



Minutes

Dare County Oregon Inlet Task Force Meeting

Dare County Administration Building, Manteo, NC

9:30 a.m., May 9, 2023

Attendance: Harry Schiffman, Steve House, John Ponton, Russ King

Staff: Barton Grover

Others in Attendance: Michael Flynn, Ken Willson, Jordan Hennessy, John Ahlen, Todd Horton

1.0 Review Minutes- April 11, 2023

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

2.0 Welcome guests

- Harry Schiffman welcomed guests to the meeting.

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

- John Ahlen reported over the last month they have installed new fixed aids. They will be working additional buoys over the next week. The 55 is still being repaired, but the 49 will be online soon for use.
- They will be moving 27 and 28 and also placing another buoy closer to the Crack where there is a gap in navigational aids. Harry commented that will be helpful for boaters.

4.0 Dredging Summary Report

- John Ponton stated no Corps dredging was performed last month in Oregon Inlet.

5.0 EJE Dredging Update

- Jordan Hennessy reported the Miss Katie dredged 82,940 cubic yards during the month of April. A majority of the material dredged was from east of the bridge.
- Harry asked about the status of dredging in Lockwood Folly. Jordan said that the DWR cost share contract has been set up and they are continuing permit coordination. John asked if their plan is to go to Lockwood Folly as soon as permitting is finalized and if conditions are good at Oregon Inlet. Jordan responded it was.

6.0 O.I. Survey & Channel reports

- Todd commented a new survey was just completed of the inside channel. The Bar Channel survey will be completed every other month. Ken Willson requested a new survey by early June for the Bar before the next quarterly meeting with the agencies.

7.0 Corps Dredging Schedule

- Todd stated there was no anticipated dredging by the Corps within the next 90 days.

8.0 Permit Updates

- Ken Willson updated the Task Force on the permits for the interior channels. These permits have been on hold since January or February as we have gone back and forth with the agencies. There was a meeting between Bobby, Harry, Steve, Barton and Ken with DCM. Since that meeting, DCM continues to have talks with the Wildlife Resources Commission on the bird island issue. Once the condition language is decided, DCM would like to have a meeting with the County. Once conditions are agreed, a permit could be issued within a week.
- Ken reached out to Josh with the Corps who stated they are on hold until they see the final conditions from the State. Ken expects their permits may take an additional few weeks to receive.

- There are surveys that need to be completed in the Crack and Walter Slough before dredging can occur. Once the DEQ contracts are set up, that work will begin. Barton is already working on getting that set up.
- Ken said they continue to coordinate with the Corps and work on permitting disposal depth of up to 18ft depth. A FOIA request was submitted to obtain further information. Ken believes with the existing modelling information, DOT studies, and previous research done by CPE and CSE for beach nourishment, there is proof that material placed to a depth of 18ft would stay in the system. There is not statistical significance between 14ft and 18ft and since the sand would only be placed deeper during times of sea conditions over 3 ft then not all the sand would be placed at that depth.
- Barton stated the funding for the dredging and the surveys would be available at the end of June once DEQ contracts are set up.

9.0 Administrative comments

9.1 Current Budget

9.1.1 Miss Katie DEQ Contract Remaining Funds - \$3,208,193

9.1.2 Non- Federal Funds with Corps - \$383,762

9.1.3 Federal Funds for OI - \$464,700

9.1.4 Dare County FY2022 Budget- \$3,000,000 (\$690,000 remaining)

9.1.5 President's Budget and Omnibus - \$7.2 million

- Barton informed the Task Force the DEQ cost share applications have been submitted or will be submitted later this week after the Board of Commissioners approved the Resolutions. There will be four cost share contracts which align with the 4 CAMA permits.
- There will be a cost share contract for required surveys in the Crack & Walter Slough to acquire permits. The Corps has never dredged the Crack and has only dredged Walter Slough to 7ft by 70ft, therefore cultural resource, shellfish, and submerged aquatic vegetation surveys are needed. The other federal channels have been previously cleared to 12ft by 100ft and therefore do not need those surveys. No dredging can occur until those surveys have been completed.
- Harry asked if those funds can be rolled over. Barton stated he had spoken to Finance about this and those funds cannot be rolled over. Harry asked for Barton to check on that again. Since the Miss Katie did not begin significant operations until October, there will be funds leftover and the Miss Katie has been very productive working the inlet over the recent months.

10.0 Additional comments

- Ray Celeste spoke concerning the feasibility study for the Oregon Inlet Jetty Project. Representative Wittman and Dr. Murphy have been working to get a feasibility study authorized and funded over the last 3 years. It was enacted into law last year and funding was requested for the study. Dr. Murphy met with the Dare County Board Chair and Vice-Chair along with the County Manager. Ray reported the Commissioners did not want to pursue a feasibility study at this time. County and State match would have been \$1.5 million.
- Ray relayed to the Task Force that if any assistance is needed related to permitting issues to reach out. Harry thanked Ray and Dr. Murphy for their efforts.
- Michael Flynn reported the Park Service is working on a Memorandum of Understanding with the Corps for the inside channel. The Corps is currently operating in this channel under emergency authorization.
- Harry asked Todd if the widener is included. Todd said it was not. The widener is for advanced maintenance in between dredge events and if a dredge is consistently working the channel, there is no need for the advanced maintenance width. Steve stated we are not looking at the widener for advanced maintenance, but for safety. Todd said an authorization change would need to go through Congress.

11.0 Adjourn

- Steve made the motion to adjourn. John seconded.