

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, March 26, 2026, 2:00 pm
Surf City Town Hall - Surf City, NC

Commission Members Present

William Snyder, TB - Chairman
Larry Strother, NTB - Vice Chair
Teresa Batts, SC
David Ward, SC
Kip Malcolm, NTB
Hiram Williams, SC
Frank Braxton, TB
Ed Broadhurst, TB

Associates Present

David Ferrell, Maynard Nexsen, Via WebEx
Kerri Allen, NCCF , Via WebEx
Trudy Solomon, SC
Kyle Breuer, SC Town Manager
Christina Burke, TB Town Manager
Alice Derian, NTB Town Manager

1. Call to Order, Greetings, & Pledge of Allegiance

- Chairman Snyder called the meeting to order at 2:00 PM.
- The Chairman welcomed the commission members, associates, and the public, emphasizing the continued importance of regional cooperation for shoreline protection.
- The meeting proceeded with the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Public Comments

- **Sabrina Guy & Zander Guy (Surf City) - read by Teresa Batts:** Submitted an email regarding the shellfish moratorium stating that the current lack of protections is a disservice to Pender and Onslow County waterways.
- **Chairman Snyder:** Acknowledged the feedback and noted that TISPC has been active – sending letters to legislators and participated in public hearings. A NC bill is pending for a study on the shellfish impacts.

3. Approval of Agenda

- **Amendment:** Teresa Batts moved to add “Oyster Leases” to the agenda under Old Business – Item A1.
- **Second:** David Ward.
- **Action:** Amended agenda approved unanimously.

4. Minutes Approval

- **Approval of Minutes for February 19, 2026:**
 - **Motion:** Hiram Williams.
 - **Second:** David Ward.
 - **Action:** Approved unanimously.
- The Chairman acknowledged the preparation of the minutes by Kip Malcolm as a newcomer and the previous contributions of former commission member, Mike Benson.

5. Consultant & Partners Reviews

- **Federal Legislation (William Snyder – memo from Ward and Smith):**
 - (Mike McIntyre is attending the ASBP Coastal Summit today and provided updates by way of a memo which was summarized by the Chair, William Snyder.)
 - **Surf City Nourishment:** Reported that the complete project packet has been received after it was moved from the Assistant Secretary of the Army Corp of Engineers and transferred to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for a their 120-day review period. The deadline for this review is approximately April 15, 2026. (David Ward expressed concerns about the Iran War and increasing fuel costs affecting increases in their dredging bid.)
 - **North Topsail Beach CBRA:** Reported that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service may be able to advance necessary legislation.
 - **Budgetary Impacts:** Noted that conflicts in Iran are complicating federal budgeting and legislation. Discussed the implications of the shutdown of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) - which has affected CISA, FEMA, the Coast Guard, and the TSA.
 - **Washington, DC Spring Legislative Trip:** Scheduled for April 20–22, 2026. A preparatory meeting with Congressmen is set for April 8, 2026 to discuss key talking points. The delegation will include Teresa Batts, Kyle Breuer, Larry Strother, John Best, Connie Pletl, Chris Gibson, the Chair.
 - **Federal NC Primary Election:** General election appears to be set following the primaries for the US Senate seat being vacated by Thom Tillis.
- **NC State Legislation (David Ferrell, Maynard Nexsen):**
 - **Primary Election Outcomes:** Discussed the dramatic state senate primaries. Noted that Senator Buerger conceded his race, which will significantly shift senate leadership and priorities.
 - **Legislative Session:** The "Long Session" resumes briefly in early April, with the "Short Session" beginning April 21.
 - **Budget & Surplus:** While there is a substantial state surplus, disputes between the House and Senate over tax plans and "big ticket items" are expected to consume those funds.
 - **Farm Bill:** Expressed hope that shellfish provisions within the bill will move forward during the short session.
 - **Legislative Day:** Target date for the Raleigh trip is May 12.

