

Minutes

Dare County Oregon Inlet Task Force Meeting

Dare County Administration Building, Manteo, NC

9:30 a.m., May 10, 2022

Attendance: Jim Tobin, Harry Schiffman, Bob Peele, Steve House, Russ King, John Ponton

1.0 Review Minutes- April 12, 2022

Jim Tobin called the meeting to order at 9:30am. Harry Schiffman made the motion to adopt the minutes. Bob Peele 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. One more barge dump remaining once the nor'easter moves through. They have one barge remaining to remove that is currently stuck on the south side of the bridge due to the shoaling. Jim mentioned that DOT is applying for funds to study moving South Dock to Pony Pens, which would mean Sloop Channel would not be maintained anymore.

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

John Ahlen reported they moved 17, 19, and 21 after last dredge event. After the nor'easter, they will be looking at surveys to determine if they will mark an alternate channel over the Bar.

5.0 Dredging Summary Report

John Ponton reported the Merritt dredged the first of April, which ended the March event. We are still waiting for an update from the Corps for more accurate numbers. Jeremy Smith commented he spoke with Dee Dee and they are working on getting that information over to Barton. Harry asked how the Corps computes the cubic yardage for a dredging event, do they use the surveys or rely on what the monitors show on the dredge. Joen Petersen responded on the hopper dredge they use the instrumentation and for the Merritt, they use a calculation of 5 cubic yards per minute.

6.0 O.I. Survey & Channel reports

Jeremy Smith said they would survey the Bar and west of the bridge after the nor'easter.

7.0 Corps Dredging Schedule

Joen said the dredging schedule and where the Merritt will go will be based on what the surveys show.

8.0 EJE Dredging Construction Update

Jim stated the two-day tanks for fuel failed their pressure tests, so they are getting a company to make two more. That will delay the delivery by about two weeks. They are experiencing some supply chain issues with the power distribution panels and other parts.

9.0 Permit Updates

Ken Willson said everything is in place for the Miss Katie in Oregon Inlet. Right now, the top priority is permitting the channel from Shallowbag Bay to 17 Extension. That application will be submitted by the end of the week. Once all the applications are submitted, it is expected to take about 6 months to have the permits in hand. The other permit is for Old House Range 2 and the permission of an additional bird island in that area. That application will be submitted in about two weeks. The third application will permit Walter Slough and The Crack, which will be submitted sometime next month. At the same time, they will be able to submit one Corps permit application for all the channels.

Jim asked Ken to talk about what was discussed at the NCBIWA meeting concerning thin layer placement. Other states have gone full speed ahead, but so far only small-scale work has been done in North Carolina. NOAA's projects showed good results. Ken said thin layer placement was looked at in the Dare County dredge material management plan and the best step moving forward was to look to the Corps CAP 204 program to fund a more detailed feasibility study to determine whether or not thin layer placement will work in the areas identified in the report. The 204 program would provide a detailed plan and agencies would be consulted during the process. Dare County would be responsible for the difference between the cost to pipeline to a CDF versus the cost for thin layer placement. Brennan said they have received the letters of support for these projects, so the process is ongoing to seek funds for those projects. Jim was in full support of these types of projects.

10.0 Additional comments

The pipeline project for Wanchese to Oregon Inlet is planned to be bid in September. Ken said we are working with WRC for approval to dispose at Island H. WRC said work could begin after June 27th. Ken said we'll need to coordinate with the Corps in terms of when the Island H work would be done and when the contractor is pipeline dredging. Barton asked if the Corps will be bidding at what the current capacity is with an option to the contract for the additional capacity created. Brennan confirmed.

Russ asked if DOT will be marking the bents. Barton said it did not sound like it was in their plans, but would reach out again. Russ said a lot of the charter boats are cutting under the bridge before the shoal and the transient boaters have asked.

Bob asked what is the concern of the regulatory agencies about thin layer placement. Ken responded it is a lack of familiarity and it is a risk placing sediment over marsh. The companies need to surgically place the material so the marsh is not smothered. But other states have shown dredging companies have the capability to do it correctly.

Harry said the survey boat is on its way back from Metal Tech today. The radar arches have been installed. All the materials are in, including the generator and air conditioner.

Harry asked Barton to speak to the Corps about any information they may have about a disposal site north of Ballast Point and determine what information they have concerning Oregon Inlet. Brennan said it would require a FOIA request. He said the information is in different offices and in different formats. Harry said he used to be able to get information from the librarian. Joen said there is no longer a library and the files were stored where there was space.

Michael Flynn asked if the survey vessel was restricted to use in navigation channels or if the vessel could be contracted. Harry said that would be a question for EJE. Barton said he would pass along the contact info for EJE.

Bob said the Wanchese Industrial Park board considered a lease for EJE at a recent meeting, both the Corps and EJE have agreed to share dock space.

Related to Miss Katie, Barton reported the Waterways Commission had sought to work with DOT to install pilings at South Dock to reduce travel time for the dredges. However, at yesterday's Waterways Commission Meeting, DOT stated they did not have time to install the pilings and estimated the installation would cost over \$200,000. Originally the cost was estimated at \$20,000.

Harry asked the Corps if the EJE survey boat would be able to utilize the same building as the Corps survey boats. Jeremy will check with Corps counsel.

Barton submitted the shallow draft application for state cost share for the Miss Katie to dredge Oregon Inlet. Dare is requesting \$6 million to match \$3 million in County funds.

11.0 Administrative comments

11.1 Current Budget

11.1.1 Non- Federal Funds with Corps, estimated \$1,350,250

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

11.1.3 Dare County FY2022 Budget- \$3,000,000

11.1.4 Infrastructure Bill (Wanchese to Oregon Inlet) - \$6,400,000

12.0 Adjourn

Steve made the motion to adjourn. Russ seconded.