



Beach Preservation Ad Hoc Committee Meeting
Friday, March 15, 2024, 9:00am
1207 Palm Boulevard, Isle of Palms, SC and
broadcasted live on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/user/cityofisleofpalms>

MINUTES

Present: Andrew Vega (via Zoom), Tim Ahmuty, Cindy Solomon, Council members Pierce, Campsen, and Miars, Mayor Pounds, Administrator Fragoso, Director Kerr

Absent: Dan Slotchiver

Also present: Steven Traynum, Nicole Elko (via Zoom)

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Discussion of developing a long-range vision and goals for future beach conditions**

Mr. Traynum explained how an ideal beach profile is developed. He said it is site specific and answers the question of how much sand do you need to remain on the beach following a storm of a particular intensity as well as addresses the expectations of the local community while taking into account local physical conditions, such as the presence of an inlet. An ideal beach profile does not address the economics of maintaining that beach, but Mr. Traynum said the SCPRT analyzes the economic impact of beaches.

Ms. Elko added that the Army Corps of Engineers also studies the economic impact of the beaches on recreation and tourism. She stated that their recent 3-year, \$3 million study of Folly Beach included an economic analysis and other modeling to determine the optimal width for that beach. She said the host town could be expected to pay up to 50% of the cost of such a study and it is necessary to have before the USACE would agree to take over management of the beach.

Ms. Elko was asked about Sullivan's Island beach nourishment philosophy. She said that Sullivan's Island has the challenge of having too much sand in some places. They have no long-term plans for nourishment but have invested some monies in beach monitoring. While beach nourishment is not a high priority for the Town, they would like to study and discuss the impact of dredging Breach Inlet with the City. She said she could facilitate a meeting with the Committee, Mayor O'Neil and the Town Administrator Andy Benke.

Mr. Traynum was asked to speak to the permitting efforts regarding beach nourishment: "We have submitted the application to supplement the Corps project by moving sand up into the dune and moving sand further south. That has been submitted. The project to do the shoal management up at the east end should be submitted next week. So those are the two very short-term things. That shoal management project at the east end would be designed to alleviate the

small area of erosion around Beachwood until the shoal attaches and then buys us time until the next big project would have to be put in place. It allows some flexibility that should, the area kind of around Ocean Club at the very east end, start getting bad, we can place sand around that area as well. The other thing we are working on right now is doing a sand search and some of the environmental work for the next large scale nourishment project. It's kind of the first preliminary step to putting in that permit application, but we have had a lot of talks with SHPO on the shipwreck. So we are actually out there today in the boat doing some of that field work. Nothing has been done yet to date for the dredging of the Breach Inlet. If that was going to be pursued, there are a lot of things that would have to be accomplished before submitting the permit application. The permit application really is, after most of the engineering is done, so that you know where you would want to place the channel, the depths that you would want to place, the width, and you've done enough analysis of the potential impacts and benefits that justifies the project."

Administrator Fragoso then asked Mr. Traynum to "speak to the permitting efforts on the inlet here about harvesting sand from what we call the spit."

Mr. Traynum replied, "That was something we thought about including in this shoal management permit. It was okay, we will do the same thing down at the south end. But knowing all the kind of concern and focus that has been on the south end right now, we felt like if we want to have that, it would be better to separate those two permits out. Essentially, it is the same biological assessment. It's a lot of the same work, but we would want to separate them so that any political or issues going on with the south end would be separate from the things on the east end. So it would not delay that. There is not a whole lot of sand on that spit that is available to harvest, where we would feel like if we harvested it we are not going to have the potential to create some down drift effects to some of those other properties. So that is something that would have to be done in a way where we would have certain thresholds to make sure that we have thresholds on the east end as well. We don't dig within 400' of a house. We have at least that much of a buffer, so we would have to have the same thing on the south end. So even if we went to permit that right now, the conditions may not allow for the removal of sand off the spit and recycling it back to the north."

Mayor Pounds asked Ms. Elko about Sullivan's Islands view of the USACE project. Ms. Elko replied, "I concur with what Stephen mentioned. Ideally, best-case scenario, we were able to achieve that beach width that we discussed, maybe a 50' wide beach maximum. I think that is the hope and dream for everyone here, but we need to keep expectations tempered."

Council Member Pierce asked if there is any recourse if the Corps project doesn't hold as expected. Mr. Traynum responded, "The sand that they are adding, there are only so many places it can go. So even if it doesn't come up the beach and restore a dry sand beach over time, they are going to be placing it around the low tide line or the middle part of the beach. That is going to be visible very quickly, and you are going to see that there. So it is going to be in the system now. Some of it may start shifting south very quickly and just kind of go out into the shoals of the inlet. But from what we have seen in the past, it has got to build up the beach first. It's got to

move up and then down. So I am expecting to see a lot of accretion. If it does not, then yes, our resource is work towards this larger offshore project.”

The Committee presented several scenarios about what could happen with the USACE project and wondered if the City should start work on other projects. Mr. Traynum believes it would be better to wait until the Corps project is finished before starting anything else.

Administrator Fragoso asked if it would be a good idea to include the installation of a groin in the permit for the large-scale offshore project. Mr. Traynum believes a groin to be a good investment if the erosion at Breach Inlet continues. He said it would be better to separate a request from a groin into its own permit because Sullivan’s Island would need to agree to its installation and coastal environmental groups may object to it.

Current conditions at Breach Inlet were briefly discussed.

3. Next Steps

Mayor Pounds would like to have Mayor O’Neil and Administrator Benke at an upcoming meeting. Mr. Traynum said he could have a document detailing a healthy beach profile in about two weeks.

The next meeting of the Beach Preservation Ad Hoc Committee will be Friday, March 22, 2024 at 9:00am.

4. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10:12am.

Respectfully submitted,

Nicole DeNeane
City Clerk