



Topsail Island
Shoreline Protection Commission



REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Monday, April 18, 2022, 2:00 PM
Surf City Town Hall

Commission Members Present

Steve Smith, Chair
Mike Benson, Vice Chair
Teresa Batts
Ed Broadhurst
Fred Fontana
Mark Price
William Snyder
David Ward
Hiram Williams

Associates Present

Alice Derian, N. Topsail Beach Manager
Kyle Breuer, Surf City Town Manager
Doug Shipley, Topsail Beach Town Manager
Christina Burke, Topsail Beach Town Asst.
Manager
Rochelle Jagst, Clerk Topsail Beach
Congressman Mike McIntyre, TISPC Federal
Advocate
Kerri Allen, NC Coastal Federation
Kathy Zagzebski, Karen Beasley Turtle
Hospital
Marc Horstman and Joe Swain, WK Dickson

Virtual

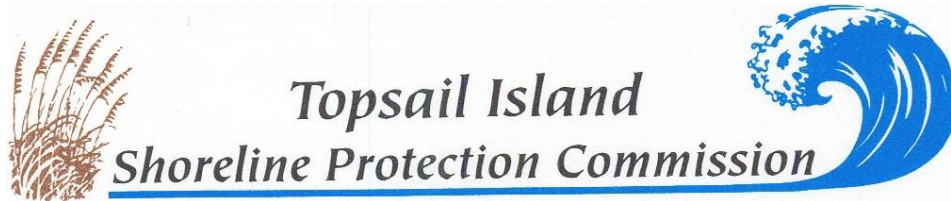
Laura Moore, UNC-Chapel Hill
Connie Wilson, TISPC State Advocate
Joonsoo Yi, TISPC Federal Advocate
Billy Christ, Office of Rep. Rouzer
Tammy Proctor, Pender County Tourism
Kathleen Riely, NCBIWA

Guests

John Gardner, NTB BISAC
Tom Leonard, Alderman, N. Topsail Beach
Deborah Hill, Planning Director, N. Topsail
Beach
Debbie Wilson, ECO Topsail (Balloon releases)

I. [Call to Order & Greetings](#)

Chairman Smith called the meeting at order at 2:00 p.m.



II. [Nomination of Commission Chair and Vice-Chair](#)

Mr. Broadhurst nominated Chairman Smith for Chair. Mr. Williams seconded the motion, and it was carried. Mr. Ward nominated Vice Chairman Benson for Vice-Chair. Mr. Williams seconded the motion, and it was carried.

III. [Public Comments](#)

None were made.

IV. [Approval of Agenda](#)

Councilwoman Batts made a motion to approve the agenda. Mr. Williams seconded the motion, and it was carried.

V. [Approval of Minutes for December 2022](#)

Mr. Snyder made a motion to approve the agenda. Mr. Williams seconded the motion, and it was carried.

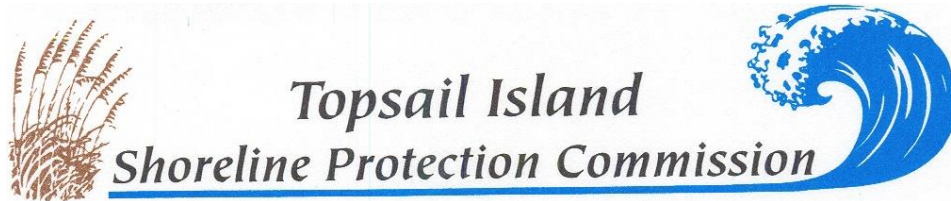
VI. [Consultant & Partners Reviews](#)

A. [Federal Legislation Activities – Mike McIntyre](#)

Mr. McIntyre discussed upcoming actions of the new Congress and opportunities for the next two years. Congressman Rouzer was named Chair of the Water Resources and Environment Subcommittee. Mr. McIntyre noted that this is a big win for Topsail Island. Earmarks have returned after a hiatus, and Mr. McIntyre noted that he expects senators' offices to publish guidance on opportunities for funding imminently. There may be a new emphasis on proving the connection to federal spending, and it may require additional support evidence in requests for funding. FEMA also offered new information on new approaches to the National Flood Insurance Program. The EPA is proposing funding for avoiding widespread contamination of PFAS. The White House released a list of opportunities for grants and funding through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. The trip to Washington will be an opportunity to talk directly about bills regarding CBRA zones and North Topsail Beach, along with committee and agency meetings during the week of March 20.

