



MINUTES - DRAFT

Regular Meeting – January 26, 2026

BEACH & SHORE PRESERVATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

John Heanue – Town of Orchid Appointee
Inocensia Hernandez – City of Fellsmere Appointee
Fred Jones – City of Sebastian Appointee
Taylor Dingle – City of Vero Beach Appointee
Michael Korpar – BCC Appointee

David Cox – BCC Appointee
Richard Harris – BCC Appointee
James Power – BCC Appointee
Francisco San Miguel – BCC Appointee
William Ferrell, Jr. – BCC Appointee

Bob Auwaerter – Town of IRS Appointee, Chairman
Joseph Earman – Commissioner, District 3, Commission Liaison

The **Beach & Shore Preservation Advisory Committee** met at 3:00 PM on Monday, January 26, 2026, in room B1-501 of County Administration Building B, located at 1800 27th Street in Vero Beach.

MINUTES

1. Call to Order

Chairman Bob Auwaerter called the January 26, 2026, meeting of the Beach & Shore Advisory Committee to order at 3:00 PM; a quorum was present.

Members Present

Bob Auwaerter, Town of IRS Appointee, Chairman
Commissioner Joseph Earman, BCC Liaison
John Heanue, Town of Orchid Appointee
Fred Jones, City of Sebastian Appointee
James Power, BCC Appointee, Vice Chairman
Francisco San Miguel, BCC Appointee
Michael Korpar, BCC Appointee
David Cox, BCC Appointee
Richard Harris, BCC Appointee

Members Absent

Inocensia Hernandez, City of Fellsmere Appointee
William Ferrell, Jr., BCC Appointee
Taylor Dingle, City of Vero Beach Appointee

Also Present

Kylie Yanchula, Natural Resources Director
Quintin Bergman, Coastal Resources Manager
Johnnie E. Sabin, Coastal Environmental Specialist
Ashley Brown, Indian River County Recording Secretary

2. Approval of Minutes

ON MOTION by David Cox, SECONDED by Michael Korpar, the members voted unanimously to approve the Minutes of November 17th, 2025.

3. Election of the Chairman & Vice-Chairman

ON MOTION by David Cox, SECONDED by Michael Korpar, the members voted unanimously elected Bob Auwaerter as Chairman.

ON MOTION by David Cox, SECONDED by Richard Harris, the members voted unanimously elected James Power as Vice-Chairman.

4. Approval of the 2026 Meeting Dates

ON MOTION by Michael Korpar, SECONDED by James Power, the members voted unanimously to approve the 2026 meeting dates as presented.

5. Coastal Division Updates, including Beach Restoration Projects

Quintin Bergman, Coastal Resources Manager, provided updates regarding the Coastal Division.

Sector 4 – Dune Restoration Project

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

- 116,970 cubic yards of sand placed, and 147,788 dune plants installed.
- Total construction contract cost: \$5,182,369.17.
- Post-construction monitoring remains ongoing.

Sector 7 – Porpoise Point Beach

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

The Final Technical Memo was shared with BSPAC members. The Community survey was mailed out to 698 addresses and received a 61% response rate. Staff is reviewing and analyzing responses for a future presentation.

Sector 5 Update – Vero Beach

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

Mr. Sabin provided committee members with a PowerPoint presentation reviewing Sector 5 updates.

- **Task 1 – Data Collection and Review:** Technical Memorandum delivered.
- **Task 2 – Beach Conditions Update:** Technical Memorandum delivered.
- **Task 3 – Sand, Environmental, and Biological Resources Update:** Technical Memorandum delivered.
- **Task 4 – Storm Vulnerability and Resilience Analysis Update:** Technical Memorandum delivered.
- **Task 5 – Beach Management Alternative Development:** Technical Memorandum delivered.
- **Task 6 – Summary and Recommendations:** Complete.
- A draft plan is currently being prepared for public release.
- Staff is coordinating with the consultant to schedule a BSPAC presentation and workshop in March.
- The March BSPAC presentation will initiate the public comment period.
- A tentative Special Call Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) meeting is anticipated in April to review the draft plan.

Sector 3 Update – Wabasso Beach

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

2021/2022 Beach and Dune Renourishment Project

- Partial FEMA funding received; reimbursement remains ongoing.

2023/2024 Hurricanes Ian and Nicole Dune Renourishment Project

- FEMA Project Worksheets have been received; project is complete.
- The County continues to await reimbursement for the 2021/2022 project.
- Permit required Year 1 Post-Construction Physical Monitoring Report complete & staff preparing Work Order for permit required Year 2 post-construction monitoring.

2024 Hurricane Milton Storm Damage Assessment

- The revised Storm Damage Assessment Report was submitted to FEMA in October 2025.

Sea Turtle Updates

As of October 31, the 2025 sea turtle nesting season came to an end.

