

MINUTES
BEACHFRONT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
October 19, 2020
2:00 p.m.

Present (in person): Dave Blauch, Matthew Kizer, Dallas Lovelace, Pat Sheehan, (conference call) Paul Oakley and Bob Ringer, Committee Members; Iris Hill, Town Administrator, ex officio. Bill Davies was absent with prior notice given.

Chairman Lovelace called the meeting to order.

Dave Blauch moved to approve the minutes from the May 29, 2020 meeting as written. Matthew Kizer seconded the motion which was approved 6 – 0.

Town Administrator Iris Hill updated the Committee on the US Army Corps of Engineers project. After the Town considered finances and the 35% match along with the easement language presented by the Corps, Council voted to withdraw from the project. When the Corps was notified of the Town's intent to withdraw, the Corps requested a meeting to negotiate. Three major issues were discussed at that time: perpetual easement language, public use of private property and the 35% in-kind match. After the initial conference call, the Corps considered the Town's requests. The Town specifically asked that the perpetual easement language be changed to keeping the easement in effect until deauthorization by Congress. The Corps agreed they would send that to headquarters and that change would be considered. Administration has now officially requested that change in language. The decision on "public use" was that the Corps cannot take the phrase out of the easement but Town Council can consider passing an Ordinance dealing with the dune and public use; i.e. it would restrict public use from the seaward toe of the dune landward. The perpetual easement line was discussed. The Corps had proposed a line two to eight feet from structures, which was deemed unfeasible by the Town. The Corps then decided to follow the existing dune and the landward toe of the existing dune so the perpetual easement line would meander down the beach. The Town also asked the Corps to consider in-kind consideration for everything that was done during the groin lengthening since the Town had paid to build the virtually identical project that the Corps had previously approved, including the engineering component. Mayor and Council then reached out to Senators and legislators to ask for a Congressional appropriation for retroactive work. The Army Corps is now comparing work done by the Town to the approved project and the cost. Bob Ringer, who was present for the teleconferences with the Corps weighed in. He expressed concern over the condition of the first blocks of Palmetto, specifically the 300/400 block. The question was raised over refocusing the scope of the project to just that area. Administrator Hill explained that the project had already been approved and funds were appropriated for the approved project area. To change the scope of the project would not be feasible. A concern of the Town following correspondence with the Corps was that if the Town withdraws from the project, or the money is pulled from the Charleston District, the Town will never have the opportunity for an Army Corps project again. More concerning is the possibility that withdrawal from the project might jeopardize all future FEMA funding and/or reimbursements.

Town Administrator Hill told the Committee that she and Steven Traynum of Coastal Science and Engineering (CSE) had ridden the beach to see how the groins were performing. CSE has written a project that is estimated to cost \$678,000 for spot nourishment that is under environmental review by FEMA. The proposed project has sand being placed on the beach from the Pavilion to groin 8 and from groin 25 to groin 28. Sand for this spot nourishment will be brought in by trucks instead of being dredged, due to

the high cost of using a dredge. Matthew Kizer asked if an off-site location for the procurement of sand had been approved. Administrator Hill said that a sample of the sand would be submitted as part of the bid process for the project. Mr. Kizer asked if CSE had already applied for a permit on the project. Administrator Hill stated they had not yet, but Mr. Traynum said it would not take long to be approved. The project cannot be done under an existing permit. Administrator Hill has asked for an extension on the project which was supposed to be completed by March 2021. Matthew Kizer moved to approve the Town move forward with plans to spot nourish the beach as suggested by Coastal Science and Engineering. The motion was seconded by Dave Blauch and approved 6 – 0.

Chairman Lovelace asked Administrator Hill if a motion was necessary on the Army Corps of Engineers project. Paul Oakley moved, "Assuming that the questions we have on perpetual easement and public use of the easement are answered as we hope and that we are permitted to reach back and use in-kind contributions that we have expended already, as we hope, is answered satisfactorily that we proceed with the project." Dave Blauch seconded the motion which was approved 5 – 1 with Matthew Kizer opposed.

Bob Ringer asked if the Town would consider having some of the groins restacked and possibly regrouted. Administrator Hill will ask Mr. Traynum if it would be possible to have the restacking done while the spot nourishment is going on since heavy equipment would already be on the beach. Administrator Hill is planning to ask for \$300,000 in ATAX funds for the project. FEMA would not reimburse the Town for the restacking and regrouting.

Matthew Kizer moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Dave Blauch and approved 6 – 0.

APPROVED BY THE BEACHFRONT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE


