp start approximately November 1st after sea turtle nesting season. We've been able to, with the help of the Parks Division, do a lot of repairs and make some of our structures usable in the interim so that we can get people back on the beach, as well as the Parks crews worked to get a Mobi-mat down at the Tracking Station Beach.

We have two new playgrounds that will be going in this year at Round Island and Treasure Shores and next year Golden Sands is slated to be funded. Other projects that are on-going include exotics removal and native plantings and trees at Round Island oceanside, connecting Round Island oceanside and Riverside to sewer. Tracking Station will also be a step system, in addition Treasure Shores will be a lift system and connecting to the sewer. The county did apply for an Indian River Lagoon National Estuary Program for Tracking Station and Round Island. Unfortunately, we were not funded, but we were next on the list and won't give up!

Jones Pier and Oyster Bar Marsh have both opened.

7. Commissioner's Matters

No Updates.

8. Committee Members Matters

No Updates.

9. Chairman's Matters

No Updates.

10. Public Discussion Items

None.

11. Adjournment

Being no further business, Chairman Ferrell adjourned the meeting at 5:05 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Maura Stokes, Recording Secretary