



**TOWN OF HOLDEN BEACH  
INLET AND BEACH PROTECTION BOARD  
THURSDAY, JANUARY 24, 2019 10 A.M.**

The Inlet and Beach Protection Board (IBPB) of the Town of Holden Beach, North Carolina met at 10 a.m. on Thursday, January 24, 2019 in the Town Hall Public Assembly.

**Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 10:03 a.m. Chair Vicki Myers and Members Dean Thomas and Ronda Dixon were present. Vice Chair Mike Pearson and Member Richard Rice were unable to attend.

**Agenda Approval**

*Motion to approve the agenda by Member Dixon, second by Member Thomas; approved unanimously.*

**Approval of Minutes**

The minutes of both the December 7<sup>th</sup> special meeting and the December 20<sup>th</sup> regular meeting were considered. *Chair Myers asked that the spelling of Brennan Dooley's name be changed in the December 20<sup>th</sup> minutes. Motion by affirmation to be approve both sets with the spelling change to the December 20<sup>th</sup> set.*

**Status of Beach and Inlets**

Assistant Town Manager Ferguson said that preliminary information is back from Mr. Fran Way of ATM regarding the stitching on to transects for the additional hurricane loss information for FEMA. Estimates in the engineered beach section are losses of 865,953 and the full shoreline is 1,524,352. She said Mr. Way will be sending a final report to FEMA. She said there is still no federal declaration for Michael for NC. She continued that despite these losses the beach looks good on recent inspections. She said the final paperwork was signed through the NC Dept. of Public Safety for Matthew and has been sent to the FEMA headquarters for review.

Assistant Town Manager Ferguson said the letter went to the county regarding the Town's position on the deeper and wider project and the IBPB received a copy at the request of Chair Myers. She said the county was going to get a response back to the Town. She stated that the Town also gave comments on Oak Island's 408 Review regarding the inlet. Assistant Town Manager Ferguson said she also sent the Corps another follow up email about the potential of piggybacking on the AIWW crossing project if they had headroom in the environmental windows to cut the contractor loose. She stated that Brennan Dooley with the Corps said they can't answer the question until they receive an updated timeline from the contractor. The contractor just started work at Brown's Inlet. She said the County Board of Commissioners had on their agenda, the previous Monday night, a resolution approving Federal

Legislative Goals for FY 2019-20. Number four on the list was to support increased federal funding and program support for shoreline protection measures including dredging and beach nourishment.

Assistant Town Manager Ferguson turned the floor over to Mr. Way to elaborate on his additional work regarding Florence and Michael. He said that more than half of Central Reach is missing. He said that regarding the 440,000 cubic yards they found in the shoreline referenced in the annual monitoring, he is hopeful that part of that is Central Reach. That would mean that Central Reach only lost half a million cubic yards, but the losses will be reported to FEMA. Chair Myers asked if the sand could be further out than depth of closure. Mr. Way said they went further out to where it flattens out. He said the survey went out to negative 25 feet. He stated they looked at typical depth of closure around 12 feet and looked at 20 feet and still saw losses.

Town Manager Hewett said he would like to add what was not on the Brunswick County Commissioners' agenda was the acceptance of the deeper wider grant project. Chair Myers asked if he knew why. Member Dixon asked about Oak Island's interest in the project and staff responded that Oak Island had mentioned to the county in an email they were interested. Town Manager Hewett said that came in a general two line email from their manager. Chair Myers asked if Mr. Way could tell if any of the sand went outside Central Reach such as to the west. He said it looked like it was the entire beach that lost sand. Chair Myers asked Mr. Way for the status of the inlet modeling project. Mr. Way said some of our other projects jumped to the front but he hoped to have some things done by next month. Chair Myers asked about the Merritt coming in May. Assistant Town Manager Ferguson said that was the last she heard but she assumes the Corps would give an update at the Brunswick Shoreline Meeting on January 30, 2019. Chair Myers asked about a plan for FEMA money. Town Manager Hewett said that the focus right now is that the FEMA state reimbursement projects get approved. Chair Myers asked if he wanted to address the proposed inlet hazard areas. Town Manager Hewett said right now there isn't proposed language to go along with expansion but we would have staff at the next Coastal Resource Meeting (CRC) to stay abreast of that process. Chair Myers asked if we would have language before the February CRC meeting. Town Manager Hewett said that any proposed language would come out at that meeting. He said it would be a long process and he is not privy to that information right now. Chair Myers said she talked to Building Inspector Evans and he thinks they did a good job this time in figuring out the maps. Member Dixon said the expansion on the west end was huge. Chair Myers asked about lots less than 15,000 square feet and what it would do to the tax base. Town Manager Hewett said until we have language to ascertain impacts it is strictly speculative. Member Dixon asked about the CRC representative assignment from this board. It was answered to be Chair Myers. Town Manager Hewett communicated that it is a planning and zoning function as far as this instance because of setbacks, lot size, etc., that are traditional planning and zoning considerations. Chair Myers asked if Mr. Way had anything else. He said he would coordinate with the dredger again for the AIWW and make sure he is aware we are still interested in the bend widener. Chair Myers asked to be reminded again what happens if both parties want the sand. Town Manager Hewett said this is uncharted territory and explained that the contractor for the AIWW is Southwind.

