

Dare County Waterways Commission

Minutes

Monday, December 13, 2021

7:00 PM (Virtual Meeting)

Call to Order

Roll Call: Steve Coulter, Natalie Kavanagh, Michael Flynn, Danny Couch, KP Scott

Acceptance of Minutes: November 8, 2021

- Steve Coulter made a motion to approve the minutes. Michael Flynn seconded the motion. All in favor.

Welcome: Chairman Steve Coulter

- Steve thanked everyone for attending.

Public Comment

- No public comment

New Business

USCG Report

- John Ahlen stated they moved the buoys into the new channel. They will be returning soon to add a buoy on the red side across from 7. 4 will be moved to mark the tip of the shoal. Steve said he's heard the channel is holding up well and there are no issues running by buoys. The shoal on the west end near 8sf is beginning to creep down. Steve thanked the Coast Guard for moving the buoys so quickly. John Matuska said the channel is holding up well for them and they can make it through.

Corps Report

- Joen Petersen said the Merritt will return in mid-January for an approximately 10-day event. He commented that it is important to do these maintenance events to keep the channel open, because once it shoals in it costs more time and money to create a pilot channel to get it back open. Steve said there is much better flow in the new channel. Joen said they noticed the shoaling on the northwest end and will monitor that situation as additional surveys are completed.
- Brennan commented that he received an update on the Rollinson Channel. The comment period for the resource agencies was set to expire December 18th, but the Division of Coastal Management has requested a 30-day extension. There will be meetings between the Corps

and the agencies to resolve the concerns. Originally they were hoping to have a FONSI in early February, but now the expectation is early March. Steve asked for clarification on the timeframe. Todd Horton responded that the public had a 30-day comment period and the resource agencies have a 60-day comment period. They have asked for a 30-day extension, so 90 days in total. Steve asked if we had heard what the concerns are from the agencies. Brennan responded that it was concerning the anytime dredging. Brennan will provide an official written response on the timeline.

- Ken Willson stated if there is supplemental dredging required outside the window, we have been successful getting approval for that emergency work under the Dare County permit and should be able to get approval under Dare County's permit or the realigned authorization this upcoming spring and summer. Knowing this, Ken asked is there funding available for South Ferry Channel this current fiscal year. Brennan answered that the Corps has funds remaining from a planned pipeline project for Rollinson Channel, so once Rollinson Channel is realigned then funds will be available. Todd confirmed and said the Corps had \$380,000 from last year's budget and \$30,000 available for this year's budget. Todd said they are still waiting to hear what projects are funded from the infrastructure bill.
- Steve asked if the MOA was on track. Brennan responded he will check back in on the status, but believed everything was in order.

NCDOT Ferry Report

- No report from the Ferry Division
- Barton Grover commented that DOT is seeking to dredge the emergency ferry route in Rodanthe. Dare County is working with the Corps to determine capacity of the spoil site if a dredging event occurs.
- Steve said he has been asked about a DOT emergency declaration seeking a permit modification for pipeline dredging in Sloop Channel and placing dredged material to protect Highway 12. Todd answered that he would have to check with Regulatory, but that he had not heard of a permit modification.

2022 Meeting Schedule

- Barton shared the 2022 meeting schedule, which showed the Commission continuing to meet on the second Monday of the month. Barton asked whether the Commission would like to continue meeting virtually or in person. Steve asked if any meetings conflict with a holiday. Barton and Natalie commented that the October meeting conflicted with a federal holiday. The Commission asked to move the October meeting to the next day, Tuesday the 11th. Steve said the virtual format has worked well and he would like to continue meeting virtually. Danny Couch agreed and he said the virtual format is an efficient use of time and allows for more input and he believes we will see more local and state boards meeting virtually. Michael Flynn motioned to adopt the schedule as presented with the modification of the October meeting to Tuesday the 11th and to continue meeting virtually. Steve seconded the motion. All in favor.

