

City of Treasure Island Beach Stewardship Committee

November 10, 2009

1:30 PM

Committee Present: Robert Minning, Alan Bildz, Don Nolan, Mary Daughtry, and Rick Raus. Guests: Jim Murphy, Public Works Director and Chris Brimo of Volkert and Associates.

Chairman, Dennis Velasco called the Beach Stewardship Committee meeting to order at 1:30 PM in the City Hall Auditorium, 108th Ave., Treasure Island, Florida..

The previous month's minutes of August 12 were not approved since a member did not have the opportunity to review these minutes. Therefore, appropriate motion was made to accept these minutes as submitted. A draft of the minutes of the October 14 meeting had been previously distributed and reviewed by all committee members. Upon appropriate motion, the draft was approved as submitted.

Changes to the Agenda – Chairman Velasco requested the following changes to the agenda: #4 NOAA Oil Spill update to #3 and move the off shore drilling to #4 and beach raking to remain at #5.

NOAA Oil Spill Money Update – Public Works Director, Jim Murphy reiterated the requirements of the agreement from Tampa Bay NOAA Oil Spill Funding. After approval was received from the Trustee Council and the City Commission, the working committee obtained the services of Volkert and Assoc as a consultant. Meetings have further defined designs for signage, turtle friendly lighting, all the necessary permits required from FDOT, and a proposed schedule for the execution of the project.

Dennis Velasco explained the history of the Beach Stewardship Committee's process of selecting signage, bike racks, turtle friendly lighting, and trash receptacles and proposed these recommendations to the City Commission for approval. After approval, a working committee was formed to move the project along.

Chris Brimo of Volkert and Assoc. explained the different signage to be used on this project including the signage identifying the beach accesses, which was designed by Ruth Philipon, and the bike parking, parking, and handicap accessibility signage which was approved by FDOT. He informed the Committee that DOT only allowed signage on the Gulf side of Gulf Blvd, however, they did approve of a double sided sign. He explained these beach access signs will start at 127 Ave thru Sunset Park. He noted that clarification needs to be completed regarding details of ownership of some of the accesses, and he is working with City staff for that clarification. Fluted ionized designed sign poles were approved by DOT, and he indicated the sign posts, as well as the bike racks, will follow the color scheme of blue. He has spoken to difference sign manufacturers throughout the Tampa Bay area. One manufacturer they spoke with had a

contract with DOT and offered 3-D signs with 3 different approaches which will be discussed further with the Committee.

He stated the schedule is tight for the rest of this year and the packet will need to be complete for review and approval before the NOAA Trustee Council in January. The packet will be completed in December to be presented to the City Commission for the Workshop on December 15.

A motion from the Committee was made to approve Volkert and Assoc to prepare their packet for presentation to the City Commission, this was seconded and approved. Jim Murphy indicated there will be a meeting scheduled for the week of December 7 for final review before presenting it to the Commission.

Off shore drilling update – Mayor Minning reviewed the off shore drilling meetings. He advised the Committee that 10 of the 11 cities of the Big-C have passed resolutions in opposition of off shore drilling. The Big-C has also passed a resolution unanimously for opposition and circulated this resolution to the Pinellas County delegation as well as the State Representative at the federal and state level. The Big-C has established a subcommittee that will come up with fact finding memos which will also be circulated. Incoming State Senator Atwater indicated that he will authorize 3 organizations to establish facts, economics and scientific information and those organizations include FL State University, the Council of 100, and an organization that is part of the FL State Senate. He indicated that the subject will be approached in a logical manner. Once the Senator receives all the information required to make a good decision, he will then move it forward to the Senate for consideration.

Beach raking recommendations. Commissioner Gayton, just prior to the meeting, gave pictures and recommendations from residents, however, there wasn't enough time to copy and distribute these photos but will be reviewed at a later time. Chairman Velasco gave a short history of the Beach Stewardship Committee recommendations. The Committee after contracting with several consultants, their recommendation was to create a natural beach, allowing dunes to form naturally. He indicated that the vegetation effort has done well and continues to do what it was designed to do which is to create dunes which would slow down erosion and stabilize the sand which keeps the sand on the beach. The main beach area had vegetation; however, the consultants suggested expanding on these dune systems. It was recommended removing the exotic growth through raking or spraying. The Committee made a recommendation to the City Commission for a resolution which would indicate the no rake zones for the Department of Public Works. Rick Raus stated that due to last fiscal year's budget, it was recommended to rake from the shoreline to 100' eastward. This was done for approximately one year. Due to the amount of growth and complaints, it was decided to start raking more areas. This fiscal year's budget, allowed expanding raking to 700' of the wide part of the beach and north and south decreased to 50' because of erosion. The Department has been focusing behind Treasure Sands where the vegetation has grown more than other areas. The City has purchased a disc to dig out certain areas of the beach. This has been completed and will then be smoothed out by the

rake. Rick noted that basically the raking is going back to maintaining the areas as defined by the middle beach resolution. Raking is being done every other week. The information which Commissioner Gayton provided was passed around indicating the pathways are overgrown, however, Rick indicated that due to grounds losing 3 employees that were not replaced, some areas have been neglected. Dennis Velasco explained that beautification of the sand wall has been discussed at length, however, due to economic conditions and the cost of the improvements the sand wall has been tabled. Commissioner Bildz indicated that the intent is for the land owners to have access to the beach, however, part of the dunes are growing together.

Several public comments were made indicating they wanted to have the beach raked, questioning the rationale behind the dunes and vegetation, and the long range plans. Commissioner Gayton spoke on behalf of several hotels regarding their dissatisfaction of the no rake zones. Commissioner Coward also spoke on behalf of Treasure Sands, and they wish to have certain areas of the vegetation removed. She also stated that work on the east side of the beach walk, which is the City right of way, also needs cleaned up.

Since the budgetary constraints of the abbreviated raking created some of the problems, and it has only been a couple of weeks that the raking plans have begun as defined in the resolution, Mary Daughtry suggested waiting until the end of year; and if the revised raking procedure does not resolve all of the conflict, this issue will be revisited.

A discussion took place regarding the wording of the resolution. Commissioner Gayton felt the resolution indicated all outside raking vendors were prohibited by the City. The Committee will review the resolution and recommended changes to the Commission if this wording is found to be ambiguous. Rick Raus informed the Committee that he had spoken with Beach Masonizing asking him not to rake so close to the dunes and residents were complaining because he was raking trash into the dunes; but other than that, no contact was made to him through Public Works.

Mary recommended the Committee walk the areas to address the complaints prior to the next meeting to help prevent future problems and/or resolve issues. It was agreed to meet on Wednesday, December 2 at 10:00 a.m. at the St Petersburg Municipal Beach at 112th Avenue. She invited anyone who wished to accompany the Committee to do so.

Comments were made that the Beach Stewardship Committee is unaware of the problems, however, making recommendations regarding the beach. Mary Daughtry explained the Committee is on a volunteer basis and anyone could apply for a position on the Committee. She further explained that several members are very familiar with the beach including Ruth Philipon, who walks the beach daily; Don Nolan from the Isle of Capri and is in charge of the monthly volunteer beach clean-up; and George Greenfield is a resident of Sunshine Beach. Commissioner Bildz explained that all Districts are represented on the Beach Stewardship Committee.

Remarks by Members – Commissioner Bildz asked if anyone attended the ASBPA field trip which Nicole Elko was involved with, however, no one had the opportunity to attend. There were no further comments

Chairman Velasco advised all that the next Beach Stewardship Committee Meeting is on Wednesday, December 9 at 1:30 here at the City Hall Auditorium.