### **Process, Timeline and Components for Comprehensive Long-term Plan**

Member Thomas talked about his submission in the agenda packet. He said he built on Chair Myer's goals, objectives, and framework. He talked about a map, short-term goals, long-term goals, disruptive events, and an appendix. Chair Myers asked for staff feedback. Town Manager Hewett said these were

great brain storm components. He said he thinks we need to step back and look at process and timeframe. He said he believes he suggested at the last meeting to look at six months to have a plan to present to the commissioners. He thinks the board will have fulfilled their sanction by charter to do that. From the staff's perspective through the process we have gotten to the point that we've realized that there is a bunch of engineering that goes along with the process. It is a natural progression to have ATM to do the engineering and the facilitation. He said we think we have bandwidth in the budget to have them do that. He thinks the framework they suggested here in the agenda packet is easily addressable in the master plan especially with the framework that exists already in the 2009 beach management plan. He thinks we are ready to set sail. He said he does believe the components that have been identified should be given to ATM and the facilitator so that they can come back to the next meeting with interim guidance with the next timeline. He said all of this is without the benefit of talking to the facilitator. The regularly scheduled meetings were discussed as being the work sessions for compiling the plan. Town Manager Hewett said if that is acceptable to the group that is how we would proceed. He said unless you want to discuss some of the particulars or add to it this will be what we give ATM and they can come back with a framework and be ready to go at the next meeting. Member Thomas said it sounds great. He said Mr. Way already does that stuff and with much technical detail. Town Manager Hewett said he found the presented items topically pertinent.

*Member Dixon made a motion that we start working on this at our next meeting; second by Member Thomas; passed unanimously.*

#### **Discussion Regarding Budget Items for FY 19-20**

Chair Myers said that Vice Chair Pearson had been working with Assistant Town Manager Ferguson on mats. Assistant Town Manager Ferguson gave a recap of her ride on the beach with Vice Chair Pearson and Zoning Officer Rhonda Wooten and described criteria for mat placement. She said the way it was left was that the same number of mats that had been budgeted should be ordered this year as replacements if we need to replace old ones. She was to have a follow up meeting with Vice Chair Pearson next week. Town Manager Hewett talked about how that might be applied to private walkways in the long-term plan as potential mechanisms that could be utilized. Chair Myers asked about private walkways that are in need of repair and what process is in place to address that. Town Manager Hewett talked about that process and the technical aspects of how people are allowed to construct their walkways. He said it wasn't as evident when the beach was skinny but now that it is wider it is more evident. Member Dixon discussed deeded beach accesses versus private and how it gets really hard to figure out the ones that are private or if it's in someone's deed. Assistant Town Manager Ferguson said that Zoning Officer Wooten answered some of the specific questions that Vice Chair Pearson had and in one particular case took pictures to see how she could follow up.

Chair Myers said that she has evaluated plants and some are not thriving. She is looking at a wider diversity of plants instead of one species. She wants to maximize dune growth by stabilizing the dune with plant roots and rhizomes and they should be able to reproduce on their own. She said that takes out American Beach Grass because it does not reproduce on its own below Cape Hattaras. She said it can spread by rhizomes. She thinks Sea Oats is the way to go. She thinks sand fences should be installed and maintained. She wanted an opportunity to present as a menu option with A, B, C, etc. to the commissioners. She said the commissioners are the budgeters but the IBPB can make recommendations. She said before the IBPB decides on exactly what they think the menu options

should be she wants to talk to Steve Mercer with Coastal Transplants. She said one option would be to establish a regular fertilization plan. She said the Holden Beach Renourishment Association is doing fertilization this spring but the Town should do it again next spring because it is best to do it in the spring. Member Thomas said he is hearing short-term items and long-term items. He asked if the longer-term is going to fold into the master plan. Chair Myers said she doesn't want to propose anything until Mr. Mercer gives advice. Chair Myers explained how the Beach Renourishment Association worked. She said the association is completing a plan that is a combination of fertilization and plantings. She said they are trying to spend their money and disband because the Town has taken over their duties. She said by Friday the Renourishment Association members had to have their input in. Town Manager Hewett said the Town was not going to hold off if things don't come into play with the Renourishment group. Chair Myers explained that option one is a regular ongoing fertilization plan. Option two is to add additional plantings. Option three is to repair our damaged areas, excluding new plantings in areas that experience frequent wash overs and inundation and to replant Sea Oats when we lose them. Option four would create a new test garden for a new species to see how things thrive here. Chair Myers said we tend to be a microclimate that is a bit drier and we end up in a rain shadow. Member Thomas said he is getting lost in short-term and long-term. He asked about costs on those items and it going to commissioners during their budget process. Chair Myers said other options would be to plant additional areas. Some areas may be limited. She also mentioned plantings between the fences and areas that were not previously planted. Member Thomas said it needs some prioritization as which ones the IBPB think are most important. Town Manager Hewett said most of what Chair Myers has mentioned needs to be addressed as part of a holistic view in the master plan. He said different species of plants is not going to happen in time to go in the budget. He said we may be able to do some bubble budgeting and take it into consideration during the fiscal year. He said he sees that as part of policy statements in the master plan. He said just to say you are going to pin a price tag on those things for the upcoming budget is not realistic. He really hates to discard American Beach Grass without walking around it a couple of times. He is looking at the practical application of the short-term and long-term. He said he hears what she is saying and a lot of that needs to be in the master plan. Town Manager Hewett said we are drafting the budget today. Assistant Town Manager Ferguson went over the budgeting schedule. Town Manager Hewett said there is a workshop in Surf City on March 9<sup>th</sup>. He said the IBPB may consider attending on their own. He continued that dune vegetation is one of the topics. He said Spencer Rogers is the guest speaker and he and David Nash wrote the Dune Book. Town Manager Hewett said he has seen Mr. Rogers' presentation a number of times. He said it is a great networking opportunity with others of like minds but they are requesting registration. He said that Surf City also took a beating and it is a good example of what happens when you don't have a nourished beach and a formal program.