- Completed the design of the next outreach campaign
- Preparing Work Order for the 2026 Sea Turtle Season.
- Staff is prepared to travel to FWC's statewide sea turtle meeting next month.

Miscellaneous Staff Updates

- Staff is prepared to travel to FSBPA's Technology Conference next month.
- LivVero published an article on the Beach Program.
- Staff presented the Town of Indian River Shores, last week covering updates on Sector 5 and Sector 4.
- Staff is providing a presentation to the Indian River Neighborhood Associate this Wednesday.

6. Update from the Sebastian Inlet District

Mr. James Gray was not in attendance; however, Mr. Bergman provided updates on his behalf.

Sand trap and channel dredging operations are currently ongoing. For the 2026 construction phase, approximately 40,000 cubic yards (CY) of material have been removed from the sand trap and channel and placed into the Dredged Material Management Area (DMMA). The contractor is anticipated to begin dredging and placement of approximately 130,000 CY of sand onto Sector 1 beach in early February, with work expected to continue through April.

7. Status of County Beach Parks

There were no formal updates, as Parks & Recreation staff were not in attendance.

Commissioner Earman noted that Tracking Station Beach Park remains closed, with the current estimated reopening anticipated at the end of February. The contractor continues to operate from that location and may extend into February depending on the extent of site restoration required.

All other County beaches remain accessible.

The Town of Orchid is currently undertaking a sand placement project, with approximately 17,000 cubic yards of sand being placed at a cost of approximately \$700,000. The project began successfully and is expected to be completed within a few weeks. Appreciation was expressed to Mr. Bergman and his team for their assistance with access and coordination.

Additionally, the Round Island Riverside boat ramps are currently under reconstruction.

8. Commissioner's Matters

Commissioner Earman thanked those in attendance for their continued service and participation.

He encouraged members to review the weekly BeachWatch emails distributed by the Florida Beach Association to stay informed on legislative developments affecting coastal management. He noted that the briefings provide thorough summaries of proposed legislation and budget considerations.

Commissioner Earman highlighted the Governor's proposed \$75 million allocation for beach projects, representing a \$25 million increase from the previous \$50 million level. He stated this could be a positive development, depending on how the funds are allocated and whether additional shoreline miles are included for eligibility.

He also referenced pending legislation related to critically eroded beach designations and financial planning requirements for local governments. Concerns were noted regarding potential unintended consequences in the bill language, including possible confusion over whether the proposed changes would replace or supplement the current critically eroded designation process, as well as the impact of expanding eligible shoreline miles, which could further distribute available funding.

Commissioner Earman reiterated his encouragement for members to review the weekly updates to remain informed on these evolving issues.

9. Committee Members Matters

There were none.

10. Chairman's Matters

Chairman Auwaerter provided comments regarding pending legislative changes related to beach management and critically eroded designations. He noted that he respectfully disagreed with prior comments suggesting that expanded eligibility could dilute available funding. In his view, the proposed legislation may help maintain critically eroded designations in areas such as Sector 4 and make it more difficult to remove that designation once applied.

Chairman Auwaerter distributed a printed report to Committee members prior to the meeting, which included the bill analysis, fiscal impact statement, and current committee vote record. He encouraged members to utilize the Florida Senate's online Bill Tracker to review bill text, legislative analyses, and status updates. He stated that the legislative analysis document helps clarify the intent and potential impacts of the proposed changes.

He reported that the bill recently passed out of the Senate Environment and Natural Resources Committee with unanimous support. Chairman Auwaerter noted that Senator Debbie Mayfield, whom he described as a strong advocate for Indian River County, supports the legislation.

Chairman Auwaerter suggested that municipalities within Indian River County may wish to consider submitting letters of support to the appropriate legislative committees and delegation members.

He also acknowledged that the proposed requirement for a perpetual easement may be a point of concern for some property owners but emphasized the importance of considering the broader, long-term public interest in shoreline protection.

11. Public Discussion Items

Mr. Power inquired about sand placement policies, specifically asking whether hotel properties are treated the same as residential property owners in regard to participation in beach nourishment projects.

Mr. Bergman explained that commercial properties, including hotels, are subject to the same easement requirements as residential properties for sand placement. He noted that certain oceanfront properties, such as the Driftwood Inn and Costa d'Este, are uniquely situated closer to the shoreline due to their historic locations and existing seawall configurations.

Mr. Bergman stated that sand cannot be placed in front of properties where a perpetual easement has not been secured. He further explained that in the past, Costa d'Este has opted to independently place emergency sand following storm events at its own expense when permitting allowed. However, such placements were not at the same volume as County-led nourishment projects.

No further comments were made.

12. Adjournment

Being no further business, Chairman Bob Auwaerter adjourned the meeting at 3:39 PM.

****A full recording of this meeting is available in the Office of Board of County Commissioners.****