



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

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**To:** NTB Board of Aldermen

**Subject:** Monthly Report for June 28, 2022, Meeting

**From:** Mike Benson, Chair

**Date:** June 29, 2022

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**Organizational Item.** On behalf of the committee, Chairman Benson reluctantly accepted the resignation of Michael Pawelko who represented Phase 3 on the BISAC.

**Recommendation.** *The Board is requested to announce an open slot for the Phase 3 representative and make a call for applicants from Phase 3 who would like to serve on the committee.*

**Manager's Update.** Manager Derian, *ex officio*, reported that

- Phase 5 along with other sand projects are paused until November after turtle season. In November we will resume work with our current contract for 289,000 CYs of sand and in the meantime are currently working on an IFB for the second phase of work that will be for 310,000 CYs of sand.
- Sea oats planting continues with Coastal Transplants continuing their dune planting work through August. July 6<sup>th</sup> through mid-August they will be starting approximately 9,000 feet from the St. Moritz and finishing at the Surf City town line.
- Living Shoreline Project – Manager Derian has been working with the NC Coastal Federation since last October to initiate the first living shoreline project for NTB. We will be pursuing with a grant to install an Oyster Catcher Marsh Toe Revetment project at the Richard Peters Park. This living shoreline demonstration will be installed between the two piers and will be 100% fully funded through a grant.

**BISAC Budget Presentation.** Alderman Grant used a PowerPoint document to explain to the committee the Town revenue sources, and where revenues are spent; as well as the Shoreline Protection Fund (Fund 30) and how revenues are spent in that fund. He went on to explain why the property tax will increase in 2022-2023 in relation to the County re-evaluation and the basis for the Board's adoption of next year's budget starting July 1. He emphasized that the Town only has control over the property tax rate and that all other Town revenues are set by state and county formula or dependent on tourism dollars through the accommodation tax. His presentation is included as a part of this report.

**Ravella 2013 Report to BOA: a Review.** As background for the BISAC, the Ravella Report was reviewed to understand how the Town developed its shoreline protection plan for Phases 1 through Phase 5. Chairman Benson noted the two shoreline protection projects mentioned in the report, that is the Phase 1 and the Phase 5 dune and beach nourishment projects with the Phase 1 project paid off shortly after completion of the project. However, the 2015 Phase 5 project funded by the 30-yr USDA Rural Development Loan to the Town would still limit further shoreline protection activities until that loan was retired in 2045 had the Town not recently adopted a 'Special Obligation Bonds' strategy to pay off the loan balance over the next 5 years. Alderman Grant noted that the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) federal project was also mentioned in the Ravella report. The Report, published in 2013, forecast that the USACE Project would begin in 2015 (seven years later it has not) and the estimated cost of that Project in 2013 grossly underestimated the 2022 costs that the Town would have incurred had it proceeded with Surf City – N. Topsail Beach federal project. Chris Gibson added that the Ravella report outlined the shortcomings in the ability of the Town to fund a complete 11-mile-long beach nourishment project for all five phases. Although funding did not develop as planned, Mr. Gibson noted that a lot of study went into looking at various sand sources so that offshore sand sources (with rocks) could be avoided.

**NC Coastal Storm Damage Mitigation Fund Grant.** Chris Gibson updated the committee on the grant application that he and Manager Derian are in the process of preparing. This grant requires a one-to-one non-state match. There are \$18 million dollars available in the fund this year. Mr. Gibson does not think there will be many grant applications from coastal communities this year as many communities already have funding in place or are not ready to start their shoreline protection projects. Thus, he suggests that N. Topsail Beach apply for \$10.5 million dollars from the fund to extend the Phase 5 FEMA beach-fill project throughout the entire 2+ miles of Phase 4 shoreline.

***Recommendation.*** *The Board should approve going forward with this grant application as leveraging CSDM funds through our federal FEMA project already underway would allow an additional shoreline phase to be nourished for added storm protection.*

**Next Meeting** – Tuesday, August 23, 2022, at 10:30 am