

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Thursday June 27, 2024, 2:00 PM
Surf City Town Hall, Surf City, NC

Commission Members Present

Steve Smith, Chair
Mike Benson, Vice Chair
William Snyder
Tom Leonard
Larry Strother
Ed Broadhurst
Hiram Williams
Teresa Batts
Brad George
Mark Price (vir.)

Associates Present

Kyle Breuer, SC Manager
Congr. Mike McIntyre (advocate)
David Ferrell (advocate, vir.)
Kerri Allen, NCCF
Clay Griffin (TFG legis. rep)
Christina Burke, TB Asst. Manager
Carla Citarelli, Surf City Town Clerk
Larry Combs (alt.)

Guests

John Kolonski, SC Councilman
Coley Corderio (vir.)
John Gardner, NTB BISAC
Tom Staker, TB BIS
Steve Gordon

I. Call to Order & Greetings

Chairman Smith called the meeting at order at 2:00 p.m. Chairman Smith welcomed the commission members, associates, and those in the audience and online. Chairman Smith then led the group in the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

II. Public Comments

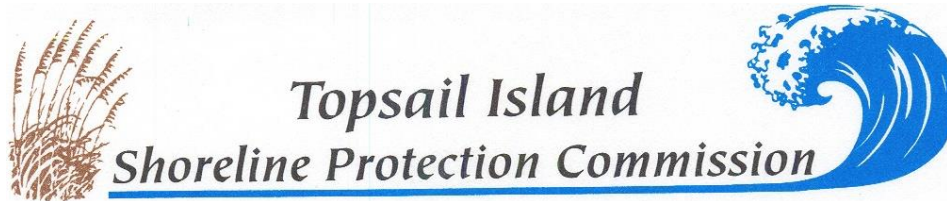
No comments.

III. Approval of Agenda

Larry Strother made a motion to approve the agenda. Teresa Batts seconded the motion, and it was carried unanimously.

IV. Approval of Minutes for April 2024

Hiram Williams made a motion to approve the minutes. Tom Leonard seconded the motion, and it was carried unanimously.



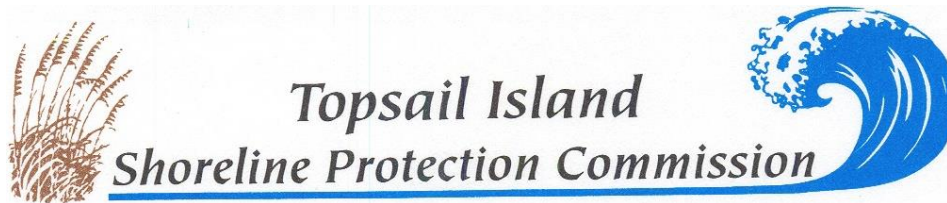
V. Consultant & Partner's Reviews

a. **Federal Legislation Activities - Ward and Smith, P.A. –Congressman Mike McIntyre.**

Chairman Smith welcomed Congressman McIntyre to the podium. Congressman McIntyre referred to his monthly report for full details. He then highlighted that Congress is trying to get through 12 different appropriations bills. A continuing resolution may be needed but the federal budget will no doubt be approved by December before the new congress convenes in January. WRDA passed the House committee unanimously requiring past projects to be completed as well as approval of several new projects. The Army Corps portion of WRDA does include \$535 thousand for dredging Topsail Inlet and \$565 thousand for New River Inlet. In addition \$6 million is included for maintenance of the ICW in North Carolina. Congressman Murphy's bill (HB2437) to revise CBRA maps remains before House with a scoring needed from the CBO but the bill should not have a federal impact (deficient). Also, Congressman Murphy invited officials from the US Fish and Wildlife to visit North Topsail Beach to view CBRA and non-CBRA portions as the only evidence for CBRA in 1982 was aerial photographs not ground truthing. Whole House passage of his bill may happen before the end of the year. Congressman Rouzer's bill (HB524) for sand borrowing from CBRA areas did pass the House subcommittee and should have overwhelming passage of the House with voice vote expected. With regard to FEMA issues, Congressman Murphy asked for a letter from TISPC for his review, approval and sending on to the agency to evaluate post-storm calculations for depth of closure determination. For Surf City, re-evaluation of the General Evaluation Report will not be needed but the 2026 WRDA will need re-authorization for future maintenance of the Surf City federal project once the initial project is built.

b. **NC State Legislation Activities – Maynard Nexsen PC – David Ferrell**

David Ferrell was reporting live from just outside the State Legislative Building since today may be last day of legislative session until November. Although a state budget is not required this year, there are surplus funds that legislators are trying to figure out how to spend. The Senate just passed a stop gap measure for federal money that would expire otherwise. He worked with Carson Smith and Brent Jackson, our legislative reps to help get money for removal of Vitex on Topsail Island in addition to the grant already awarded. He then discussed a regulatory reform bill SB607 which is actually the House version. If passed this bill will among other things delay the reporting of recreational fish catch reporting, negate a new CAMA permit for repairing docks, piers, and walkways, and increase the number of experimental terminal groins from six to seven as Bald Head Island wants to build a second groin, it would also allow Bald Head Island to replace their fabric geotubes with rock structures. The state portion of the local match for the Surf City federal project should not need a state bill as DEQ can make that an



agency authorization. *(post meeting note: The Senate passed SB607 and it became law [Session Law 2024-45] without Governor Cooper's signature on July 9th)*

c. North Carolina Coastal Federation – Kerri Allen

Kerri recognized Mia who is Coastal Federation intern for the summer. The Federation is working on a tool kit for coastal pier construction that includes information on floating docks and encapsulated polystyrene. When ready she would like each town to make a link to the tool kit. Draft report for abandoned vessels in coastal waters is in preparation to unify a state rule for removal. The plan is for the Federation to manage the program with state funding. Debris removal continues. She reported that the North Carolina version of the South Atlantic Salt Marsh Action Plan has been released to look at effects of sea-level rise and other environmental changes on salt marsh health and space for marshes to migrate as well as management by thin-layer placement. A workshop is planned for possibly November to bring stakeholders together. Kerri announced a Debris Removal Action Plan Workshop for September 24. August 1 is the Pelican Awards event.

d. North Carolina Beach, Inlet and Waterway Association – Kathleen Riely

Chairman Smith reported for Kathleen that the fall meeting of NCBIWAs will be held on in Wilmington. He also mentioned a possible meeting with reps from the 20 coastal counties and the Army Corps meeting later this summer in Topsail Beach.