Mr. Way added that the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation put out a grant about resilience that is nationwide, but the one thing they said for the east coast was dune restoration and big groups. He said it looked like it is a pretty quick process. You have to say that you are helping out bird habitat and flooding. Member Thomas said that it gets him thinking about UNCW and a dune survey of vegetation and maybe it could tie into that. Mr. Way said maybe when the board reads through it or the staff, the granting agency usually wants large-scale and bang for your buck. Member Thomas said maybe it is something Brunswick County would like to get involved with and apply to all beaches. Mr. Way said the grant is competitive. He said there was one last year for living shorelines and his firm partnered with a local group but they didn't get it.

Keep off the dune signs and replacing those and the UNCW collaboration were also discussed as potential budget items. Member Thomas said he took the professor's email and he entered in what the rough estimate is of what he thinks it would cost short-term to collaborate with UNCW. He passed out the document and said this is a rough estimate. Member Dixon said a couple of years ago there was a test garden in front of Dunescape. She said her understanding was that project involved Steve Mercer in collaboration with UNCW. She said she doesn't know the results. Assistant Town Manager Ferguson said that the garden did have some inundation but the doctoral student came and gave a report to the BOC at the time. Town Manager Hewett said that some areas did get inundated but there were some positive results in the area that didn't get over wash. He said he looked at how the Sea Oats grew and there is a small dune there now. Even plants that were inundated grew and a dune grew. He said the back side of that research is as Chair Myers stated, that type of fertilizer mix has become best practice. Assistant Town Manager Ferguson gave UNCW's availability. She said February 13<sup>th</sup> works best for staff schedules and room availability. She will poll the board and the engineer on availability and get back to the board. Chair Myers also talked about additional monitoring for the west end and the Shallotte Inlet. Town Manager Hewett said the staff would be budgeting the additional transects and engineering analysis for those.

### **Inlet and Beach Board Announcements**

Chair Myers said the February meeting date is pending. At some point the board wants to schedule Steve Mercer to come. Chair Myers brought up the Brunswick Shoreline Meeting scheduled for January 30, 2019 at 10 a.m. Member Thomas asked about the deeper and wider project and if it will be addressed at the meeting. Town Manager Hewett said if it is not discussed it will be appropriate for staff to raise the discussion.

### **Consensus of Short Report to the Board**

Chair Myers said that the IBPB met January 24<sup>th</sup> and the following issues and topics were addressed:

- Status of Beach and Inlets- Staff provided an overview. The board was updated on new inlet hazard areas and will monitor the situation. Member Thomas added that Mr. Way gave a status on the hurricane report for FEMA and an update on the inlet modeling work. The Town sent a letter to the County regarding the deepening and widening project. Town Manager Hewett will bring it up at the meeting on January 30<sup>th</sup> at the county.
- Comprehensive Long-term Plan- A working framework was discussed for the long-term plan. ATM will be working with us to facilitate the report. A six month timeframe is the target.
- Budget items for FY 19-20- Board members discussed items they would like to see such as plantings, mats, signs, and collaboration with UNCW.
- Members of the IBPB plan to attend the Brunswick Shoreline meeting January 30<sup>th</sup>.

*Motion by Member Dixon to approve short report; second by Member Thomas; approved by unanimous vote.*

**Public Comment**

Commissioner Kwiatkowski said she has a lot of questions coming from people in her neighborhood. She said it will help if addresses are put with different sections of the beach so that it is easier for the citizens. Chair Myers said the important thing is that we keep in mind how each section is managed because they are managed differently.

Member Dixon said with the CRC meetings and the inlet hazard areas she understands that fits under Planning and Zoning but from what she has seen proposed she sees it affecting where we placed sand. Town Manager Hewett said that hasn't been established yet.

**Adjournment**

*Motion by Member Thomas to adjourn at 11:22 a.m.; second by Member Dixon; approved by unanimous vote.*