



Minutes

Dare County Oregon Inlet Task Force Meeting

Dare County Administration Building, Manteo, NC

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

Attendance: Steve House, Harry Schiffman, Jamie Reibel, Russ King

Staff: Barton Grover

Others in Attendance: Jordan Hennessy, Ken Willson, Patrick Tallant, Trey Lewis, Carl Hendrickson, Erin Weller, Todd Horton, Michael Flynn

1.0 Welcome guests

- Meeting was called to order at 9:30am. Steve House welcomed guests to the meeting. Steve announced that he was selected by the Board of Commissioners to fill the position of Chair for the Oregon Inlet Task Force. Steve spoke of his appreciation for the extensive efforts and accomplishments of former Task Force Chair Jim Tobin that helped get the Task Force and Dare County to where they are today. He thanked Harry Schiffman for filling in during the transitional period and for continuing on as Vice-Chair and Project Manager.

2.0 Review Minutes- November 14, 2023

- Russ King made the motion to approve the minutes. Jamie Reibel seconded the motion. All in favor.

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

- Patrick Tallant reported the buoys are holding west of the bridge. There is a buoy missing on the Ocean Bar. The Coast Guard is currently working to address the recent grounding of a large vessel near buoys 3 and 5. Buoys that are off station and in shallow water or on land will need to be helicoptered off. Harry Schiffman asked for confirmation that the vessel is not in the channel. Patrick confirmed it was not. The vessel had been disabled and had been towed from Station Hatteras and those on the boat had been taken off by helicopter.

4.0 Dredging Summary Report

- No Corps dredging during November

5.0 EJE Dredging Update

- Jordan Hennessy reported 68,139 cubic yards were dredged during the month of November in Oregon Inlet. A total cost of \$1,056,835. The last few days the Miss Katie has been working west of the bridge due to weather.
- Russ King mentioned Dominion Energy has been contacted to establish shore power at the Oregon Inlet Fishing Center. Dolphins will also be installed for the Miss Katie to dock overnight. The Coast Guard was consulted to ensure they have safe exit out of the Station.

6.0 O.I. Survey & Channel reports

- Todd Horton reported a survey of the alternate channel was completed west of the bridge. The alternate channel is mostly at authorized depth currently. Where it is shallower, there appears to be deeper water outside the authorized channel.
- The Environmental Assessment is targeted to be completed in January, at which time the channel will be able to be shifted to account for recent shoaling.
- A Ocean Bar survey will be performed in late January.

7.0 Corps Dredging Schedule

- No anticipated Corps dredging in Oregon Inlet
- Russ King if there would be any expected Corps dredging moving forward. Todd Horton responded there are funds for a pipeline project next winter in the interior channels which were not recently dredged.

8.0 Permit Updates

- Ken Willson shared a presentation of current conditions of the interior channels. Ken stated with the permits expected to be received in January and the quarterly meeting coming up soon for dredging activities to be performed between January 1 and March 31st, a review of current channel conditions is necessary to determine which channels may need to be dredged during this time period.
- For the Oregon Inlet Alternate Channel, Ken said we are waiting for the EA to be finalized to allow for the Miss Katie to dredge deep and best water. Once that is

finalized, the Corps has reiterated it will only be a few days to modify the permit to allow the Miss Katie to dredge best water to 12 + 2ft.

- The CAMA permits and Water Quality Certifications have been received for the interior channels. Ken said we are waiting for the Department of Army permit and he has spoken with Josh Pelletier. The Corps is not waiting for any further agency comments and is currently going through 408 review to ensure the proposed permits do not negatively affect the federal channels. Ken said Dare County responses to the Corps 408 comments have already been sent to Josh.
- Ken said there is significant shoaling in 14A, B, and C, which is the entrance channel to Wanchese. Ken showed the survey near the double nickel, which he noted is from early this year. There may have been additional shoaling since that area was surveyed, as this area is noted for rapid shoaling. There are areas north of Wanchese which show shoaling, but there appears to be deeper water outside the federal channel. There has been a recent survey of Old House 2, which also shows some shoaling in the federal channel.
- The Crack and Walter Slough surveys have also recently been performed. There are depths of 6 to 7 ft in those channels.
- Steve House asked when the next quarterly meeting is scheduled. Ken Willson responded ideally before the end of December, but he may need to shift to early January due to the holidays.
- Ken Willson asked if there were any concerns with keeping the waypoints the same as the previous quarter on the ocean bar. Jordan Hennessy noted some shoaling from the south, but otherwise the bar has been maintainable.
- Harry Schiffman asked Ken if he could forward the power point to the Task Force for further review. Ken said he would.
- Barton Grover commented Ken Willson will need to know which channels the Task Force will prioritize to dredge in the upcoming quarter, so that CPE can develop plans for the meeting. The quarterly meetings will cover proposed dredging for both Oregon Inlet and the interior channels.
- Russ King asked for an update on the pipeline leftover from the previous winters project. Todd Horton said photos were sent over to the construction team to look into the issue and he will check with them for an update.

9.0 Administrative comments

9.1 Current Budget

9.1.1 Miss Katie DEQ Contract Remaining Funds

9.1.1.1 Oregon Inlet - \$3,188,460.91

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 IJA – \$4,067,100

9.1.3.3 O&M - \$300,000

9.1.4 Dare County OI FY23 Budget- \$3,000,000

- Barton Grover asked for an update on the return of the non-federal funds. Erin Weller with the Corps responded she will look into. Barton mentioned Erin Weller is the new project manager for our area. She previously worked for the Corps survey office, so is familiar with the area and issues.
- Barton shared the proposed 2024 meeting schedule, which reflected the Task Force continuing to meet the Tuesday the week after the Board of Commissioners meeting.
- Barton mentioned he will be bringing up increasing the shallow draft grant contract amount for Oregon Inlet at the next meeting. There is currently \$3.18 million remaining in that contract as of November 30th. The contract end date is June 30, 2024. Typical contract modifications take about 30 days.
- Barton commented that at the Waterways Commission meeting yesterday, DOT has indicated interest in having the Miss Katie dredge the ferry channel in the future. The Ferry Division has experienced multiple groundings in the ferry channel due to shoaling and the Corps pipeline project will not occur this winter. Harry Schiffman asked that the Task Force be updated on the DOT situation.
- Barton said that the Coast Guard has asked for comments on the Cape Hatteras Lighthouse project. The light may be temporarily or permanently turned off during the 24-month project. If the Task Force is aware of any concerns mariners may have, please email Barton who will forward that comment to the Coast Guard.
- Michael Flynn commented that Sabrina Henry with the Park Service will now be with the Regional Office, but is still assigned to the Oregon Inlet EA project.
- Steve House said a couple weeks ago the Colonel and Corps staff came up to Manteo to meet with Chairman Woodard, Vice-Chairman Overman, the County Manager, Barton, and Steve. It was a productive meeting and everyone was on the same page. Todd Horton concurred and said it was a good opportunity for Colonel Morgan to assess the issues on his first visit to the Outer Banks. Steve House thanked Todd and the Corps for coming up.

10.0 Adjourn

- Harry Schiffman made the motion to adjourn. Russ King seconded.