



Dare County Waterways Commission

Minutes

April 8, 2024

Call to Order

Roll Call: Steve Coulter, Natalie Kavanagh, Michael Flynn, Ernie Foster, John Berquist

Acceptance of Minutes: March 11, 2024

- John Berquist made the motion to approve the minutes. Michael Flynn seconded the motion. All in favor.

New Business

USCG Report

- Patrick Tallant reported the Coast Guard has placed temporary buoys in the new emergency channel at Sloop Channel. They will be replaced soon with permanent buoys and buoys marking the original channel will be removed.
- Hatteras Connector Channel buoys 11 and 12 have been placed back on station.
- Patrick commented that the Coast Guard official light list refers to the entire ferry route as Barney Slough, however it seems locally and per the Corps survey the emergency channel is located in Sloop Channel. On Local Notice to Mariners, they must refer to it as Barney Slough. He asked if there are any official documents referencing Sloop. Steve Coulter referenced the Corps surveys, environmental assessments and permits. These channels began being used once the horseshoe route was created and were termed Barney Slough and Sloop Channel. Originally the channel was simply Rollinson. Chief Matuska commented that they internally refer to it as Sloop.
- Steve Coulter commented that the local newspaper referenced buoys were being removed from Barney Slough based on a Coast Guard announcement, which caused concern from local boaters when the Coast Guard was actually referencing Sloop Channel. Ernie Foster

stated that local knowledge knows this channel as Sloop and it is confusing when the Coast Guard refers to it otherwise.

- Patrick Tallant was open to suggestions. Steve Coulter responded that from buoys 7 and 6B towards South Dock should be referred to as Sloop, but the remaining part of the horseshoe route could remain Barney without causing significant confusion. Patrick said they did announce in the notice that buoys were noted as being moved in Barney Slough, locally known as Sloop Channel. Bob Keistler commented that the Corps refers to the channels collectively as Rollinson in their federal authorization, but refer to parts of Rollinson channel as Sloop and Barney.
- Michael Flynn asked what the process was to change the name. Patrick responded he would have internal conversations on how that could be done if possible.
- Steve Coulter asked about the status of buoys in the inlet. Patrick answered that 5 is missing the top part, 4 is missing completely, and 3 needs reflectors. They will be position checking 1, which was reported off station. Steve said that buoy 6 has relocated to the middle of the channel. Patrick commented they will address tomorrow. Chief Matuska said they would also check on status of the buoys when out training.

Corps Report

- Bob Keistler stated the Merritt has completed dredging of the emergency channel at Sloop, dredging more than 41,000 cubic yards.
- They are working on the Manteo-Stumpy Point pipeline project and are planning on advertising in July. They were tight on funds and issues were encountered with disposal, so there will be no Hatteras Inlet pipeline dredging. The Corps will be looking to modify Rollinson to widen the corridor at Sloop and Barney. Steve stated Dare County will have 200ft wide channel in Sloop, boats are bigger and ferries are running through there and that channel could be wider than the currently authorized width of 100ft which the Corps has. Bob said that would need to be done with a widener. Bob said that and other items could be discussed among everyone including this Commission during a scoping meeting before proceeding with the modification.
- Steve Coulter mentioned that with the ferries running Rollinson proper now, they are pushing sand towards the breakwater when making the turn. That will need to be cleaned out at some point soon.

NCDOT Ferry Division Report

- Catherine Peele thanked the Corps for their hard work dredging Sloop. South Dock is shoaled in, but the dredge Manteo has been repaired. They plan to begin dredging before the end of the month. They hold a Major CAMA permit for this area, but have submitted notifications because this dredging would be completed during the moratorium. Once that is completed, they will return to performing piling work during the summer. Natalie

Kavanagh asked if there was a location for the dredged material from South Dock. Catherine said it will be placed in the upland disposal site adjacent to South Dock. It is essentially empty currently. Once it is dewatered, Division One will use for sand bags along Highway 12.

EJE Report

- Jordan Hennessy stated the Miss Katie arrived in Hatteras on March 1st. There were three weather days where no dredging occurred. 15 dredging days for a total cubic yardage of approximately 22,086 cubic yards. Steve Coulter thanked Jordan and said they did a great job in the channel.

Public Comment

- Ernie Doshier commented that he expects if everything else is in place for Sloop, Hyde County and DOT have been successful in obtaining funds quickly. The sand dredged from South Dock will help not only the ferries, but also be used in sand bags to address overwash on the road from recent high tides.

Old Business

- Ken Willson reported there is a meeting on Wednesday with NC DOT, Hyde County, and Dare County to discuss what is needed to dredge in the emergency channel at Sloop. The Corps included the Miss Katie in their authorization. For the next steps to move the project forward, he believes a CAMA minor permit modification is necessary. Hyde County would need to submit a request for dredging funds from the Shallow Draft Fund, which they will receive 100% funding. Hyde and EJE would need to come to an agreement on dredging. Then lastly, Dare and Hyde County would likely want to enter into a MOU with Hyde County for Hyde to operate under Dare County's permit. The minor modification process would take 30 to 40 days to receive, so it would be prudent to move forward with that as early as possible. The Shallow Draft application process will take up to 60 days.
- Ken also commented on the permit modification for the Connector Channel which includes a minor modification to add disposal areas and remove the moratorium. Then also a major modification to add the Ocean Bar. The Commission reviewed the current and proposed permitted corridor and disposal area map.

Administrative Business

- Barton Grover stated the agenda reflected the updated budget after the most recent dredge event. \$281,623.33 is remaining.

- As per the Commission motion, a shallow draft fund application will be submitted for \$900,000 in the Connector Channel and \$100,000 in Rollinson in FY25. The application Resolution was passed at last week's Board of Commissioners meeting. Steve Coulter also mentioned there are still funds with the Corps for Rollinson in case funding is needed sooner.

Board Member Business

- Barton commented that terms of 4 Waterways Commissioners are expiring in June and to let him know if they would like to be reappointed before the June Board of Commissioners meeting where voting for reappointment would occur. Steve Coulter and Natalie Kavanagh stated they would like to continue on as part of the Commission. Barton said Danny Couch had responded that he would like to continue until the end of his term as County Commissioner. Ernie Foster asked for additional time to consider continuing as a member.
- Natalie Kavanagh said this is not exactly dredging related, but to pay attention to the Buxton beach contamination issue affecting local residents. If there is anything we can do as Commission members or as individuals to push for the petroleum contamination to be addressed, please do so. The Corps of Engineers, National Park Service, and Coast Guard are reviewing the problem. The beach effected is 3/10^{ths} of a mile in length, but the images have caused concerns amongst vacationers visiting the entire County. Michael Flynn stated the Park Service set up a webpage to summarize the issue and has a map to show the area affected. The page notes that there are almost 100 miles of ocean facing beaches from Hatteras Village to Duck not affected. The Park Service has been coordinating with the Corps of Engineers and the Coast Guard to address this situation.
- Patrick Tallant confirmed that the request for channel names would include the west side of the horseshoe from 7B south to South Dock as Sloop then the east side of the horseshoe would be Barney. There would be 6 channels total including Sloop, Barney, Rollinson, Hatteras Connecting, Hatteras Connector, and Hatteras Inlet. The Commission confirmed.

Adjournment

- Michael Flynn motioned to adjourn. Natalie Kavanagh seconded.