- **Karen Beasley Sea Turtle Hospital (Kyle Breuer – summarized email from Dr. Zagzebski):**
 - (Dr. Kathy Zagzebski is offshore releasing 37 sea turtles today and provided updates by way of an email which was summarized by Kyle Breuer.)
 - **Jean Beasley Memorial:** A celebration of life is scheduled for April 11, 2026 at 10:00 AM on the Karen Beasley Sea Turtle Rescue and Rehabilitation Center lawn and it will be live-streamed to Facebook and Instagram pages. An open house will follow the ceremony.
 - **Tours/Education Programming:** Tours taking place for the next two weeks during weekday hours for Spring Break. Additional education programs also available. Check their website for schedules.
 - **Lighting Study:** Topsail Island two-year lighting survey indicates that 57% of artificial lighting disorientation is caused by indoor residential lights, 26% by outdoor residential lights, and 7% by municipal streetlights was presented at the International Sea Turtle Symposium and hoping to present a PowerPoint to TISPC or any town. They recommend strong mitigation measures and pursue coordinated lighting ordinances between the Topsail Island's three towns.
 - **HB1053 (Sea Turtle Protection Act):** Urged the Commission and towns to support this bill, which provides statutory authority for municipalities to regulate lighting standards (reduce artificial lighting, promote turtle-friendly lighting) and protect key nesting areas. *(Potentially from the 2023-2024 session.)*
 - **Field Data on Lighting Study:** Trudy Solomon noted that interns are utilizing light meters to correlate lighting conditions with nest data. There is a high percentage of disorientation near homes with large windows and bright indoor lighting.
 - **Topsail Turtle Project:** Trudy Solomon also spoke on the Topsail Turtle Project nest hatching predictions and technologies utilized. Discussion continued regarding education of residents and visitors to help protect turtle hatchlings. More detail also provided about the Topsail Turtle Project procedures and operations.
- **North Carolina Coastal Federation (Kerri Allen):**
 - **Lighting Ordinance(s):** Discussed potential legislative work with Wrightsville Beach regarding their implementation of a lighting ordinance per new state laws being enacted giving local governments more authority to enforce.
 - **Shellfish Leasing Stakeholder Meeting:** Announced a meeting for April 14 at 1:00 PM at the Surf City Chambers to discuss spatial planning and resolving aquaculture conflicts.
 - **Spatial Analysis:** Working on geographic "hotspots" to resolve user needs and navigation conflicts, with a final report and recommendations to follow in the fall. A public survey is available to provide feedback and address concerns. In the fall, there will be focus groups analyzing data to produce maps and potentially make consensus-based recommendations.
 - **Information Sharing:** Ed Broadhurst thanked Kerri Allen for providing information recently.

NC Beach, Inlet and Waterway Association (Kathleen Riely):

- (Kathleen Riely is in Washington, DC for legislative matters.)
- **Spring Meeting:** Reminder of the meeting on April 23–24 in Emerald Isle. Agenda items include Inlet Hazard Areas, considerations for borrow-area, beach nourishment projects, dredge technology, update on “The Point” at Topsail Beach, and Sea Grant updates. Agenda available on their website.
- **Preventing Environmental Hazards Act (Congressman Dr. Murphy):** Discussion on legislative goals to allow federal funds to move buildings before they are destroyed by storms. The NC Coastal Federation supports this legislation.

Hiram Williams and Kerri Allen mentioned the “[Coastal Review Online](#)”, a publication by the NC Coastal Federation, which provides objective daily reporting on the environment, history, and communities of North Carolina’s 20 coastal counties.

6. Old Business & Updates

- **Oyster Lease Discussion:** Teresa Batts and Kerri Allen discussed the approved study from April 2025, delayed by budgetary processes, but moving forward. New Hanover moratorium expires July 2026 with uncertainty remaining about the extension of that moratorium. Water Column Shellfish Leases are controlled by DMF (NC Division of Marine Fisheries) and the towns cannot “control the water.” Pender and Onslow Counties are most dramatically impacted by the management of shellfish leases and aquaculture.

- **Motion:** To approve the modified language for the TISPC 2026 Advocate Goals #F.

“Advocate for state-level shellfish and water column lease management that balances aquaculture with traditional navigation, recreation, and riparian rights to mitigate negative impacts on other waterway uses.”

Motion: Kip Malcolm

Second: Hiram Williams

Action: Approved unanimously.

- **Stakeholder Meeting Goals:** Goals of the April 14 meeting discussed – interactive workshop to discuss shared facts, process, DMF review, and influencing process. Breakout sessions to address primary conflicts: navigational safety, property values, fishing access, or overall density of leases. Determine solutions/recommendations based on breakout sessions. Information gathered for researchers for reporting and a public report working towards solutions. Frank Braxton discussed an intermediate step so that reporting could be made more public to inform the public. It is possible to bring growers and users

together to get buy-in from both groups to influence state regulations or legislation.

Differentiation discussed between the NC legislative study conducted by the [NC Collaboratory](#) (based at the University of North Carolina) versus the NCCF study funded by NOAA.

The NCCF wants to see the shellfish industry succeed, but not at the expense of blanket leases everywhere and they do not oppose a moratorium; however they do recommend a “sunset-clause” inserted for a re-evaluation. Larry Strother discussed how the TISPC is opposed to leases based on how TISPC has gotten no traction on changes and NCCF is more in favor of some middle-ground.

Teresa Batts provided statistics that Onslow County has seen 190% increase in column leases since 2019 making Onslow County #2 and Pender County is #3 while requesting DMF to provide more detailed lease statistics/data growth.

