

***MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING
OF THE CAROLINA BEACH TOWN COUNCIL***

September 23, 2011

The Town Council of the Town of Carolina Beach hosted a breakfast meeting at the Marriott Hotel in Carolina Beach along with representatives from the Town of Kure Beach, Town of Wrightsville Beach, US Army Corps of Engineers, New Hanover County Port Waterway and Beach Commission, the New Hanover County Engineer, New Hanover County Commissioner Rick Caitlin, and a telephone conference call with a representative from Marlowe and Company, Daniel Sheehan. The following representatives from Carolina Beach were present: Mayor Joel Macon; Mayor Pro Tem (MPT) Pat Efird; Councilman Dan Wilcox; and Councilman Bob Lewis. Also present: Town Manager Tim Owens, Town Clerk Lynn Prusa; Administrative Specialist Sara Hartman, Finance Director Dawn Johnson; and Town Attorney Steve Coggins.

Following a meet, greet and breakfast Mayor Macon opened the meeting by thanking everyone for coming to discuss issues of mutual interest such as future maintenance and dredging of the inlet and beach re-nourishment projects. He introduced the first speaker Colonel Steven Baker of the US Army Corps of Engineers Wilmington District.

Colonel Baker said they are continuing to maintain the projects as best possible with the budget cuts they are facing.

There was concern expressed about federal funds needed for the inlet project. He said the district is doing what it can to advocate for these projects.

Kure Beach Mayor Lambeth suggested that everyone e-mail the elected officials in Washington and let them know when you might be there. He also mentioned that the state would like us to evaluate and give them feedback on DENR. He feels that the NC DENR is as good as they come.

Colonel Baker went on to explain that their department is different from most federal government agencies and how the budget is funded. They will go to Atlanta in June and at that time each group defends their own budget. Then it is ranked by priority nationwide. Right now the Wilmington harbor is not high ranking because of tonnage.

There was discussion about earmarks, and Mr. Coggins said the definition of earmark is whether or not it is in the President's budget at least for the Corps of Engineers.

Colonel Baker said he received a message last night from Harry Simmons about pulling the buoys at Lockwood Folly. He said they will schedule the dredging in 2-3 weeks and the buoys will not be replaced until the survey is done and then they will be put back right. Currently they are not in the right place.

Next to speak was Layton Bedsole, Chairman of the New Hanover County Port Waterway and Beach Commission talked about their role and the future issues for New Hanover County. She said they have been successful in the past in Raleigh and she believes they will be in the future. She mentioned the Carolina Beach re-nourishment project and said it will be the first project to reach 50 years. The evaluation of the Carolina Beach and Kure Beach projects will be done at the same time.

There was discussion about improving areas for vessels and additional cargo so we can get funding for this project and O&R funding.

County Commissioner Rick Caitlin said that concerning the inlet maintenance the handwriting is on the wall and we need a plan. We do not have a funding stream for the AIWW. He said now he thinks everyone realizes we have to change but we'll still maintain partnerships.

Mayor Macon called for a 5 minute recess.

The next speaker was Jim Iannucci, County Engineer. He said that we have 3 separate projects. He said that they are trying to come up with a contingency plan and he can provide a copy to everyone on a disk. He said that all three projects were done in the same timeframe and there may be some savings there. It will take 1 year for permits to get contract approval for 3 projects if we move forward doing the projects with the same template and not change them because it can be quite expensive. The plan was funded through ROT. The permits should be in hand within a year. He said we want to get the 291.

Wrightsville Beach Mayor Cignotti said we are trying to get the permit and then the interlocal agreement.

Kure Beach Mayor Lambeth suggested that all towns call a special meeting to review the document at one time.

If the federal funding is not there then we need to keep the funding there with a contributing authority with the existing permits with the Corps of Engineers. This is to be done through the interlocal agreement.

Also during the meeting Mr. Owens set up a conference call with Daniel Sheehan representing Marlowe and Company concerning future challenges with beach and inlet projects, federal funding availability, upcoming legislation and opportunities, and status of contributing authority and federal reauthorization efforts.

Mr. Sheehan said that Congress must pass something by December 23rd and we won't know about FY 2012 Corps of Engineers funds until that time. Appropriations to Carolina Beach will be critical and putting dollars to the evaluation report is critical. Mr. Sheehan said these are policy changes and need to make sure they all understand this is a policy change and not an earmark.

As it stands now the Carolina Beach project goes away in 2014 so we are trying to do a contributing authority so we can get 3 more years after the re-nourishment.

Carolina Beach Councilman Bob Lewis was wondering if the state could collect a portion of the fishing license dollars to raise money for the inlet project.

Mr. Coggins provided everybody in attendance with a handout (Exhibit 1) outlining the towns' rights for ocean access and nourishment projects.

Mr. Owens said we need to say in tune with the state and local officials about the importance of these projects.

This concluded the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn N. Prusa, Town Clerk
Town of Carolina Beach

Approved: _____