

Dare County Waterways Commission

Minutes

Monday, September 12, 2022

7:00 PM Manteo

Call to Order

Roll Call: Steve Coulter, Natalie Kavanagh, Ernie Foster, Kermit Skinner, KP Scott, Michael Flynn, Danny Couch

Acceptance of Minutes: July 11, 2022

- Danny Couch made the motion to approve the minutes. Steve Coulter seconded the motion. All in favor.

Welcome: Chairman Steve Coulter

New Business

USCG Report

- John Ahlen reported the Coast Guard expects to be back down to move buoys in the Connector Channel later this week. Work has predominantly been in Barney Slough after the dredging event. Steve said the green buoy at the end of Sloop is gone. Also, the point has moved farther to the north. John reported they will make that area a priority. Steve said it is getting shallow between buoy 8 and 9. Steve asked about conditions in Oregon Inlet. John replied that the shoal has encroached on the west side of the bridge and some buoys are off station at the Bar after the recent blow. Once the alternate channel is opened, the Coast Guard will mark that channel.

Corps Report

- Todd Horton announced Coley Cordeiro as the new Shallow Draft Project Manager. The Snell and Merritt will be complete in the alternate channel on Wednesday. The Murden worked 4 days in Barney Slough recently also. The latest schedule for the realignment will be October 24th due to additional comments from an environmental agency. Therefore, they are tracking dredging the Connector Channel in late October. Steve asked how much of the shoaling between 8 and 9 is in the existing permitted corridor. Ken Willson commented a majority of the shoaling is outside the permitted corridor. Ken shared the site plans for the proposed dredging event. Ken commented the total acreage of the modification has forced DCM to run it as a Major Modification instead of Minor. Therefore, they have 75 days to review. Steve commented the agencies have been aware of our request since we received permission to dredge this area in May. KP said this is why people get frustrated, it is only 2

days of dredging that is needed and it can't be done due to permitting issues. Ken and Steve asked when the Merritt could be in the Connector Channel. Todd said they will be in Carolina Beach for a few days then Lockwoods Folly will be dredged until middle of October. Steve asked how the Murden was allowed to place material in the Sound when the Corps dredged Barney Slough. Todd said it was an emergency one-time approval.

- KP believed the channel will not be open by the time the Merritt returns in early November. Steve agreed. Ken said we needed to know the amount of days that the channel needs to be dredged and when the Corps has availability. He will begin making calls tomorrow to the agencies. The Cultural Resources survey has been completed and they are aware that historically South Ferry Channel has closed in when maintenance dredging has not occurred. KP mentioned last winter when the Coast Guard in Hatteras could not get out of South Ferry to respond to the plane crash, and that we can't wait for the channel to close before getting emergency dredging approval. Natalie Kavanagh motioned to immediately request a one-time dredging event outside the permitted corridor before the Merritt leaves for Carolina Beach. KP seconded. All in favor.

NCDOT Ferry Report

- Catherine Peele reported the Corps performed dredging in Barney Slough and two vessels can now pass at the same time. The maintenance crew is working at Silver Lake installing pilings.
- They are understaffed across board so the schedule is tentative. They are trying to get to South Dock and Hatteras to install pilings before Fort Fisher is dredged.
- The passenger ferry has been extended until the end of September. They are performing a project to look at 9-foot shoal because it appears be more stable than Bigfoot Slough.

Public Comment

- Kyle Ward with NOAA stated they will be rescheming the Electronic Navigational Charts and suggested the Commission reach out online to recommend Oregon Inlet and Hatteras Inlet be prioritized. Kyle will send an email to Barton with a link to the website.

Old Business

- None

Administrative Business

- Current Budget
 - Non-Federal Funds with Corps for HCC: \$217,000
 - Infrastructure Bill for Rollinson Channel: \$1,430,000
 - Dare County FY2023 Budget: \$250,000
 - Miss Katie Remaining Funds: \$800,000
- MOA/Permit Status
 - MOA- Expires 02/2023
 - CAMA – Expires 12/2024
 - Department of the Army Permit – Expires 03/2027

- Barton reported they have received a cubic yardage total from the Corps for the Avon Channel. Approximately 40,000 cubic yards to dredge to 6ft and approximately 130,000 cubic yards to dredge to 8ft. Coordination is ongoing between the Corps, DOT, and Park Service for disposal area options. Placing it on the interdunal road, near the Haulover, and/or on the beach are options.
- Next meeting will be on a Tuesday in Buxton.
- The Miss Katie has begun dredging the Bar at Oregon Inlet. It is currently docked in Wanchese with some draghead issues. Once the Corps opens up the alternate channel, the Miss Katie will follow. Ernie Foster asked how much it drafts. Barton stated 5ft 3 inches, but once fully loaded it is 8ft.
- Once realignment is completed, Dare County will look to obtain permits for other channels in the Hatteras Inlet complex. That process is a minimum of 6 months.
- Ken showed a polygon of an area to be dredged for the next event and asked the Commission to confirm this area will address the concerns. The Commission confirmed.
- Steve asked about the MOA. Barton said his understanding is once the channel is realigned, it will fall under the long-term MOA that expires in 2026. Natalie and Steve expressed concern that the realignment may not be completed prior to the expiration of the short-term MOA. Natalie made a motion to begin processing paperwork for the short-term MOA. Steve seconded. All in favor. Coley Cordeiro responded she will track this issue and have a response from the Corps.

Board Member Business

Adjournment

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

Respectfully submitted,

By: _____
Barton Grover
Grants & Waterways Administrator

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