



Dare County Waterways Commission

Minutes

Monday May 8, 2023

Call to Order

Roll Call: Steve Coulter, Natalie Kavanagh, Ernie Foster, KP Scott, Danny Couch, Michael Flynn (virtual)

New Business

USCG Report

- John Ahlen reported a new vessel will be introduced which drafts a few inches less than the 55, so they will be getting everyone certified on it the next couple of weeks. Steve reported there will be an offshore fishing tournament starting this week, so to be aware of the boat traffic transiting through the channel when relocating buoys. Those boats will be leaving in the morning and returning in the afternoon around 4, so the Coast Guard will have time to relocate buoys in between. The Coast Guard will be moving 13 and Steve requested 14 be relocated to better define the shoal.

Corps Report

- Todd Horton stated in terms of federal funding for the Rollinson Channel, all funds have been expended for this fiscal year which ends September 30th. The Corps has communicated with Hyde County, which will be requesting funds from the shallow draft navigation fund to dredge Sloop Channel. Those funds should be received by the Corps in one month. Steve mentioned there will be two fishing tournaments in June where there could be a lot of boat traffic in the area that the Merritt will need to work around. Steve asked Todd to confirm that there originally was \$1.6 million dollars for this fiscal year. Todd confirmed. Steve said the vast majority of the funds were spent on the Barney Slough side correct. Todd responded he believed that to be the case.

- Steve asked for an update on the pipeline project. Todd responded that is moving forward and they are working on a MOU with the Park Service for placement of dredged material on the beach. Once Cora June is at capacity, remaining material will go to the beach. The material from Barney and Sloop will go to the beaches on Hatteras and Ocracoke respectively. Steve asked if the bird island in the inlet will be used. Todd said WRC needs to renew their permit and since the island is no longer there, sand bags would have to be placed which increased costs which the State would be responsible for.
- Ernie asked if the entrance to the harbor would be included in the pipeline dredging event. Todd said it would. Steve asked if the Corps has considered using the Murden to dredge the entrance to the harbor, which would save the Corps money on the pipeline project due to the pipeline contractor not needing to mobilize and extend pipe to that area. Todd said they currently do not have authority to dredge that area with the Murden.
- Steve asked if there was a process to get the Murden into that channel. Todd stated there would need to be an emergency request from the County. KP asked where the funds would come from. Todd said there are no federal funds, so it would need to be County funds. Steve said there are County funds with the Corps. Barton responded the Corps does have \$217,000, but the Corps has informed the County those funds were transferred under the additional work MOA for a non-federal channel, before the Connector Channel became federal, and possibly would need to be returned to the County before being transferred back to the Corps under the long-term MOA. The Murden will be transiting through Dare County in June. Steve said one day is all we need to address the shoal that is impacting the fleet. Danny said the Coast Guard and Sea Tow need to be able to access the harbor. Cat mentioned all DOT has done to receive emergency dredging is submit a letter from the Director to the Corps stating the reason for the request.

NCDOT Ferry Division Report

- Catherine Peele said Todd already spoke to it, but Hyde County did submit a shallow draft application last Monday to dredge Sloop. The Skyco is still under maintenance. There are repairs necessary at South Dock and Silver Lake. They are still seeing shoaling in the ferry channel. The original Sloop Channel permit did not allow for dredging with a hopper dredge, therefore DOT will be modifying the permit to allow for either Corps dredges or the Miss Katie to maintain that channel. Steve said the Corps already has authorization to hopper dredge that area and Dare County is pursuing permits for all of Rollinson Channel to allow for hopper dredging, why can't we operate under one permit. Cat responded that is what the agencies have asked us to do. Steve asked Todd if he's seen areas with multiple entities holding multiple permits for the same area. Todd said he has and they have similar issues. Cat said they are also looking into widening the dredging corridor to allow for the straightening of Sloop.
- DOT is continuing to communicate with the Corps on Stumpy Point dredging to the emergency ferry docks. Initial estimates were high, so they are working with the Corps on

what can be done to reduce costs. DOT is still running the emergency ferry channel on a quarterly basis, it is shallow but they are able to use it.

EJE Dredging Report

- Steve wanted to thank Jordan Hennessey and EJE again for the recent dredging event. The Connector Channel is in good condition.

Public Comment

- Bianca Aniski asked if material from Avon Harbor could be placed adjacent to the Harbor where previously permitted. Barton stated those areas do not have capacity for the proposed number of cubic yards to be dredged. Approximately 20,000 cubic yards will be dredged.

Old Business

- Barton reported the vibracores were collected last Friday in Avon Harbor and will be sent for testing. A scoping meeting was held earlier today with the agencies concerning placement of material on the soundside beach. A couple more items, including an equilibrium analysis, were requested by the agencies.
- Geotechnical analysis was performed of the material inside Stumpy Point to determine quality of material to be used for elevation of the berm and a survey has been performed
- A scoping meeting was held with the agencies for the Southern Permitting project to allow the Miss Katie to operate in Rollinson Channel and the ocean bar. This included additional open water disposal areas to place dredged material that are closer to the channels.

Administrative Business

- Steve motioned to request the Board of Commissioners submit an emergency dredging request to the Corps for Rollinson Channel near Hatteras Harbor. KP seconded. All in favor.
- John Berquist introduced himself to the board and indicated his interest in serving on the Waterways Commission. He is a former restaurant owner who now runs a charter fishing operation. He lives in Kitty Hawk, but fishes throughout Dare County. Steve said John fishes in a lot of the areas we talk about and will represent interests in the northern part of the County. Danny agreed it is important to have someone from that part of the County. Steve said we can recommend John be appointed, but it is up to the Board of Commissioners to appoint him to the Commission. Ernie recommended John Berquist be appointed to the Waterways Commission. Danny seconded. All in favor.

Adjournment

- Steve motioned to adjourn. Natalie seconded.

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