

# Dare County Waterways Commission

## Unofficial Minutes

Monday April 10, 2023

### Call to Order

**Roll Call:** Steve Coulter, Natalie Kavanagh, Ernie Foster, Michael Flynn (Virtual)

### **New Business**

### **USCG Report**

- John Ahlen and Chief Matuska spoke about conditions in Sloop Channel. Buoys have been relocated, but the channel is only 40 ft wide. They do not want to impede traffic by placing the buoy in an area where it may float in the way of traffic, so buoys are placed up on the shelf. Boaters should not run up close to the buoys. Buoy 42 light in Rollinson was extinguished and has been fixed. The Coast Guard also relocated buoys in Hatteras Inlet Channel and Barney Slough. The Connector Channel is in good condition. Boaters will need to stay away from the 14 buoy and they cannot run green to green in between 13 and 11.

### **Corps Report**

- Todd Horton stated the Sloop, Hatteras Connector, and Barney Slough surveys have recently been completed. The Barney Slough survey was completed after the Murden departed. Joen commented there are no dredge events on the schedule for Hatteras. Todd said federal funds remaining are limited for this area. Steve asked how much was originally budgeted and how much has been spent. Joen replied that it looks like the Merritt has billed around \$1.1 million this fiscal year and he does not have the final number for the Murden, but estimated approximately \$400,000 in dredging costs for the Murden.
- Ken Willson asked if there had been any surveys of the areas where material was placed in Barney Slough and if there was any guidance given to the captains for where to place, depths, contours etc. Todd said surveys will be done soon. Joen said the guidance was to spread throughout the disposal area so as to ensure disposal did not occur above authorized dredge depths. Ken asked about the anticipated pipeline project and if that was still scheduled for this winter. Todd said it is still on schedule for 2023/2024, but cost estimates for the work are higher than estimated so they are having to work through which areas pipeline dredging should be focused. The DOT island is submerged at high water and therefore would be costly to place material on that site compared to if it were dry during mean high water.
- Ernie brought up the shoaling near the breakwater and what was stated before is that only pipeline dredging is allowed. He asked if the Corps is pursuing the ability to hopper dredge that area. Todd said they are not. Barton commented Dare County is, but that will be approximately 6 months before that permit is received. Todd said that is one of the areas the pipeline dredge would address. Steve asked if an emergency could be declared to get that area dredged. Todd said there would need to be a letter from the County requesting dredging

which would then be passed along to the agencies. The Coast Guard could also provide a letter. Barton stated there is funding with the Corps for the Connector Channel. Joen said the Murden is fully booked for the next 60 days.

### **NCDOT Ferry Division Report**

- Catherine Peele said Sloop and Barney are narrow and weather conditions caused the suspension of the ferry over the weekend. They are still waiting for the Skyco crane barge to be repaired. Some temporary repairs were made to the piling clusters in Hatteras. Ken asked if DOT had any internal discussions about permitting a shorter route near Sloop. Cat said they have had some initial discussions with agencies and internally about costs.

### **Miss Katie Report**

- Jordan Hennessey with EJE Dredging reported the Miss Katie dredged a total of 12 days and approximately 17,500 cubic yards. There were 4 days they were unable to operate due to weather. The channel appears to be in good condition. Steve asked how it looked in Oregon Inlet. Jordan said they will need to see how it looks after the recent storm, but his captain indicated the channels held up well. Steve asked Jordan if they had looked at the area near the breakwater and if it could be dredged. Jordan confirmed the Miss Katie could dredge that area. Steve asked Ken if we could obtain an emergency approval for the Miss Katie to dredge the breakwater area. Ken said that is only a method for the Corps to use. Dare County would need to modify an existing permit or obtain a permit which we are working on acquiring now.

### **Public Comment**

- Woody Joyner from North Carolina Watermen United relayed questions from captains about the conditions of the inlet. Steve said the Connector Channel is as good as it has been in years, but the ferry channel is narrow. Ernie summarized by saying the worst areas we have are still deep and wide enough for the ferries to go through.

### **Old Business**

- Barton reported that preliminary contracting is still ongoing in Stumpy Point and Avon, but work should begin by the end of the month.
- There will be an open spot on the Waterways Commission. An application will need to be submitted online. Selection of a new Waterways Commission member can be discussed at next month's meeting.
- Ken noted the agencies have requested another interagency meeting next month on the 8th to discuss the Miss Katie permit for Hatteras Inlet. After that meeting, the application will be submitted within a few days.

### **Administrative Business**

- Current Budget
  - Non-Federal Funds with Corps for HCC: \$217,000
  - Infrastructure Bill for Rollinson, Avon, Stumpy Point \$5,613,000

- Rollinson Channel Remaining Funds: \$0
- Dare County FY2023 Budget: \$250,000 (\$0 remaining)
- Miss Katie Remaining Funds: \$308,000
- MOA/Permit Status
  - MOA- Expires 09/2026
  - CAMA – Expires 12/2025
  - Department of the Army Permit – Expires 03/2027

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