



Beach Preservation Ad Hoc Committee Meeting
Friday, June 7, 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, Cindy Solomon, Tim Ahmuty, Council members Pierce (via Zoom) and Miars, Mayor Pounds, Director Kerr, Stephen Traynum

Absent: Council Member Campsen, Administrator Fragoso, Dan Slotchiver

1. Call to Order

2. Discussion of developing long and mid-term beach preservation strategies

Director Kerr said the staff would like “a series of triggers of when we need to at least approach Council” about the necessity for a beach nourishment project. Staff would like to be more proactive with having permits in hand but need to work out the timing of when to start the permitting process.

Mr. Traynum briefly explained how the outward appearance of sand volumes will differ between the inlets and other parts of the island.

Council Member Pierce asked if the health of the dunes could act as a trigger. Mr. Traynum said beach volumes are better indicators of what the dune is going to be, but dune widths, “the linear distance between the structure line and the edge of the vegetation,” could be monitored. He added, “These triggers and thresholds are guidelines or should be considered guidelines with the option to be able to look at the conditions at the time, and if it is not exactly meeting, but we want to have the flexibility to make some adjustments to it.”

Mr. Traynum said the beach is monitored annually, but he could add in a review of the dune widths every six months as an extra measure of beach conditions. He said, “My bare minimum would be 60’ of vegetated dune area is kind of a trigger. We don’t want anything less than that.”

When discussing the beach volume trigger, Mr. Traynum said, “The biggest impact on whether that number is 380 or 400 would be an initial project to get you to that point, and then everything else you’re just trying to maintain volumes above that. So, once you get to whatever that number is, it’s all based off the erosion rates that you are going to see, so really after that point, it doesn’t change a whole lot.”

Director Kerr said dune width would be added as a trigger to the recommendations.

The Committee then discussed erosion rates for the north and south ends of the island as a trigger. Mr. Traynum explained how he arrived at the suggested numbers. The Committee agreed

those triggers would be 150,000 yards of sand loss per year at the north end and 68,000 yards of sand loss per year at the south end.

Discussion about the cadence of projects ensued. Mr. Traynum said the pace has been large projects every 10 years with a shoal management project at about year 5. He noted that shoal attachment leads to erosional hot spots that often need mitigation. He said the City is “much less likely to want to implement a shoal project if you’re nourishing the beach every 6 years.” He noted that the cost difference between 6, 8 or 10-year project spans is mobilization.

He said, “The benefit of doing projects more frequently is if you are able to add on a little sand every time so you’re not just restoring the minimum, but you’re adding a little bit so you’re gaining each time. You’re able to do that more quickly, and that is really the biggest benefit is to try to maintain a wider beach. That if you are maintaining it further out, even if we do have these shoal attachments that are making you lose 200’, if you are starting that erosion cycle with a healthier beach, you’re more likely to withstand it without having critical erosion issues. The biggest downside, outside of the mobilization, is just the cumulative impacts of every six years, you’ve got a dredge out there digging in the bar area, possibly shutting down the beach during the season. They are pretty good about working around the crowds and all that, and the more familiar people become with it, the less of an issue it is because they realize how to handle it.”

Committee members came to the consensus that an 8-year project cadence with a shoal management project in between and all subject to the set triggers would be the model they would like to see. Mr. Traynum said securing the next project’s permit by year 5 would give the City the flexibility to do the project as needed during the permit’s 5-year allowance.

3. Next Steps

Director Kerr will add in the triggers discussed during the meeting, and he and Mr. Traynum will work on that model plus identifying funding needs. The desire to align projects at both ends of the island will also be included on the list of recommendations.

Mayor Pounds stressed the need for education and communication to the public about this nourishment process moving forward.

The next meeting will include discussion about the letter to the USACE and how much public parking would need to be added within Wild Dunes to include that space in beach nourishment projects.

The Committee will meet on Friday, July 12, 2024 at 9:00am.

4. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:58am.

Respectfully submitted,

Nicole DeNeane
City Clerk