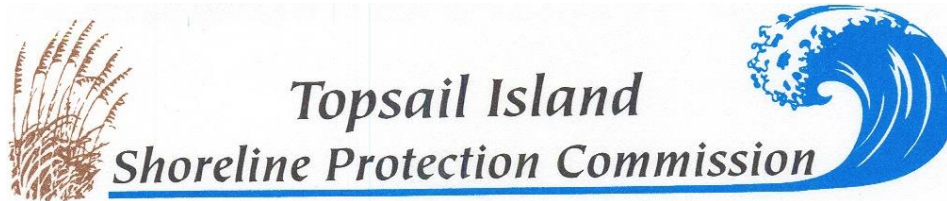
e. Turtle Hospital – Kathy Zagzebski *(in absentia)*

Sea Turtle nesting season: The season started slowly but as of today, halfway through nesting season, we are on par with previous years with 54 island-wide nests. Of great excitement, earlier this month we documented the first leatherback nest on Topsail Island!

Sea Turtle hospital: We are having our busiest year yet. So far in 2024, we have cared for 164 turtles. Our previous record for the whole year is 119. We are currently seeing a lot of hooked turtles and a lot of debilitated turtles. If people see any turtles on the beach whether nesting or stranded, they should please call our 24-hour hotline at 910-470-2880. We are open 7 days a week through the end of July. Tours continue to sell out at least a week in advance. We have a full slate of college interns and high school interns, who are doing a great job.

VI. Old Business & Updates

a. DEQ award for Vitex Removal for Topsail Island – Christina Burke



She reported that the island-wide grant proposal to DCM in amount of \$1.3 million was awarded as a 50:50 local cost-share with \$650 thousand split among the three island towns. The town managers are putting together a work plan which will be hosted on the TISPC website. A draft waiver for property owners to sign for work on their dune property as well as a MOA among the three towns as part of the grant requirement is in progress. An RFP is under development to manage the project and actually do the removal treatments starting in April 2025. The project is 4-yr with grant funding for the first two, so replanting will occur as eradication continues.

b. Updated Charter – Steve Smith

Chairman stated that Topsail Beach and North Topsail Beach have approved revisions to the charter with Surf City to consider shortly. He has not heard from either county yet.

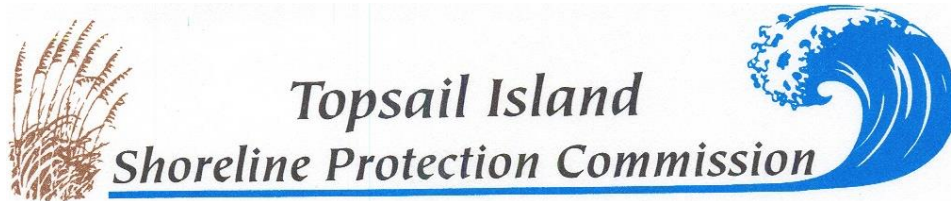
VII. New Items

a. Presentation on Insurance – Joe Stewart, Vice-President, Independent Insurance Agents of NC.

Joe is Vice Chair for Government Affairs. There are about 10,000 independent agents in North Carolina that sell insurance for multiple companies. Individuals pay a portion of the cost of the potential risk for loss. For Eastern North Carolina the risk from hurricanes and coastal river flooding is beyond one insurance company's capitalization to adequately cover the risk. So, in the 1970s the 'Beach Plan' was put in place for ENC in where rates were based on predicted losses. All insurance companies in the state share a portion of the risk associated with the Beach Plan. There is about \$150 billion worth of property covered in 18 coastal counties now. For most homeowners this means three separate policies- one: basic homeowner coverage for fire and damage, two: wind and hail coverage (hurricane insurance) and three: flood insurance through the National Flood Insurance Program. Unlike for good/bad drivers, home insurance is not based on individual claims, i.e. everyone pays the same rate depending on the home's/business replacement value, although incentive programs like 'Strengthen Your Roof can lower premiums. However, all homeowners/business owners in the state help to pay for the Beach Plan through a portion of their premiums. Just like the Beach Plan, the Fair Plan covers the rest of the state and a portion of premiums from policies in the Beach Plan go toward coverage of the Fair Plan. We have the best run Beach Plan of anywhere on the East Coast. Joe doesn't see private flood insurance policies coming from private insurance companies given the large number of losses nationwide. Commission members asked a wide variety of follow-on questions ranging from fortified roofs and homes as to why carriers might decide to leave North Carolina.

VIII. Upcoming Meetings & Conference

a. CRC – August 27 & 28, 2024, Beaufort Hotel



- IX. [Public/Commission Members Comments](#)
 - a. John Gardner asked a question about boat regulations and fishing regulations for the year. Especially gill netting and further regulation.
- X. [Next Meeting – Thursday, August 22, 2024 – Surf City Town Hall](#)
- XI. [Adjournment and Thank you for your support](#)

Chairman Smith asked for a motion to adjourn. David Ward made the motion with a second by Teresa Batts and it passed unanimously.