



MINUTES

Regular Meeting – April 20, 2026

BEACH & SHORE PRESERVATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

John Heanue – Town of Orchid Appointee
Inocencia 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, April 20th, 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 meeting to order at 3:00 PM.

Members Present

John Heanue, Town of Orchid Appointee
Taylor Dingle, City of Vero Beach Appointee
William Ferrell, Jr. - BCC Appointee
Richard Harris, BCC Appointee
Fred Jones, City of Sebastian Appointee
David Cox, BCC Appointee
Bob Auwaerter, Town of IRS Appointee, Chairman
James Power, BCC Appointee, Vice Chairman

Members Absent

Francisco San Miguel, BCC Appointee
Michael Korpar, BCC Appointee
Inocencia Hernandez, City of Fellsmere Appointee

Also Present

Quintin Bergman, Coastal Resources Manager
Johnnie E. Sabin, Coastal Environmental Specialist
Max Sherman, Recording Secretary
Steve Barako, Superintendent - Parks, Recreation, Conservation
Joseph Earman, County Commissioner
Wendy Swindell, Assistant Director, Parks, Recreation, Conservation
James Grey, Executive Director of SID
Eric Charest – Assistant Director of Natural Resources
Lisa Smith – Sea Oaks
Greg Smith – Sea Oaks
Cherry Stowe – Town of Orchid

2. Approval of Minutes

- a. ***On MOTION by Taylor Dingle., SECONDED by Richard Harris, the members voted unanimously to approve the Minutes of April 20th, 2026.***
- b. ***On MOTION by David Cox, SECONDED by Taylor Dingle, the members voted unanimously to approve the Minutes of April 14th, 2026.***

3. Coastal Division Updates

A. Discussion on the 2026 Beach Preservation Plan (BPP) Update

County Coastal Division staff provided an update on the ongoing 2026 Beach Preservation Plan (BPP) Update and reviewed the presentation delivered to the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) on May 5, 2026. Staff summarized key findings from the draft update, recent public engagement efforts, and ongoing discussions regarding future beach management strategies throughout Indian River County.

The Committee discussed offshore sand resources and the importance of identifying and securing future sand sources to support long-term beach nourishment and coastal resilience efforts. Staff provided an overview of the 2025 Geophysical and Geological Data Acquisition on the Atlantic Outer Continental Shelf of Florida prepared by the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) and highlighted areas that may warrant additional investigation as potential borrow sites.

Committee members discussed projected sand needs for future county beach restoration and nourishment projects. Several members expressed concern regarding the long-term availability of suitable sand resources and emphasized the importance of proactively pursuing additional offshore sand sources to ensure adequate material is available for future projects. Members noted that identifying viable borrow areas can require significant time and resources and that advancing reconnaissance efforts now may help avoid future project delays.

Mr. Gray, representing the Sebastian Inlet District, informed the Committee that the District is planning to pursue additional reconnaissance efforts in the vicinity of Thomas Shoals. Mr. Gray indicated there may be opportunities for Indian River County to coordinate or partner with the District during future phases of investigation, potentially creating efficiencies and shared benefits for both organizations.

Mr. Powers raised a question regarding ownership and control of offshore borrow sites. Committee members and staff discussed the regulatory framework governing offshore sand resources and clarified that offshore sand deposits are not owned by individual local governments. Rather, these resources are managed through state and federal regulatory processes and are considered a public resource subject to applicable permitting requirements.

Following discussion, Mr. David Cox made the following motion:

"Recommend that the County continue pursuing the development of an offshore sand source near Bethel Shoals and request that staff provide the Committee with a one-page summary or similar document outlining potential next steps, timelines, and considerations associated with advancing the effort."

Motion seconded by: James Power

The motion passed unanimously.

Members of the public subsequently inquired about the process for incorporating public comments received during the BPP Update process. Staff explained that all comments received during the public review period are being evaluated and considered. Depending on the nature of the comment, staff noted that comments may result in revisions to portions of the report, additional discussion within the document, or formal responses where appropriate.

Several residents from Sector 7 expressed interest in having a more detailed implementation or "Action Plan" included as an appendix to the BPP. Residents indicated that such an appendix could help identify potential pathways forward and provide greater clarity regarding future beach management options within the sector.

During public comment, the topic of eminent domain was also raised in relation to obtaining the remaining easements needed to facilitate future beach restoration projects within Sector 7. Commissioner Earman noted that, at his request, the County Attorney's Office is currently researching the matter and evaluating the legal considerations associated with the use of eminent domain for beach project purposes.

B. Sea Turtle Updates

2026 Sea Turtle Nest Count	
Species	Number of Nests
Leatherback	23
Loggerhead	334
Green	0
Total	357
As of May 8th, 2026	

C. Educational Videos

Staff presented the two education videos that just went public. They can be viewed here:
https://indianriver.gov/services/natural_resources/coastal_engineering/educational_resources.php

4. **Updates from the Sebastian Inlet District**

5. **Status of County Beach Parks**

6. **Commissioner's Matters**

7. **Committee Members Matters**

8. **Chairman Matters**

9. **Public Discussion**

10. **Adjournment**

Chairman Bob Auwaerter adjourned the BSPAC meeting at 4:26 pm.

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