

Shore Protection Manager

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CARTERET COUNTY BEACH COMMISSION MEETING

Minutes

Emerald Isle Board Room

Remotely via Carteret County Zoom Account (<https://carteretcountync.zoom.us/>)

August 23, 2021, 2 pm

Attendance.

Commission Members Jim Normile (chair), John Brodman (vice-chair), Larry Baldwin (remotely), Larry Corsello, Jimmy Farrington, Mike Luther, Danny Navey, Tom Rule, Woody Warren, secretary Greg Rudolph, and the general public. Members Archer and Guthrie were absent.

- (1) **Call to Order.** – Chairman Normile welcomed everyone in attendance (both live and remotely) and proceeded to call the meeting to order.
- (2) **Approval of Minutes - Regular Beach Commission Meeting (July 26, 2021).** – Chairman Normile asked the Commission if there were any corrections, additions, or comments regarding the July 26th regular session minutes provided in the agenda packet. With no comments forthcoming, member Navey subsequently made a motion to adopt the minutes as presented, which was seconded by vice-chair Brodman and unanimously approved.
- (3) **Room Occupancy Tax (ROT) and “Beach Fund” Update.** – Secretary Rudolph introduced the topic by noting the June 2021 collection figure (\$2,186,741) was provided to the Beach Commission via email earlier in the month and is notable on several different levels (see [Slides 1&2](#)); (a) The June 2021 collection was up by +38% compared to the June 2020 collection – the latter was the record-holding month as well, (b) The June 2021 collection also represents our 13th consecutive record-breaking month, (c) Through the first six months of the calendar year, the 2021 collection is up by +97% compared to 2020, and (d) The June 2021 report also signifies the end of the 2020-21 fiscal year (FY), and we landed +58% ahead of the FY 2019-20 total collection \$11,513,303 vs. \$7,271,245. The secretary concluded by reviewing the nourishment reserve (a.k.a., “Beach Fund”) balance at the end of FY 2020-21 (~\$16.8 million) and reiterated we should be close to the \$20 million mark at the end of the summer, which in itself is quite an accomplishment considering the balance was \$18.1 million just before hurricane *Florence* impacted the area in September 2018. Since then we have placed 5 million cubic yards of sand along Bogue Banks at a total cost of \$85 million. In that context, the reserve value we have now is even more impressive.

Member Warren added that as of August 10th, we (Bluewater Realty) has roughly 1,000 more check-ins compared to the same point in time in 2020. Plus the advance reservations are also up for September, October, November, and December so we should continue to see very strong or record occupancy tax receipts well into the future.

- (4) **The Bogue Inlet Relocation Project (2005) & Current Monitoring Efforts.** – Chairman Normile turned the floor over to the secretary who subsequently introduced Ken Willson (audience) and Tom Jarrett (remotely) with Coastal Planning & Engineering, which was the firm who designed and administered the Bogue Inlet Relocation Project in the early 2000s. The secretary continued with a [Slide Presentation \(3-27\)](#) that detailed the inlet conditions at the time, the project's formulation, our monitoring efforts, and our current management scheme that could trigger the next realignment event. Subsequent to the presentation, Chairman Normile asked if Mr. Willson and Mr. Jarrett could say a few words, especially Mr. Jarrett who was the project engineer/manager and essentially designed the project. After reminiscing about sand bags, Mr. Jarrett mentioned there was some initial planning concern that there could be some shoreline erosion on the oceanfront as the ebb delta collapsed to heal the Point and thereby exposing the oceanfront near Lands End. However, that shoreline erosion never manifested itself, or if it did – it has been unnoticeable.
- (5) **Beach Vitex – Introduction & Update.** – Chairman Normile introduced the topic by noting this presentation is for informational purposes and to serve as a reminder to the Beach Commission and Towns of the threat Beach Vitex poses and the challenges involved with eradication of the plant. The secretary continued with a presentation ([Slides 28-30](#)) summarizing the features of the invasive plant (imported from the Pacific Rim), its aggressive nature that suffocates all other vegetation (including our new sea oats), and eradication methods. Manual removal is the most effective method compared to the shade method or applying an herbicide. However manual removal is disruptive and a full re-planting of native vegetation is involved. All the municipalities have ordinances disclosing the Vitex as a nuisance and prohibiting any new planting, but the existing (or old) Vitex is the problem. The secretary concluded by asking the Commission is there anything that needs to be done with Vitex in the context that we just planted 21 miles of beach with native vegetation (sea oats, bitter panicum, and seashore elder).
- Vice-chair Brodman asked if the Vitex had any natural predators, and unfortunately the answer is no. Member Rule followed by asking if any other North Carolina beach towns were encountering similar problems with Vitex. The secretary responded that yes they are, and the firm of Coastal Transplants who had done some work here with our dune planting; has also been involved with Vitex eradication efforts along the Brunswick County beaches. Chairman Normile suggested that maybe the Shore Protection Office could outreach to the horticultural program at N.C. State University to see if they have any new thoughts concerning eradication methods – especially different herbicides. The Commission as a whole agreed, and the Shore Protection Office will pursue this inquiry. Member Baldwin concluded the discussion that maybe N.C. State University could provide insights regarding the creation of infertile Vitex plants, which eventually could lead to its eradication.
- (6) **Public Comment.** – None.
- (7) **Other Business.** – None.
- (8) **September 2021 Meeting Date (September 27, 2021).** – It was agreed upon that the next Beach Commission meeting would be held on September 27th at 2:00 pm, Emerald Isle Board Room and remotely.
- (9) **Adjourn.** – Chairman Normile asked for any additional comments and with no additional comments forthcoming, the meeting was adjourned.

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