

City of Treasure Island Beach Stewardship Committee

April 9, 2008

1:30 PM

COMMITTEE PRESENT: Dennis Velasco, John Burke, Robert Minning, James Murphy, Rick Raus; Cliff Truitt, Coastal Tech.

Chairman Dennis Velasco called the Beach Stewardship Committee meeting to order at 1:40 PM in the City Hall auditorium, 108th Avenue, Treasure Island, Florida. A quorum of the Committee was not present so no Committee business requiring a formal vote could be conducted.

1. The draft minutes of the March 12, 2008 meeting had been distributed and reviewed by the Committee members, but no action could be taken to adopt.
2. There were no changes or additions proposed to the published Agenda. Chairman Velasco introduced and welcomed the City's new Public Works Director, James Murphy.
3. As discussed at the last meeting, the City Commission has asked the Committee to look at placement of the educational/interpretive signage at the Sunset Vista Trail Park. There was consensus at that time that Committee members would all individually visit the area and come to today's meeting with suggestions. Dennis Velasco said that there were a total of seven signs in the park area and he had marked a site plan with the locations. When asked about the overall condition of the signs, Rick Raus replied that the PW staff had previously done some repairs and modifications to the original sign designs and materials and he felt that the resulting signs were all in reasonably good shape with usable life remaining. He also noted that they were intentionally not embedded in substantial foundations and could be moved pretty easily.

Dennis suggested that at least six of them could be aligned on the beach side of the dune area at the park so that beach users walking along that area would see them. John Burke felt that six signs placed along that relatively short stretch of beach would be too many and suggested that some of them be moved to other parts of the trail. This led to discussion of what approvals might be necessary from the original grantors, NOAA and FCT, to modify the park elements. Commissioner Mining said that the City staff has already thought of that issue and had contacted the agencies for clarification. Further action will be considered at the next meeting.

4. Cliff Truitt reported briefly on the Sand Sharing draft interlocal agreement. Commissioner Minning also confirmed that Mayor Maloof had sent a follow-up letter to the Mayor of St. Petersburg asking for a meeting to further discuss the situation. No response has been received as yet.
5. Commissioner Minning reported that the City Commission had approved designation of three beach areas for the more proactive bird protection/conservation measures as suggested by Dr. Beth Forsys from Eckerd College and subsequently recommended by the Committee. Rick

Raus said that the Eckerd volunteers had already contacted him and were planning to put the signs out on the beach this coming weekend. There was further Committee discussion of how the City might follow-up on other measures such as active enforcement of the existing 'dog prohibition.' Commissioner Minning said that the City Manager had discussed this point with the police chief. Committee members also suggested a more active public information effort.

6. Committee Member Remarks:

John Burke reported that the next beach pick-up day will be this coming Saturday.

Robert Minning had obtained a copy of a 1968 photograph showing beach conditions along an area probably just south of 104th avenue. The photo showed the complete absence of any beach at that location and an existing bulkhead with timber groins extending south; sand bags were being placed to protect a house in the foreground from wave run-up. Commissioner Minning also said that NOAA had finally approved the time extension of the \$385,000 grant for the trail and public access improvements. The approval was based on conceptual designs taken from the Phil Graham plans, but Public Works will now need to finalize the details and move the projects forward.

Rick Raus noted that the previously selected walkover construction contractor had increased his price estimates by about 15 percent in negotiations following the expiration of his original bid. However, the separate match from the County and FDEP for the new walkover project will just offset that price increase.

Dennis Velasco discussed some Email information that he and others had received about loss of the planted dune vegetation near Caddy's parking lot. Dennis said he had visited the site and felt that the plants had been 'removed' rather than just dying – plus we have never seen a similar failure of *all* of the plants at any of the other restored locations. He asked the Committee what they felt should be done. It was suggested that somebody start by calling Caddy's and asking if they knew what had happened. Depending on the response, we may want to involve the police and/or Code Enforcement. Rick Raus noted that the area is City property and the plants are protected by State law, therefore if the removal was intentional it would be vandalism of public property. John Burke also suggested that following future planting efforts, we should have someone document the installation with photos.

Dennis also updated the Committee on Elnor Island. The volunteer clean-up is scheduled for May 10th and Jeff Jensen will be putting out information and calls for participation.

There were no further remarks.

7. The next regular Committee meeting date was set for May 14, 2008 at 1:30 PM

The meeting was adjourned at 2:30.