Old Business

- None

Administrative Business

- Current Budget
 - Non-Federal Funds with Corps for SFC: \$527,995
 - President's Budget FY2022 for Rollinson Channel: \$30,000
 - Dare County FY2022 Budget: \$250,000 (\$0 remaining)
- MOA/Permit Status
 - MOA- Expires 01/2022
 - CAMA – Expires 12/2024
 - Department of the Army Permit – Expires 03/2027
- Funds withdrawn from non-federal account with the Corps to reflect November event, approximately \$222,000 expended.
- Ken said the County has submitted a package to DCM and the Corps to modify existing permits to allow the Miss Katie to be used. The existing permits specifically name the dredge plants; therefore, the Miss Katie needs to be added. He expects to receive approvals for the modification in February.
- Steve asked about the status of the permit modification in Oregon Inlet. Ken said we are still awaiting confirmation. A permit modification was previously received to allow the Miss Katie to dredge, but an additional modification to include 2 foot of over depth and sidecasting was requested.
- Natalie asked about the status of the Miss Katie. Barton asked Ken if other counties request the Miss Katie, would they need a permit modification in place. Ken believed that was the case. Barton commented that the dredge will predominantly be in Dare County. It is 68% complete. Expected completion date of late April and delivery date in May. Barton showed the Commission photos of the dredge. Steve asked if it would be able to dredge outside of South Ferry Channel. Ken said the modification is currently just for South Ferry Channel. Ken said they are working on a comprehensive approach to permit the Miss Katie to dredge in non-federal and federal channels throughout Dare County. They are looking at modifying the permits where hopper dredges and sidecast dredges have been used before, but also looking at disposal methods like open water disposal sites in the sound for channels that have previously only allowed pipeline dredging. Barton showed a map the GIS department created that is on the Dare County website to show what dredges are authorized in each channel and what the permitted depth and width of the channel is. Steve stated it is important to have the Miss Katie authorized for Rollinson Channel, so that if the Corps dredge plants are unavailable, the Miss Katie could dredge.

Board Member Business

- Danny said Tuesday there was a NC 12 Task Force subcommittee meeting. Randal Matthews who is on the Ocracoke Waterways Commission and is a Hyde County Board of Commissioner was present for that meeting and is here tonight. The Task Force wanted to

involve the Dare County Waterways Commission in conversations on the South Dock and the ferry route. There were discussions about utilizing dredge materials to buffer Highway 12 and the South Dock. Natalie said the Task Force wanted the Waterways Commission to know there was an opportunity to place dredged material in Ocracoke, when considering disposal site options for Hatteras Inlet. Randal confirmed that DOT is interested in using dredged material from Sloop Channel to nourish the area on the north end of Ocracoke. The long-term plan from DOT ultimately appears to be moving the ferry dock down closer to Pony Pens. If that route is chosen, the ferry route would not go through Sloop Channel. That would add at least another 45 minutes to the ferry trip and cause a hit to the economy of Hyde County.

- Barton stated that if the infrastructure bill does provide funding for Rollinson, then there may be a pipeline dredging event in the area in the future.
- Michael informed the Commission that the National Park Service Sediment Management Plan allows 6 miles of sediment placement a year, 5.4 of which is being used this year in Avon and Buxton.
- Steve and Ken said there is a close source of material for Ocracoke if South Ferry Channel is pipeline dredged. Randal said any grain of sand going to Ocracoke would be helpful.
- Steve asked Michael if the Sediment Management Plan allowed for direct placement of dredged material via pipeline. Michael and Ken did not recall limitations on the method, rather it focused on locations and time of the year material could be placed.
- Steve wished everyone a happy holiday and thanked everyone for their efforts this year.

Adjournment

- Danny made the motion to adjourn, Michael seconded. All in favor.

Next meeting is January 10, 2022 at 7:00pm. The meeting will be virtual.

Respectfully submitted,

By: _____
Barton Grover
Grants & Waterways Administrator

APPROVED By: _____
Steve Coulter, Board Chair
Dare County Waterways Commission