



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

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**To:** NTB Board of Aldermen

**Subject:** BISAC Monthly Report for September 27, 2022, Meeting

**From:** Mike Benson, Chair

**Date:** September 28, 2022

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**Organizational Item:** No applications have been received from citizens in the Phase 3 section of shoreline. Therefore, the committee decided to add an at-large member from any Phase to serve out the remainder of the two-year term of the Phase 3 slot. Manager Derian was tasked with advertising the at-large request for applications on the town website and Facebook page.

**Manager's Update.** Manager Derian, *ex officio*, reported that a second bid for the Phase 5 beach nourishment project was received. The low bidder was CM Mitchell. Work will start in November/December and is expected to place about 290,000 cu yd of sand at a bid price of \$8.6 million dollars. The recipients of 2022-2023 grants from the state CSDM fund has not been announced yet. We applied for \$10.5 million dollars to extend the beach nourishment work through Phase 4 with about 2.5 miles of shoreline. Sea oats planting was completed with about 300,000 sprigs planted in the Phase 5 dune and about 530,000 sprigs planted in the Phase 2-4 dunes. The Living Shoreline in Richard Peters Park will begin construction once the state has approved our permit request. A conference call with the USACE officials regarding the ICW crossing and Channel to Jacksonville dredging work was held to discuss preferred placement of disposal materials on the Phase 1 beach. Chris Gibson, TI Coastal President, provided a justification for the preferred placement starting on the beach across from the junction of River Rd and New River Inlet Rd. and working south toward the Topsail Reef Condos to maximize benefit of this disposal material.

**USACE New River Inlet Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).** The outcome of the September call with Mr. Mickey Suggs, regulatory director of the Wilmington District of the USACE was less positive than the August call. Given the decision by ATM to conduct more potential terminal groin placement modeling, Mr. Suggs suggested that the EIS and publication of the Notice of Intent (NOI) cannot occur as planned for November 1<sup>st</sup>. The modeling work approved by the Town will not be completed until November thus delaying completion of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) which is released at NOI.

**NCBIWA Fall Conference, November 3-4, Wilmington.** Chairman Benson encouraged all the BISAC member to register and attend this conference.

**CRC quarterly meeting update.** Chairman Benson reported that the CRC adopted the 'new' 2019 Inlet Hazard Areas proposed by the Division of Coastal Management (DCM) at their September meeting. For the New River Inlet, the Inlet Hazard Area was expanded along the beach from the 1979 boundary at Topsail Reef Condo Building 1 south all way the way to

include the three buildings at the St. Regis Condos. The adopted rules also consider building structure size such that new construction of larger structures must be built further from the first line of stable vegetation line. The setback distances are governed by the shoreline erosion rate and potential structure size. However, re-construction of structures less than 5,000 sf may be permitted at the extreme edge of the parcel away from the ocean.

**Shoreline Protection.** Chris Gibson returned to advising the committee after a recovering from multiple health issues. After participating in the call with the USACE on sand placement as mentioned above, he described some additional ideas to make dredge line placement on River Rd more appealing for long-term use that would be less disruptive to motorists. He encouraged the committee to consider applying for Shallow Draft Inlet funds as a possible source of funding to help with permanent connections under roadways for dredge line placement in the Phase 1 area. He also re-emphasized that Disposal Area 143 (DA143) established when the ICW was constructed holds over 2.5 million cy of beach compatible sand, if only an engineering scheme to mine the sand can be permitted.

**BISAC Grantsmanship.** A general discussion was held based on the grant opportunity summaries prepared for the TISPC by our state and federal advocates. Federal and State dollars for resiliency projects to solve stormwater issues, infrastructure issues and protect property from storm damage are at an all time high. One problem is finding the ‘right’ grant program to apply to as for beach resiliency alone there are over 100 federal grant programs while the state has several programs. State dollars usually require engineered-ready projects so funds are expended in the fiscal year, but federal program funds can be used for planning as well as for construction. As a small town, staff time to sort through these funding opportunities is extremely limited. Some possible solutions are hiring a grant specialist, developing an ad hoc group of retired grant writers from the community, and/or looking to college programs where students in coastal programs take on a grant application.

**Recommendation:** The Board of Aldermen should discuss how the BISAC and possibly other town committees can assist staff in competing for resiliency grant dollars.