

## Minutes

### Dare County Oregon Inlet Task Force Meeting

Dare County Administration Building, Manteo, NC

9:30 a.m., November 15, 2022

Attendance: Jim Tobin, Harry Schiffman, Russ King, Jamie Reibel, John Ponton

Staff: Barton Grover

#### 1.0 Review Minutes- October 11, 2022

Meeting was called to order at 9:30am. Harry made the motion to approve the minutes. Russ King seconded the motion. All in favor.

#### 2.0 Welcome guests

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

John Ahlen reported the Coast Guard has been out yesterday and today to relocate all buoys east of the bridge. Notifications have been sent out to notify mariners of the shoaling.

#### 4.0 Dredging Summary Report

John Ponton reported there was no federal dredging during October. A summary of dredging during federal FY22 is in the agenda packet. As seen on the table, the last several years less than 200,000 cubic yards have been dredged each year, compared to FY16 when almost 1 million cubic yards was dredged by all three dredges. With some of the dredges in dry dock, less dredging has occurred. John stated that even with the Miss Katie, this shows the need for the Corps to assist in dredging 1 million cubic yards per year to match the shoaling rates.

#### 5.0 O.I. Survey & Channel reports

Joen reported a survey was completed on the 7<sup>th</sup> of November after the storm. They are planning to survey up near the marked channel which boaters are using to transit under the bridge. No recent surveys have been completed on the Bar, but a survey will be completed later this month or next month.

#### 6.0 Corps Dredging Schedule

Joen Petersen commented the Merritt has bent a rudder and is heading to Manns Harbor for repairs. It should be back in the water on Thursday and work approximately 10 days in Oregon Inlet to deepen the alternate channel.

#### 7.0 EJE Dredging Update

Jordan Hennessy reported roughly 13,000 cubic yards were dredged in Oregon Inlet in October. Before the Corps implemented the no-dredge box in the alternate channel due to the silt content of a vibrocore sample, the Miss Katie was just beginning to remove half a

load at a time. Over the time period dredging was not allowed, the channel shoaled back in. Right now, the Miss Katie can access the channel during high water and has sidecasted. The Miss Katie has also worked on the Bar.

Jordan asked the Corps if they would be obtaining additional vibracore samples. Coley responded they will be obtaining additional vibracores. The RFQ for a contractor to perform the sampling went out today and responses will be due the 18<sup>th</sup> of November. The urgent dredge request was sent out to the agencies and all agencies concurred with moving forward with dredging. Monitoring of turbidity will occur when the Merritt is operating. Temporary authorization for dredging the alternate channel is 8 plus 2ft.

## **8.0 Permit Updates**

Ken Willson said the Miss Katie will be authorized to do the same dredging in the alternate channel that the Corps is authorized to perform. 3 CAMA permits have been submitted. One for the channel from Wanchese to Range 17. Some comments have been received. Another permit is for Old House Range 2, which will include the permitting of a bird island. The third permit would be for the permitting of Walter Slough and the Crack and the shortcut under the bridge. Permits are expected to be received in later Winter and early Spring. Harry asked if the Corps was considering a widener for the alternate channel, since the Corps is going through the NEPA process already for that area. A wider channel would hold up better during storms. Coley stated there have been discussions about this and a meeting will be held later this month to determine options for widening the channel.

## **9.0 Additional comments**

Jerald Craddock thanked the Task Force for their efforts. He attended a meeting a week ago with the several other residents about the issues with Oregon Inlet and they realized the Task Force was having the same issues they were. Therefore, they wanted to come to the meeting to voice their concerns. One issue they noted was the Corps enforcing a no dredge zone due to the sample having more than 10% silt. Jim spoke about the issue and conversations with the Corps concerning the sample and allowing dredging to continue.

Jerald Craddock also asked whether Oregon Inlet was under a state of emergency. Jim responded they do have emergency approval to operate in the alternate channel. The Corps FONSI did not cover the alternate channel, so emergency authorization was given by the agencies to allow for return to dredging. Multiple state and federal agencies have a say in this issue. Jerald asked when it is expected the channel will be open. Harry and Jim stated it was hard to predict mother nature and the inability to dredge for a few weeks has caused the channel to shoal in, hopefully mid-December. Once the Miss Katie begins loading the hopper it drafts deeper. Jim also noted the Miss Katie cannot go out between bents 30 and 31 under the bridge due to DOT restrictions on weight, which is understandable due to the construction of the bridge and the narrowness of the opening. Harry gave credit to the Corps for monitoring different channels over the last several years to identify a channel

that will be able to self-maintain in its current position better than the channel parallel to the bridge.

Mark Vrablic commented the channel needs to be at least 10ft for the trawlers to travel through Oregon Inlet. His company has been waiting for years for the dredge and bridge to be built, but it is frustrating that the Corps could stop dredging just as the Miss Katie was making progress. Harry commented that once the NEPA process is completed, the channel will be allowed to be dredged to 12ft. Jordan stated they have begun anchoring the dredge south of the bridge to reduce travel time and increase the time dredging by about 3 hours.

## **10.0 Administrative comments**

### 10.1 Current Budget

10.1.1 Miss Katie Remaining Funds - \$8,591,403

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

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

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

Barton mentioned once the permits are received, DEQ has stated we will need to modify the shallow draft application to show the other interior channels to be dredged.

Conversations will need to be had about which channels and the \$ amount that should be allocated for dredging them. The modification of the Oregon Inlet state cost share contract has been submitted to change the state match from 66.67% to 75%. Mark Vrablic commented the short channel out of Wanchese will need maintenance from the Miss Katie.

## **11.0 Adjourn**

Russ made the motion to adjourn. Jamie seconded.