Chairman Snyder requests towns promote the stakeholder meeting. Discussion about a TISPC group to meet with NC legislators to continue advocacy, including leases, through more direct contact with our legislators.

- **Vitex Dune Project (Christina Burke):** Michael Baker International has a tentative date of April 20 to begin treatments again – dependent on plant conditions and weather.
- **Washington, DC Spring Legislative Trip:** Additional recommendations for goals and objectives were solicited and no modifications or additional items were submitted for inclusion.
- **Raleigh, NC Spring Legislative Trip:** Additional recommendations for goals and objectives were solicited and no modifications or additional items were submitted for inclusion.

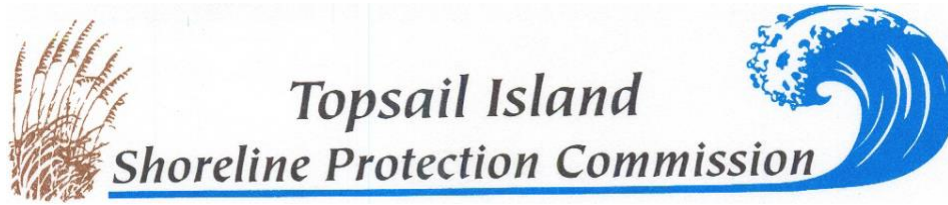
7. Town Updates

- **Topsail Beach (Christina Burke):**
 - **Budget:** Budgeting and budget workshops are taking a lot of staff time.
 - **Public Safety Building:** Project is underway. Bids expected back April 9. Construction anticipated to begin in June and last approximately a year. Located on the corner of Flake Avenue and S. Anderson Boulevard.
 - **Autumn with Topsail Festival:** Streets will be utilized to accommodate the festival with the construction of the public safety building.
 - **Water Management Taskforce:** Tidal and stormwater flooding being reviewed to evaluate drainage pipes and flow. Mitigation measures being evaluated.
 - **“The Point”:** Coastal Land Trust celebration on April 15 to celebrate the closing on the property.
- **Surf City (Kyle Breuer):**

- **USACE:** Project proceeding on the administrative level at the district office to formulate partnership agreements to mitigate delays.
- **Stormwater Projects:** Roland Avenue paver project ribbon cutting completed 2 weeks ago. Seahorse pavers had some settling, but it was under warranty. Mecklenburg Avenue and N. Topsail Drive project moving forward to replace with pavers
- **Bridge Signal Pilot Project:** NC DOT concept signalized ramp metering pilot project on the high-rise bridge – concept to gauge traffic and allow mitigation to traffic backups with the given infrastructure. Anticipated in May 2026.
- **Roundabout at 50/210:** Redesign discussed; however other quadrant projects are moving forward.
- **Waterline Resilience Project:** Another water line from the mainland, under the intracoastal to serve the island incorporating an 8” line and design features.
- **North Topsail Beach (Alice Derian):**
 - **PTC 8 Dune Work:** Finished ahead of schedule. Sea plantings (sea oats) beginning in May into July planting 182,000 plants to stabilize the repaired dunes. Reimbursed approximately \$4 million from FEMA.
 - **Budget:** Meetings and workshops scheduled.
 - **Fire Station #2:** Anticipated completion in June 2026. 12,000 square feet/2-stories.
 - **Stormwater Projects:** First ever grant-funded, stormwater projects at Richard Peters Park and Gray Street.
 - **Sandbags:** Repair/replacement issues have been discussed with the State and future feedback is ongoing. A potential empty sandbag may have washed up in Topsail Beach from unknown origin, but possibly from NTB. Private sandbag projects have been permitted by the State utilizing sand from recent nourishment projects – which is somewhat problematic.
 - **Departure of Town Manager:** Commissioners reflected on Alice Derian’s work with TISPC and their appreciation

8. New Business

- **CRC Update:**
 - **Sandbags:** At their February 15, 2026 meeting, sandbags were discussed on Figure Eight Island. Variance received for larger sandbags. Ocean Isle also got a similar variance.
 - **Septic Tanks Concerns:** Septic tanks from endangered homes were also discussed during the CRC meeting and jurisdictions are looking for solutions.
 - Oceanfront and Inlet erosion rates and setbacks were discussed.
 - **Next CRC Meeting:** April 15-16, 2026 (Ocean Isle Beach)
 - CRAC – April 15 meeting in the morning
 - Terminal Groin Tour available at Ocean Isle Beach



9. Public/Commission Member Comments

- No additional comments provided.

10. Next Meeting

- Thursday, May 28, 2026, 2:00 PM – Surf City Town Hall.

11. Adjournment

- **Motion:** Frank Braxton
- **Second:** David Ward
- **Action:** Approved unanimously.