B. [NC State Legislation Activities – Connie Wilson](#)

Ms. Wilson stated that the Legislature is working on the budget at the Appropriations Chair levels, meeting by committee and subcommittee, and educating new legislators. Ms. Wilson noted that the growth in state revenues is over 10% higher than projected. Ms. Wilson reported that the House believes they may have a budget by May and reiterated that she will talk with policymakers about permanent funding for the Coastal Storm Mitigation Fund. A few bills are out to handle derelict vessels and to raise money for dredging. There have been a number of bills filed to allow schools to start before



August 25 but later summer start dates are helpful for tourism and employment on the coast.

C. [North Carolina Coastal Federation – Kerri Allen](#)

Ms. Allen reported that they are in the final internal review of the Bogue Sound Watershed Restoration Plan and will be submitting that to the state for approval in the coming weeks. This sets Surf City, North Topsail Beach, and Holly Ridge up for EPA 319 funding for implementation. The Coastal Federation is seeking funding for engineering plans and projects, recurring funding for a living shoreline cost share, and support for a cost share resolution aimed at reducing nutrient loading. Chairman Smith and Ms. Allen also discussed the intensity of microplastics and actions that can be taken on the island.

D. [Turtle Hospital – Kathy Zagzebski](#)

Ms. Zagzebski shared that the Sea Turtle Hospital had a maximum of 74 sea turtles this summer and were kept busy. This was a high level for the summer and a trend shared across the state. Ms. Wilson noted that they worked with the US Coast Guard to release over 20 turtles recently and are reopening their facility for public tours for purchase. Ms. Wilson noted that an internship for college students is available with a stipend and housing and an internship for undergraduate students is also available without a stipend. Ms. Wilson concluded by offering strong support on behalf of the Turtle Hospital for a ban on balloon releases and shared that they have seen balloons showing up in their turtles.

E. [RCCP Phase 3 Update – Marc Horstman & Joe Swaim](#)

Mr. Horstman presented on the discoveries and potential solutions that the team is recommending given their work. Mr. Horstman noted the focus on nature-based solutions to minimize flooding at hotspots in all three communities while minimizing property impact. Mr. Swaim presented on various infiltration infrastructure methods and offered regional examples of certain methods. Mr. Swaim then recapped the investigation undertaken in this Phase, including groundwater and seasonal high water table levels, and shared concept plans for all hotspots. Mr. asked about changes to road crown and was told that collaboration with NCDOT is recommended to avoid ponding on sidewalks. Mr. Swaim noted that these concepts utilize 1-inch rainfall models.

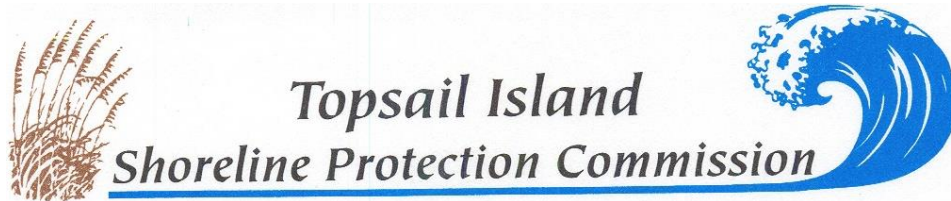
VII. [Old Business](#)

A. [Invasive Species](#)

Chairman Smith reported that Topsail Beach had two experts offer visions for how to attack Vitex. The effort should be an island-wide project. Chairman Smith estimated approximately \$200,000 per community per year over a five-year period. Mr. Breuer noted that Surf City adopted an ordinance but education is vital to efficient eradication.

