



MINUTES **Regular Meeting – April 20, 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, 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
Michael Korpar, BCC Appointee
Richard Harris, BCC Appointee
Fred Jones, City of Sebastian Appointee
David Cox, BCC Appointee
Inocensia Hernandez, City of Fellsmere Appointee
Francisco San Miguel, BCC Appointee
Bob Auwaerter, Town of IRS Appointee, Chairman

Members Absent

James Power, BCC Appointee, Vice Chairman

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
Dakota Whelen, Coastal Environmental Specialist
Wendy Swindell, Assistant Director, Parks, Recreation, Conservation
James Grey, Executive Director of SID
Shelly Distl - Constituent
Andy Goodenough – Constituent
Eric Charest – Assistant Director of Natural Resources

2. Approval of Minutes

ON MOTION by William Ferrell, Jr., SECONDED by Michael Korpar, the members voted unanimously to approve the Minutes of March 16th, 2026.

3. Coastal Division Updates, including Beach Restoration Projects

A. Presentation on Current Beach Conditions

County Coastal Division staff presented a photographic and technical overview of current beach conditions throughout Indian River County. Topics discussed included:

- Post-weather event shoreline conditions across multiple sectors
- Dune erosion and escarpment observations
- Ongoing monitoring of seaweed accumulation and shoreline movement
- Impacts to dune crossovers and beach access structures
- Evidence of profile equilibration following nourishment projects
- Dune vegetation performance and ongoing stabilization efforts

Key observations included:

- Sector 3 continued to show benefits from prior nourishment projects.
- Sector 5 experienced localized dune erosion near Ocean Gate.
- Sector 7 continued to demonstrate significant erosional vulnerability and exposure of seawalls and infrastructure.
- Staff emphasized that many observed shoreline adjustments are considered normal coastal processes following nourishment activity.

Discussion also included:

- Wind-blown sand impacts near parking areas and boardwalks
- Effects of wave refraction around structures
- Performance of recently installed dune vegetation and restoration efforts

B. Discussion on the 2026 Beach Preservation Plan Update

Staff provided an in-depth presentation on the draft 2026 Beach Preservation Plan Update,

including methodology, findings, and recommendations.

Topics reviewed included:

- Historical coastal conditions
- Sea level rise projections
- Shoreline change analysis
- Sand resource availability
- Environmental and ecological considerations
- Economic impacts of beach preservation
- Risk assessment by shoreline sector
- Shoreline management strategies

Key Findings Discussed

- Indian River County's shoreline remains generally stable due to continued nourishment efforts.
- Sea level rise along Florida's east coast has increased approximately six inches between 1992 and 2020.
- Sector 5 was identified as the highest-risk planning sector in the County.
- Beach nourishment remains the primary recommended shoreline management strategy.
- Additional consideration may be given to "impact design" nourishment approaches in future projects.
- Sector 7 continues to present major challenges due to erosion, armoring, and property coordination issues.

Management Strategies Reviewed

The plan evaluated multiple shoreline management strategies, including:

- No action
- Beach and dune nourishment
- Groins
- Artificial reefs
- Breakwaters
- Dune vegetation enhancement

Discussion ensued while staff explained the limitations and permitting challenges associated with offshore dredging, reef proximity, and environmental protections.

Sand Source Discussion

Committee members and staff discussed:

- Existing upland sand mine locations
- Potential offshore borrow sites
- Cost comparisons between truck-haul and dredge projects
- Transportation and mobilization costs
- Need for future sand source planning and permitting flexibility

4. Updates from the Sebastian Inlet District

- Nearing completion on dredging project
- 130,000 yards available between sand trap and channel
- Have dredged 120,000 of 130,000 available
- 35,000 cubic yards of sand placed

5. Status of County Beach Parks

Steve Barako, Parks Superintendent, provided an update.

- Ongoing maintenance and monitoring efforts at beach parks and access points

6. Commissioner's Matters

Commissioner Joseph Earman commented on:

- Continued fiscal responsibility regarding beach nourishment projects
- Importance of evaluating all nourishment and sand source options
- County coordination with municipalities and state agencies
- Long-term planning considerations for future nourishment needs

7. Committee Members Matters

Discussion topics included:

- Coastal Construction Control Line (CCCL) considerations and possible future reevaluation by the State
- Concerns regarding future sea level rise impacts and long-term nourishment costs
- Discussion regarding incorporation of private nourishment projects into shoreline analyses
- Discussion regarding Sector 7 easement coordination and long-term preservation strategies

A motion was proposed recommending that the State reevaluate the Coastal Construction Control Line due to the passage of time since the original designation; however, the motion failed for lack of a second.

8. Chairman Matters

Chairman Auwaerter facilitated discussion regarding:

- Long-term nourishment planning
- Cost efficiency considerations
- Future coordination with state and federal agencies regarding offshore borrow areas

9. Public Discussion

Public and committee discussion included:

- Dune vegetation survivability following freeze events
- Importance of irrigation for new dune plantings
- Discussion regarding future shoreline retreat and sea level rise impacts
- Consideration of additional tools for protecting Sector 7 properties

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.****