



## *Town of North Topsail Beach* **Beach, Inlet, and Sound Advisory Committee**

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**To:** NTB Board of Aldermen

**Subject:** Monthly Report for March 22, 2022, Meeting

**From:** Mike Benson, Chair

**Date:** March 24, 2022

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The BISAC members welcomed Thomas Garrison to the committee to represent Phase 2 of our Town's shoreline.

Manager Derian, *ex officio*, reported on the status of the FEMA Cat. G and Cat. B projects underway along the shoreline noting that the Cat. G project is running smoothly and on schedule. She noted that the US Army Corps work on the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is moving very slowly as we wait for the public release of the Preliminary Draft of the EIS.

**Vision and Mission.** The committee had a good discussion around the topics of the BISAC vision and mission statement based on the draft BISAC charter led by Deborah Coltrane.

The following was adopted

**Vision:** *The Beach, Inlet, and Sound Advisory Committee vision is to advise and provide direction and recommendations on shoreline protection and environmental matters to the North Topsail Beach, Board of Alderman according to the BISAC Charter.*

**Mission Statement:** *The Mission of the Beach, Inlet, and Sound Advisory Committee is to serve as a long-term advisory committee to the North Topsail Beach, Board of Alderman by identifying management and financial opportunities for shoreline protection according to the BISAC Charter*

**Fund 30 discussion.** With the BOA budget workshops coming up shortly it was important for the committee to delve into Fund 30 to understand budget revenues and expenses to be sure that the revenue stream will support future shoreline projects.

Alderman Grant explained why the BOA had to make the decision to decline participation in the long-awaited US Army Corps, Coastal Storm Risk Management Project with Surf City, since the funding requirements for the Town were magnitudes beyond our revenue resources.

Alderman Grant went on to explain that the only revenue source we can manage is the property tax stream that current contributes about \$1.3 million dollars annually to Fund 30. A period of questions and discussion ensued as the committee worked to understand the Town's shoreline protection needs over the next 5 years. After careful consideration, the committee

decided that the current revenue stream for Fund 30 is adequate for the next 5 years.

**Recommendation to BOA.** There is no need to increase the revenue stream from personal property taxes for Fund 30 in the coming budget cycle.

**Environmental protection.** A proposal from the NC Coastal Federation to the Topsail Island Shoreline Protection Commission was made that would ban the use of unencapsulated Styrofoam in structures such as floating docks and walkways or other water-borne structures. Unencapsulated Styrofoam breaks down in the environment into small 'microplastic-sized pieces' that are toxic to fish, other aquatic animal life, as well as birds in the saltwater marsh when they are ingested. The commission in turned asked the three towns to consider an ordinance to ban unencapsulated Styrofoam. The Town of Topsail Beach has already agreed to develop an ordinance, while Surf City is still considering the proposal from NCCF.

Considerable discussion among BISAC committee members followed on the need for a town ordinance.

Negatives:

- Are there that many structures with Styrofoam floats in NTB to warrant an ordinance?
- If this is a state coast-wide issue why doesn't the CRC, make a state-wide ruling?
- As far as the effect on construction costs to use an encapsulated Expanded PolyStyrene (EPS) product that doesn't break down into micro-plastics there appears to be an increase in cost (30% to 100%) for the encapsulated product (pers. comm. Steve Smith, TISPC chair, on March 24, 2022).

Positives:

- With the Town's commitment to make decisions that have the least impact on the environment isn't it the right thing to do to acknowledge our effort to protect the environment with an ordinance?
- Oftentimes granting agencies look to the efforts towns have made in protecting the environment when considering funding for town projects, so wouldn't this public acknowledgement to protect the environment have future benefits?

Eventually, the committee decided that the positives outweighed the negatives. Possible parameters for the ordinance were discussed with an agreement to consider the general conditions for an ordinance at the April meeting.

**Recommendation to BOA.** Expect a draft of an ordinance to ban the use of unencapsulated Styrofoam in future construction projects involving floating structures for the May BOA meeting.