



## Minutes

### Dare County Oregon Inlet Task Force Meeting

USCG ANT Wanchese

9:30 a.m., May 14 , 2024

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

Staff: Barton Grover

Others in Attendance: Jordan Hennessy, Brad Rosov, Adam Preiser, Tommy Danchese, Mark Vrablic, Patrick Tallant, Joen Petersen, Erin Weller, Kyle Ward, David Hewett, Alyson Flynn

#### 1.0 Welcome guests

- Meeting was called to order at 9:30am by Vice Chairman Harry Schiffman. He announced we are holding the meeting remotely at U.S. Coast Guard ANT Wanchese. Harry noted Tommy Danchese and Mark Vrablic were in attendance in person. Tommy, a lifelong fisherman who often guides other boats through the inlet, and Mark, who runs Etheridge Seafood, introduced themselves.

#### 2.0 Review Minutes- March 12, 2024 & April 9 2024

- Harry Schiffman noted on the March 12 minutes that the word "be" should be added to the sentence in Section 6.0, paragraph 4, line 3 so that the sentence reads "needs to be clarified." Bob Peele made the motion to approve the March 12<sup>th</sup> and April 9<sup>th</sup> minutes. Russ King seconded. All in favor.

#### 3.0 USCG ANT Wanchese Update

- Patrick Tallant reported the Coast Guard relocated buoy 3 and 6 at the inlet. The light was replaced on buoy 4. Buoy 4 will be moved once their weight handling equipment on the boat is repaired.
- Patrick noted it was determined internally that a directional or range light was not feasible at the inlet. They could not drill it into the bridge. Also, the range would have to be so precise that if shoaling occurred, the time it would take to re-

establish the range would be too slow and therefore make the range inaccurate. They are currently working on establishing virtual ATON at the inlet.

- Old House buoys 1 and 3 have been moved to mark good water.
- Harry Schiffman stated that in earlier conversations, the Coast Guard has indicated that to move larger buoys between the bridge and buoy 4 in the inlet, the Coast Guard would need 25ft of water to work. He asked how the larger buoys were set there originally. Patrick responded due to safety concerns, they cannot get in there to set the larger buoys. They do have sea buoys 1 and 2 that the 225 out of Morehead City can maintain, but otherwise all buoys are maintained by ANT Wanchese. Adam Preiser commented that previously they had to send in the 47 to give soundings to the 225 for it to move the outer buoys on the north bar before they would consider maintaining those. That is why buoys 1 and 2 are so far out.
- Harry Schiffman asked if the Coast Guard had considered smaller cylindrical buoys. Patrick responded that is being talked about internally and they are looking into prototypes. They did have 5ft by 9ft buoys, but the tops were being ripped off by larger waves. That is why they have gone to 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> class foam buoys. Mark Vrablic said the larger buoys were previously placed in the inlet and at that point only 10ft was needed. Patrick said the cutter Smilax would likely have been the vessel placing those. The vessel is older and less reliable than the 49, so cannot as effectively maintain the buoys. Tommy Danchese asked if more of the smaller buoys could be an option. Patrick said they only have one asset from Elizabeth City to Ocracoke, so there would be issues with response time to address additional buoys that may go off station after a storm.
- Tommy Danchese said the reflection on 8 needs to be addressed. Steve House indicated he had messaged Patrick about issues on 8 at the end of April. Patrick said they had addressed multiple buoys, but a piece of their weight handling equipment broke before they could get to 4 and 8. They will address when that is fixed. They need to lift the 8 out of the water to place the retro. Tommy mentioned the light is also dim on 8 and it could be moved closer to the bridge.
- Harry and Tommy mentioned they have also heard a piece of net could be placed under a buoy to increase drag and limit buoys going off station. Patrick said he would talk after the meeting with Harry and Tommy to get more details on that method.

#### **4.0 EJE Dredging Update**

- Jordan Hennessy reported the Miss Katie dredged over 28,000 cubic yards on the Bar and roughly 1,700 cubic yards in the Alternate Channel this month so far. The Miss Katie is out on the Bar today and then will head to Old House 2. The last

month over 27,000 cubic yards was dredged out of the Crack & Walter Slough, over 26,000 out of the Alternate Channel, and one load out of Wanchese Harbor.

