

## Minutes

### Dare County Oregon Inlet Task Force Meeting

Dare County Administration Building, Manteo, NC

9:30 a.m., October 12, 2021

Attendance: Jim Tobin, Harry Schiffman, Steve House, Bob Peele

#### 1.0 Review Minutes- July 13, 2021

Jim Tobin called the meeting to order at 9:30am. Bob Peele made the motion to adopt the minutes. Steve House seconded the motion. All in favor.

#### 2.0 Welcome guests

Jim thanked everyone for joining.

#### 3.0 NCDOT Division I update

Barton Grover updated the Task Force on the DOT Bonner Bridge demolition project. DOT is removing the final 20 to 25 piles near bent 26 and 27. One barge dump left to reef AR 255. DOT is beginning to remove cranes and demobilize, will soon only have one remaining. They have begun removing piles where barges were moored on south side of inlet.

#### 4.0 Update on buoys placement in & around O.I. by USCG ANT, Wanchese

John Ahlen with the Coast Guard said they put 23 back in. Once their 55 is back up, they will move 16 and 14 will remain where it is. 16A and 17 buoys will be moved to allow room for the dredge to work. John asked if the jetty light is being used by any mariners. The Coast Guard is looking to remove the light since no one is getting near that area due to shoaling. It is a hazard to maintain, but if boats are using it the Coast Guard will keep it maintained. Harry Schiffman said to check with charter boats which sometimes use the cut near there when it is open.

#### 5.0 Dredging Summary Report

Barton reported that the Murden arrived in late September and worked five 24 hour days. Total cost for dredging and mobilization in September was \$273,600. The Murden also worked the first day of October, but that charge will not be reflected until next month's summary. Harry Schiffman asked if we are getting charged for 24 hours on a crew change day. Joen Petersen said for a typical crew change day, Dare County is charged for 10 hours instead of 12. Because there were two crews working 24 hours, Dare County is charged for two crew change days for a total of 20 hours. Harry asked about September 27<sup>th</sup>, where the crews worked a 24 hour day but only 850 cubic yards were removed. Joen responded he would look into it. Jim Tobin stated the costs per cubic yard were astronomically high for this event. He also noted that for this cycle, we dredged a lot from the Bar, and didn't understand why the Corps would dredge from the Bar when west of the bridge is the primary area of concern. He understood that the Corps can only do partial

loads due to shallow depths, but west of the bridge should be the main focus. Joen responded that because of safety issues due to shallow conditions west of the bridge and how close the dredge must get to the bridge, the night crew worked on the Bar. Jim said two boats cannot go through that channel at the same time. Joen commented that the Merritt will be in Dare County for the next 30 days to work west of the bridge.

#### **6.0 O.I. Survey & Channel reports**

Todd Horton said the last survey west of the bridge was October 4<sup>th</sup> and the Merritt will focus on the shallow stretch between 17 and 19. Jim stated the fleet had seen some issues in that area. Harry asked what we can do to permit a wider channel because we are continuing to see issues west of the bridge. Ken Willson said there have been some internal discussions about that now that we are close to completing the permitting modifications for the Miss Katie. A formal call will need to be set up with the Corps and Division of Coastal Management to determine if a new permit for a 200 foot channel is required, because Corps Regulatory most likely will not approve a modification of the existing permit. The current environmental assessment is not looked on favorably by the resource agencies, so they are specific about not allowing for permit conditions to exceed what the Corps has permitted. Harry mentioned that in the past, the Corps has gotten emergency permits to address situations like this, so that should be part of the discussion. David Lekson with Corps Regulatory confirmed that those permits were issued based on that specific environmental document which is somewhat dated, so anything new beyond what is currently permitted will require a new document. Harry asked whether the Corps would request a widener to benefit their operations in the future like they've done previously. Jim stated the permit doesn't designate the channel width. David said that was correct, something like that may need to go to Washington D.C. for that to happen. Todd said that a new environmental assessment would have to be completed for a widener. The widener to dredge an additional 200 feet that was received before for east of the bridge was because it was a fixed location through that span of the bridge and there were issues with Bodie Island moving southward. If government plant is having issues maintaining a 100 ft channel, they would have more issues maintaining a 150ft or 200ft channel. They may need a pipeline dredge to get that open. Todd said west of the bridge is not a fixed channel and Todd is unsure if they've ever pursued a widener for a naturally deep channel. Ken said we need to look at options and plan for a long term answer to this issue. Jim said we need to get a dredge in there to maintain it; width doesn't matter if it isn't being maintained. Joen believed Dare County would not have a big issue once the Miss Katie is there maintaining it consistently. Harry thanked everyone for the good discussion.

#### **7.0 Corps Dredging Schedule**

The Merritt will be in Dare County for the next 30 days. They will continue to monitor South Ferry Channel, so there is a possibility the Merritt is sent down there for a few days.

## **8.0 Corps Private Dredge Contract**

Barton reported that the bid opening was October 1<sup>st</sup>. Corps estimate was \$1,000,025 for mobilization, \$8.80 per cubic yard, and \$11,980 for Supplies/Services. Total estimate: \$1,723,380. One bid was received. Bid cost for mobilization was \$1,965,000, \$37 per cubic yard, and \$27,685 for Supplies/Services. Total bid: \$4,878,685. Bid was almost 3 times the estimated cost and price per cubic yard was over 4 times the estimate. Bob clarified that this project was only for west of the bridge. Brennan said that the Corps has the plan and specs if a future event is needed and they have learned a lot about bin measurements to more accurately reflect what was dredged and pay based on what is in the hopper. Contractors often bid higher amounts per cubic yard, because the dredged area has shoaled in some by the time a survey is completed to calculate cubic yards dredged.

## **9.0 EJE Dredging Construction Update**

Jim and Steve went to a sand management conference last week in New Orleans and also visited Morgan City to observe the dredge and have a meeting. Both Jim and Steve commented that the construction is moving along well and is looking good. The hull is basically complete and is being welded together, the stern is complete, and the bow was being welded together. They have all the pieces cut for the house and assembly will be starting soon. Steve and Jim said Conrad Shipyard is still on schedule, but they are having staffing issues due to the recent hurricane in the area which affected the homes of many employees.

## **10.0 Permit Updates**

Permit updates discussed during agenda item 6.0.

## **11.0 Additional comments**

### **11.1 Current Budget**

11.1.1 Non- Federal Funds with Corps, estimated \$460,000

11.1.2 FY2022 President's Budget remaining- \$3,296,000

11.1.3 FY2022 Work Plan Budget - TBA

11.1.4 Remaining Fy2021 Dare Budget- \$100,846 (Total available with State Grant \$302,538)

11.1.5 Proposed Dare County FY2022 Budget- \$3,000,000

## **12.0 Administrative comments**

The Merritt dredge event will be withdrawing from non-federal funds until the Corps receives their quarterly federal allocation. Private dredge contract funds or Dare County funds will be transferred through the long term MOA in the coming months to ensure non-federal funds are available for future events. Brennan mentioned the private dredge account should have approximately \$3.9 million remaining and can be returned or transferred.

**13.0 Adjourn**

Bob made a motion to adjourn, Steve seconded. All in favor.

DRAFT