



Minutes

Dare County Oregon Inlet Task Force Meeting

Dare County Administration Building, Manteo, NC

9:30 a.m., September 12, 2023

Attendance: Harry Schiffman, Bob Peele, Steve House, Russ King, Brown Douglas

Staff: Barton Grover

Others in Attendance: Jordan Hennessy, Brad Rosov, Patrick Tallant, Carl Hendrickson, Kyle Ward, Master Chief Naker, Captain List

1.0 Welcome guests

- Meeting was called to order at 9:30am. Harry Schiffman welcomed guests to the meeting.

2.0 Review Minutes- August 15, 2023

- Steve House made the motion to approve the minutes. Russ King seconded the motion. All in favor.

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

- Patrick Tallant introduced the Task Force to Captain List, Sector Commander for North Carolina, and Master Chief Naker. There were multiple buoy relocations after the recent storm. Buoys 3, 5, 16, 17, 25, and 31 are off station. They will be able to light buoy 23 as requested. The 49 ft boat is going through hydraulic repairs, but once done will begin working the buoys.
- Jordan referenced some boats are running aground near buoy 14. Patrick responded he will move the buoy out to keep boats away from the shoal. Harry said most of the trouble spots are at the north and south end of the inside channel. Steve said if the out of town boater runs straight between 16 and 14, they will run aground. The Coast Guard said they will also move 16 south.
- Captain List introduced himself and said he appreciates this forum which provides local knowledge on buoy issues. This is a unique area that requires constant

monitoring. They will continue to prioritize keeping this channel open and responding after storms.

- Harry thanked the Coast Guard for what they do. Harry said there is a lot of activity here at Oregon Inlet, providing over \$1 billion in economic impact if we can keep the channel open according to the 2013 report. There are numerous charter, commercial, and out of town vessels utilizing Oregon Inlet and we have our private partner dredge, the Miss Katie, operated by EJE Dredging. This is also a harbor of safe refuge, so it is important to allow your 47 be able to get in and out of the inlet. Harry also commented that the inside channel is only 100ft wide and with commercial vessels with their outriggers out and other boats going in the same or opposite direction, it is a tight passage to traverse.

4.0 Dredging Summary Report

- No Corps dredging during July.

5.0 EJE Dredging Update

- Jordan thanked Captain List for coming today and thanked the Coast Guard for all they are doing. All the local coast guardsmen have been great to work with.
- Jordan Hennessy stated the Miss Katie dredged a total of 78,917 cubic yards in Oregon Inlet, mostly from the Bar, during the month of August. There were some maintenance days during the latter part of the month due to the storms. They have performed some surveys, and the channels seemed to hold up pretty well.
- Jordan mentioned some dredging was performed near Old House 1 and a leftover pipe was still located in the area.
- Jordan performed a survey of all the interior channels and the entrance to Wanchese Harbor seemed to have the most issues, 7 to 8ft deep in spots. Barton stated Dare County has attempted to address the confined disposal facility to provide capacity for a pipeline dredging event in the Wanchese channel. Work has been completed to elevate the berm, but the engineers discovered issues with erosion that could subject the island to a blowout were material to be pipeline dredged into the CDF. Riprap must be placed to stabilize the island, but riprap cannot be cost shared with the State which would increase Dare County's match requirements by approximately \$1 million.
- Bob asked if there was any method to allow the Miss Katie to dredge the channel. Harry asked Brad if there was a way to get an emergency permit for the Miss Katie to pick up loads on its way out of Wanchese to Oregon Inlet. Brad stated they can present the facts, impact to safe harbor, and economic impacts. Russ requested emergency dredging in the Wanchese Channel. Bob seconded the motion. All in favor. Harry asked Barton to consult with Bobby on this issue.

- Barton reported the Waterways Commission requested the Miss Katie to dredge at the beginning of the environmental window on October 1st if the Task Force is amenable. Jordan said he would need a shipyard visit before mid-November. Russ asked how long the request was for. Barton stated 7 to 14 days. Jordan said ideally he would put the Miss Katie on 24hrs, which would reduce the number of days needed to dredge. Barton showed the Task Force the Hatteras Connector Channel survey, which showed where the channel has narrowed in the middle near buoys 8 and 9. Bob motioned to approve the Miss Katie dredging event in Hatteras during October. Russ seconded. All in favor.

6.0 O.I. Survey & Channel reports

- No Corps report

7.0 Corps Dredging Schedule

- No Corps Report

8.0 Permit Updates

- Harry asked if there was an update on the 17ft depth for placement off of Pea Island. Brad said we have received approval from the Army Corps of Engineers, but not yet from the Division of Coastal Management. The applications were submitted at the same time. Brad spoke to DCM yesterday and they are still waiting for final comments from the agencies before issuing the permit modification. Brad said that from what he understands, there are not any significant resource concerns. But, they are requesting a management plan be developed due to multiple entities dredging with different permit conditions. However, that would likely not preclude the issuance of the permit.
- Harry asked for clarification on the inlet management plan. Brad said the Corps was asked to create a management plan as part of their environmental assessment in Hatteras. The agencies are conditioning Dare County's southern permit on the creation of this plan by the Corps. It is a summary of each entities permits. What channel is to be dredged, where material will be placed, what type of dredge, when dredging will occur, and targeted number of cubic yards and events. It is an outline of what each entity is allowed and required to do. There are certain channels where the entities have different channel widths and different buffers or monitoring requirements. It is essentially a cheat sheet, in the form of a excel document, for the agencies.

- Harry thanked Brad for providing background on what may be asked for at Oregon Inlet. Harry commented Oregon Inlet is a whole different ballgame than Hatteras Inlet and now with the private partner dredge being here, the mode of operation has changed. EJE will be operating to proactively dredge the channels before issues arise.

9.0 Administrative comments

9.1 Current Budget

- 9.1.1 Miss Katie DEQ Contract Remaining Funds
 - 9.1.1.1 Oregon Inlet - \$6,951,528.13
- 9.1.2 Non- Federal Funds with the Corps - \$46,796
- 9.1.3 Federal Funds
 - 9.1.3.1 Earmark - \$5,706,600
 - 9.1.3.2 IIJA – \$4,067,100
 - 9.1.3.3 O&M - \$300,000
- 9.1.4 Dare County OI FY23 Budget- \$3,000,000

- The Miss Katie budget does not reflect the most recent Miss Katie invoice. The budget only shows the DEQ funds for the Miss Katie to dredge in Oregon Inlet. There is still an additional \$3.5 million for additional channels that may be permitted.
- As requested by the Task Force, a letter will be submitted to the State requesting the return of the non-federal funds with the Corps. The Corps emailed yesterday confirming that procedure can begin.

10.0 Additional comments

- Harry asked if Kyle Ward had any comments. Kyle said a survey has just been completed of all of Albemarle Sound and he can make it available to anyone interested. If there are any other channels that have known navigation issues and the Corps does not survey that area, they will take requests to perform surveys.
- Bob said the comment period for the 10-knot rule is closed, but sending a letter to the congressional delegation should be done.
- Brad said the Q4 meeting for Oregon Inlet dredging will be coming up at the end of September.

11.0 Adjourn

- Steve made the motion to adjourn. Russ seconded.