- Harry Schiffman said we have David Hewett, Town Manager of Holden Beach, online and we have received a request from Holden Beach for dredging. Harry asked if the Corps has completed the sidecast work in Lockwood Folly. David Hewett said they have not, but the Merritt is expected to arrive in a few days. Joen Petersen said they are hoping to get the survey for Bogue soon. If the survey looks good, the Merritt will mobilize to Holden on Thursday and dredge for 21 days. Bob Peele asked if both dredges can work at the same time. Jordan Hennessy said he would not see any issues working at the same time as the Corps if there was some overlap, but Joen would need to answer for the Corps. Harry asked David if the permits are all set for the Miss Katie to work. David said not yet, their engineer is still working on coordinating with the agencies for permitting.
- Harry Schiffman made the motion to allow the Miss Katie to dredge in Holden Beach for two to three weeks in June pending permits. Steve House seconded. All in favor.
- David Hewett thanked the Task Force and he hoped they could make all the pieces fit together to get this project done.
- Barton Grover stated that he placed the Hyde County request on the agenda. Barton mentioned Kris Noble, Hyde County Manager, had previously attended a Task Force meeting to discuss this request They are still 6 to 8 weeks out with permitting and establishing a cost share contract. Steve House asked that the request remain on the agenda moving forward so the Task Force is aware of the progress and timeline.

## **5.0 U.S. Army Corps Update**

- Erin Weller said she is now in Todd Horton's old position of Waterways Chief. Steve House congratulated her on the promotion. Erin said they are working on surveys in preparation for bidding out a pipeline project for this winter. They have surveyed Old House 1 and 2.
- She said the last information for the Oregon Inlet Environmental Assessment is that they are waiting for Tribal Coordination which should be received soon. The EA should be finalized by the end of the month. Steve House said the Corps reported last month the EA was days from being signed.
- Harry Schiffman asked Erin to confirm the Corps received the email from Barton Grover relaying information the Corps had requested to plan their pipeline dredging event in the interior channels. Erin Weller said she did and thanked the Task Force for providing that information. Harry also asked that the Corps look

into dredging the entrance channel to Wanchese. Erin Weller said there were concerns with placing the material in Island H. Harry asked if they could investigate dredging a smaller amount instead of a fuller project if that would reduce concerns. Erin responded she will look into it, but they are getting close to soliciting the project. Harry asked that Erin send an update before the next meeting. Erin confirmed she would.

## 6.0 CPE Update

- Brad Rosov said Dare has received 4 CAMA Major Permits, 4 Water Quality Certifications and 3 Department of Army permits that all need to be kept up to date. For the Oregon Inlet permit, we received the modification to remove the Townsend wreck buffer. The Corps had performed a multibeam survey that determined there were no remnants of the wreck down to almost 16ft. The Department of Army, CAMA, and National Park Service permits have all been modified. The Water Quality certification modification has been received that removed the moratorium language from those channels also.
- Once the Environmental Assessment is finalized by the Corps, we will submit a modification to match their authorization to allow for dredging to 12 + 2ft as well as ask to expand the dredging corridor both west and east of the bridge to match the Corps expanded corridor. Currently we are restricted to a fixed channel that is 8ft + 2ft under the Emergency Authorization.
- Dare County is also waiting for the Special Use Permit from the National Park Service to allow for dredging adjacent to the Oregon Inlet Fishing Center within Park Service boundary. The National Park Service could not begin their review until the Corps finished their environmental assessment about 6 weeks ago. The Special Use Permit is expected to be received in June.
- A request was also submitted to the Division of Water Quality to remove the moratorium language from the interior channel permits. That has been verbally okayed to operate within the moratorium, but we are still waiting for official documentation.
- Brad Rosov said there will need to be a SAV survey performed if the Miss Katie dredges within 100ft, so that will need to be done soon. Harry Schiffman said we had agreed to do one survey this year if the Miss Katie dredges within 100 ft and that it would be done this fall to match the timing of the last survey. Brad said he would double check the timing of the SAV survey. Barton Grover commented that he also believed that it was a consensus of the group that the survey would be performed in the fall if dredging occurred within 100ft of SAV.

## **7.0 Administrative comments**

### **7.1 Current Budget**

#### **7.1.1 Miss Katie DEQ Contract Remaining Funds**

7.1.1.1 Oregon Inlet – \$877,592

7.1.1.2 Wanchese to 17ext. - \$592,570

7.1.1.3 Crack & Walter Slough - \$483,842

7.1.1.4 Old House 2 - \$400,000

#### **7.1.2 Federal Funds (Pipeline Dredging & Operations & Maintenance)**

7.1.2.1 Earmark - \$5,706,600

7.1.2.2 IJA – \$4,067,100

7.1.2.3 O&M - \$300,000

- Barton Grover stated the budget reflects invoices up to the end of April and what is available until the end of June.

## **8.0 Adjourn**

- Bob Peele made the motion to adjourn. Russ King seconded