

**TOWN OF EDISTO BEACH
BEACHFRONT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

July 13, 2023

10:00 a.m.

MINUTES

Present

Bob Ringer (chaired this meeting), Marie Bost, Pat Deloach (entered meeting at 10:13 a.m.) Stanley Hergott, Paul Oakley, Dallas Lovelace (via conference call) (*Quorum of Committee Members Present*)

Absent

Mr. Blauch (excused)

Others Present

Mayor Crawford Moore; Council Members Jerome Kizer, Bob Renner, Jay Watts; Town Administrator Mark Aakhus, and Assistant Town Administrator Dee Stalvey

Call to Order

Mr. Ringer called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m.

Approval of Minutes – May 24, 2023

Ms. Bost moved to approve the minutes of May 24, 2023. Mr. Hergott seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

Comments from Town Administrator

Town Administrator Aakhus noted a meeting regarding the 35% design review is scheduled for July 18. Following the final approval of the 35% design, the Town may begin acquiring the easements. Mr. Aakhus also noted the Town has been contacting and following up with real estate attorneys, surveyors, and appraisers. USACE has provided a real estate guide which outlines steps that must be followed when acquiring real estate.

New Business

USACE Discussion with Chrissa Waite, Project Manager

Ms. Waite shared with the Committee the following information:

- As the Town Administrator noted, a meeting will be held next week to review the 35% design, and those individuals attending from the Town will have the opportunity to provide comments and ask questions. The Mayor, Mr. Aakhus, Council Members, and Mr. Ringer will attend the meeting, as well as the whole team at the USACE who are working on this project.
- The expectation for the meeting is the following will be shared: the boundaries of the project, the easement line, the construction line, the dunes, and the borrow site.
- If adjustments need to be made to the 35% design following the meeting, those will be completed; however, once the 35% design and lines are decided, they will not be moved or changed. The Army Corps will then decide how much sand is needed to create the dune and the berm, but the boundaries will not shift once decided.

- Ms. Bost asked about the criteria for the line. Ms. Waite noted the dune is 13-15 feet wide, and the berm has to be a certain size; all needs to be placed where it will actually fit; and where the dune is now will determine where the newly construction dune will start.
- Mr. Aakhus noted the surveyor has marked where the 15 feet mark is on each beach access, and even on the Sound side where it tapers from 15 to 14 feet, it is marked to 15 feet.

Review Messaging for USACE Coastal Storm Risk Management Project

Ms. Waite presented the key messages of this project:

Primary Audience: Property owners who must sign easements for the project

Secondary Audiences: Other property owners, business owners, Beachfront Management Committee

- The primary benefit of the project is to reduce risk of damage to life and structures behind dunes.
- Additional benefits include sharing the cost of beach nourishment with the federal government; eligibility for repairs after declared disasters; attractive and usable beach for both residents and visitors.
- The easements will allow the Corp's contractor to build the dune and berm designed to reduce risk of damage by coastal storms.
- Having the easements in place long-term allows the Corps to conduct periodic nourishments, for which costs are shared by the federal government, and allows the Town to be eligible for post-storm repairs to the beach if a natural disaster has been declared. In the event of a named storm, the Town will be eligible to receive 100% of the cost of storm repair, whereas before the Town was only eligible for 75% from FEMA.
- The easements will be held by the Town of Edisto Beach, not the US Army Corps of Engineers.
- At any time, the Town has the ability to revoke the easements, and they will be returned to the property owner. The town is not permitted to sell or transfer the easements.
- The project includes a vegetated dune and berm, which were designed to maximize risk reduction for the relative cost. The height of the dune will vary depending on the current conditions of the beach.

Additional Information

- Turtle nesting is being taken into consideration.
- This project does not guarantee hurricane damage work will be done. This project makes the Town eligible for the repair work, but it is not an automatic repair.
- Whenever there is a storm, the repair and replacement would go back to the line, even if erosion happened between the project construction end and the named storm. Ms. Waite will doublecheck on this process.
- The Town will check on the elevation of beach houses with Mr. Brown, which is in an ordinance.

Next Steps

- We should know the easement lines by August 1.
- The Town can then meet with beachfront owners and others. Mr. Aakhus noted we will work on updated messages and FAQs and a proposed schedule for the meetings. We can hold informational meetings with the beachfront homeowners, with realty brokers, and with other residents. We can have these informational meetings in person and virtually, if needed. The Town will work on notification to the beachfront homeowners regarding the informational meeting when it is confirmed.

Adjournment

There being no further business to discuss, Ms. Bost made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Oakley seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 11:43 a.m.

APPROVED BY THE BEACHFRONT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE



Donna Iskra, Municipal Clerk
August 10, 2023