

Dare County Waterways Commission

Minutes

Monday, May 9, 2022
7:00 PM (Virtual Meeting)

Call to Order

Roll Call: Steve Coulter, Natalie Kavanagh, Ernie Foster, KP Scott, Michael Flynn

Acceptance of Minutes: April 11, 2022

- KP Scott made the motion to approve the minutes. Natalie Kavanagh seconded the motion. All in favor.

Welcome: Chairman Steve Coulter

- Steve thanked everyone for attending.

New Business

USCG Report

- Steve thanked the Coast Guard for marking the channel. John Ahlen said they will be moving buoy 2 and installing additional buoys in Sloop once dredging is completed there. Steve said the connecting channel looked great a few days ago and hopes it holds up through the nor'easter. John stated approximately three buoys will be installed in Sloop. Chief Matuska stated the official name will be Hatteras Connector channel and an official announcement will be done next week. They will be running the channel every day during the storm to check the conditions.

Corps Report

- Jeremy Smith reported the Merritt is docked in Wanchese due to the nor'easter. After the storm, the Corps will run surveys before determining where to move the Merritt. They are anticipating needing to dredge near buoy 19 for DOT due to shoaling. Catherine Peele confirmed that DOT would be requesting dredging near buoys 15 and 19. The Corps cannot sidecast near buoy 18 and 19, so they will have to receive approval from the agencies.
- Corps of Engineers, the Coast Guard, DOT, and resource agencies had a meeting concerning realigning Rollinson. The Corps stated they will be requesting to include the Hatteras Connector area in the realignment. They will be able to work the permitting concurrently with Dare County, which will be performing a cultural resource survey. KP asked if the realignment will be completed this summer. Jeremy believed it would be complete later this summer. Steve asked if the Corps would no longer be seeking to modify the corridor near Sloop. Jeremy responded they would not be modifying that area. Jeremy says there is a

corridor for Rollinson Channel, which the Corps will be able to dredge a 100ft channel within. The corridor width varies. Steve asked which SAV datasets are used by the Corps. He has heard that 2013 maps were being utilized, which show SAV in locations they are no longer present due to erosion of the inlet. Todd stated they use up to date satellite imagery to identify SAV.

- Steve asked when the Murden will return to North Carolina. Jeremy responded it is in Maine and will need an ABS inspection before September. It will be up north until July. The Murden also has some necessary repairs which need to be completed.
- Ernie Foster mentioned there is beginning to be shoaling near the breakwater. Todd said that is an area addressed during pipeline dredging and Barton stated Dare County is seeking permission for the Miss Katie to dredge that area also.

NCDOT Ferry Report

- Catherine Peele stated there are 3 days left of dredging in Sloop. The captains are reporting some relief, but can still not pass each other. The summer schedule will begin next week.
- KP asked about the status of the South Dock pilings. Catherine responded they have finished dredging Southport and are currently at Cherry Branch. Lance will be getting an updated survey of South Dock before dredging. Lance Winslow said once the survey is done, DOT will reach out to the agencies to get moratorium relief to dredge. Steve asked if the material will be placed in the spoil site to be used at the dunes. Lance said if the material is appropriate, but if there are too many fines then possibly the Park Service will use it. Lance said usually the top foot or two is sand, but much of it is mud. Catherine said with Lance's schedule, they will not be able to fit the piling installation into the schedule. Catherine said it may be in the best interest for Dare County to contract out the work. Based on the design requirements of the Corps and EJE, 3 sets of 2 steel tubes were recommended. The Corps had required the steel tubes or 13 pile clusters, which would push the vessel out into the way of the ferries and require a walkway to get to the dredge. Lance stated steel tubes would last longer than wood. They are now \$9,000 a pile compared to before when they were \$4,200.
- Steve asked when they would be installing DOT pilings at South Dock. Lance said whenever moratorium relief was granted and dredging was completed. Pilings cannot be installed until the area is dredged. For DOT to do the work, Catherine said it would be approximately \$155,000. Rough estimate for a private contractor would be \$215,000. KP commented that is a higher number than what we previously have heard. Dare budgets \$250,000 for dredging, which with state cost share is \$1,000,000. Barton said the state will not cost share on piling installation. KP said that puts this number in perspective. KP said about 25% of the time per day the Merritt is traveling from Hatteras instead of dredging. KP asked how much the Merritt charges per day. Barton responded \$20,500. Steve said it has been over a year since this has been discussed and nothing has been done. Dare County would save on dredge costs and DOT would also save costs for dredging the ferry channel. He said both Harold Thomas and Jed Dixon from DOT were also in support of the project, but now the cost has gone up and DOT does not want to do the work.
- Catherine said the delay of the state budget has held up numerous critical projects and they are having to play catch up on the infrastructure. Barton asked when the schedule would

allow for install. Lance said at least a year and a half. Hatteras, South Dock, and Silver Lake all need work, which doesn't include the ferry docks farther south. KP was concerned why we are finding out right now after a year of being told they would be installed.

- Natalie asked how much 25% a day costs for the dredge to travel from Hatteras and how many days a year do we dredge. Barton responded around \$5,000 and we dredge 40 days a year. After 4 years, the investment would even out in terms of cost to install pilings versus how much dredging \$215,000 would get with state cost share.
- Steve asked who would own these pilings if Dare installed them. Lance said it is Park Service property and DOT has a special use permit to operate there. Steve said the current Sloop Channel work cost \$257,000, if the pilings were installed DOT would have saved approximately \$50,000 on this event. That's almost half the cost of what the pilings would cost to be installed.

Public Comment

- No comment

Old Business

- None

Administrative Business

- Current Budget
 - Non-Federal Funds with Corps for SFC: \$162,000 (as of April 26th)
 - Infrastructure Bill for Rollinson Channel: \$1,430,000
 - President's Budget FY2022 for Rollinson Channel: \$30,000
 - Dare County FY2022 Budget: \$250,000 (\$0 remaining)
- MOA/Permit Status
 - MOA- Expires 02/2023
 - CAMA – Expires 12/2024
 - Department of the Army Permit – Expires 03/2027
- Ken Willson asked the Corps to confirm they are complete with dredging the Connector Channel. Jeremy will look into that.
- Barton said he will be monitoring the condition of the channel after the nor'easter. After this dredging event, the funds will be depleted. Additional funds will be available once the 2023 budget is approved, but it does take Division of Water Resources 30 days to move funds to the Corps. This would mean no additional dredging days until August 1st. The Corps has stated the Rollinson and Avon pipeline project funds will be rolled to next year.
- Dare received the DEQ cost share contract for the corridor expansion and the budget amendment and contract will be presented to the Board of Commissioners at the May 16th meeting. Once approved, we will enter into a contract with Coastal Protection Engineering to perform the

cultural resource survey. Ken Willson said they are looking to use both a survey vessel and a drone over two full days to cover as much area as possible.

Board Member Business

- Michael was glad to hear the dredging was successful and wished everyone safe passage over the summer. Michael wanted to mention the Albemarle- Pamlico National Estuary Partnership, which is involved in managing and monitoring SAV. Their website has the Coastal Habitat Protection Plan and other documents that can be looked through about agencies which monitor water quality and SAV.

Adjournment

- Ernie made the motion to adjourn, KP seconded. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

By: _____
Barton Grover
Grants & Waterways Administrator

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