B. [Legislative Meeting Review](#)

Chairman Smith noted that these meetings went well but mentioned the possible need for a follow-up trip sometime in April to get more details on projects.



C. Beach Clean Project

Chairman Smith reported that a group of town managers and other representatives came up with actions to start with. First was to put up aluminum signs at beach access points. Second was to contact realtors and environmental groups to ensure that information was disseminated to the public. Next was to create a common calendar of events.

D. RCCP

Phase 3 of the project with WK Dickson concludes with this meeting. Commission members were encouraged to work with their towns to prioritize permit ready projects so that each town will be ready when funding for Phase 4 comes.

E. 2023 Goals

Chairman Smith noted that the Commission should be aware of some resistance from Raleigh with the terminal groin project in North Topsail Beach.

VIII. Town's Local Projects/Direction –

A. North Topsail Beach – Alice Derian

Ms. Derian shared that the Phase 5 project continues. The 2nd Avenue access was opened to facilitate more vehicles placing sand. The Army Corps project wrapped up last week after reaching Topsail Reef Building 6. Ms. Derian also shared that the Town will move forward with the FEMA project and that the North Topsail Beach Music Festival is upcoming.

B. Surf City – Kyle Breuer

Mr. Breuer notified the Commission that the Corps had issued a public notice for sources sought, which provides the industry information on upcoming projects and is an important sign of forward progress. The town Beautification Enhancement Committee has also been doing an educational series. On March 23, there will be a workshop for homeowners on living shorelines.

C. Topsail Beach – Doug Shipley

Mr. Shipley reported that FEMA requested an arbitration extension to April. Revisions to the 30-year plan have been slowed by the delays in arbitration. The Army Corps did some hotspot dredging at the tip of the island. The Town will be receiving LiDAR data soon. Mr. Shipley noted that an agreement was reached for multiple applications of chemicals to be used to attack Vitex. The South End applicant did not make the deadline for the upcoming Planning Board meeting. The Town was notified of \$400,000 for Stormwater Capital Improvement and Resiliency Plan.

IX. New Items

A. NC SeaGrant Research Opportunity – Laura Moore

Dr. Moore, professor of geomorphology at UNC-Chapel Hill, discussed the outline of a collaborative research opportunity with the three communities on Topsail Island. The effort



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would provide a means for considering how short-term management decisions are likely to play out over different scenarios in the longer term, using a geomorphic model currently under peer review. The use of these sorts of models can support informed decision-making and prevent potentially maladaptive actions in future years. This would be a two-year project, involving graduate students and academic partners from UNC, Duke, and NC State. Through SeaGrant funding, this project would incur no cost to the Commission or the three communities. Chairman Smith noted that he will loop in county representatives to gauge their interest as well and encouraged moving forward so the Commission could understand its time commitment.

B. Environmental Conservancy of Topsail – Debbie Wilson

Ms. Wilson requested that the three towns enact an ordinance to ban the release of balloons within their town limits. She noted that balloons can be potentially life-threatening litter to wildlife. Ms. Wilson stated that the US Fish and Wildlife Service is requesting that balloons not be released and that similar bans have been enacted in other states, including Virginia and Hawai'i. Ms. Wilson then offered an example ordinance for the three towns.

C. CRC Meeting

Discussion centered around exposed septic tanks and how federal money is applied or not applied to repair or removal of tanks. Members then visited the Ocean Isle Beach terminal groin. Mr. Breuer reported that the CRC is hopeful about the results. He then noted that CRC planned to encourage DCM to keep updating data to ensure fairness in the applied regulations. Chairman Smith then shared administrative updates and opportunities for comments on the Inlet Hazard Area Zone and the CAMA Land Use Plan.

X. Public/Commission Comments

Betsy Johnson

Ms. Johnson noted that there will be considerable opposition to removing this invasive species (Vitex). She noted that a property owner reported that the plant helped protect the dune.

XI. Next Meeting – Friday, April 28 , 2023 – Surf City Town Hall

XII. Adjournment

Mr. Ward made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Snyder seconded the motion, and it was carried.