**City of Treasure Island Beach Stewardship Committee**

**March 10, 2010** **1:30 PM**

Committee Present: Don Nolan, George Greenfield, Ruth Philipon, and Mary Daughtry, Rick Raus, Commissioner Alan Bildz, Jim Murphy, and Mayor Robert Minning.

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.

A draft of the minutes of the February 10, 2010 meeting had been previously distributed and reviewed by all committee members. Upon appropriate motion, the draft was approved as submitted.

**Changes to the Agenda** – Dennis asked that discussion of the central beach trail planning be inserted after the Elnor Island Update.

**NOAA Grant Project Status –** Jim Murphy, Public Works Director, reviewed the process to date of the NOAA Grant including meeting with the NOAA Trustee Counsel for approval of items planned for the design including signs, trash cans, turtle friendly lighting, bike racks, and 4 crosswalks at Gulf Blvd. Following the meeting with the Trustee Council, the concept was then presented at the Commission Workshop, and the Commission has approved the design and concept. Currently, the design phase of the project and the final details are being worked out. The Commission asked about the possibility of adding signage in the Sunset Beach area, however, the target area for the NOAA beach access project is from the north end of Treasure Island beach to Sunset Vista Park. Jim Murphy stated he would obtain the cost of the signs for the Sunset Beach area and then present this to the Commission to see if they wanted to proceed. He indicated that the signs for the Sunset Beach area, if so approved, would need to come from City funds due to the NOAA target area. These designs will include signage for the new city park recently named, Treasure Island Gulf Front Park, Sunset Vista Park, and the beach pavilion. It is anticipated that the project will be completed sometime toward the end of October. The designs will move forward; and when finalized, the final designs will be presented to the Trustee Council in mid-spring. Once approval is given, the project will move forward obtaining bids and issuing a contract. Mary Daughtry inquired regarding the cross walks and Jim Murphy stated the crosswalks will include pedestrian activated beacons which are solar powered.

**Sand Sharing Permit Status –** Jim Murphy gave an update on the sand sharing project indicating the City has acquired the services of a consultant, Coastal Technology Corp, to develop the design of a sand sharing project. He informed the Committee that the concept of sand sharing would be an emergency sharing of sand on the beach. This

would be a re-allocation of sand from areas where there is more sand to areas with lesser sand in the event that it would become necessary. Coastal Tech is developing specifications for the sand sharing work which would require moving sand from identified borrow areas and obtain a permit with the DEP for those areas and set up a process, ability and specification to be completed. The specifications currently are being put together and once that work has been completed the project can go out to bid and have a contractor ready in the event that sand sharing will be necessary. Coastal Tech is also putting together the costs of data and specifications for the work. A meeting is being planned with Coastal Tech at the end of the month, and he is anticipating going out to bid in mid-spring and the bid evaluation and award will be completed by early summer so the contractor will be available if and when it is necessary to move the sand. The contract with Coastal Tech includes them doing a survey of the beach and documentation for the purpose of the costs for reimbursement from the state and to the satisfaction of the DEP. Jim Murphy indicated the City has $500,000 in reserves for an emergency event but the state will reimburse the city. The concerns regarding the transport of the sand were discussed, and he is unsure whether it will be by truck or by the more efficient way of pumping the sand. Cliff Truitt feels the use of pumps would be more cost efficient. Jim Murphy noted that the funding of $17,000 for Phase 3 is being funded by the County. The main advantage with this project is the time line would be approximately 60 days vs. 6 months. A discussion took place regarding future funding and/or reimbursement for sand sharing and re-nourishment projects. It would be the responsibility of the home owner to stabilize their property until the City had the approval to do the sand sharing. It was recommended that the city make information available to the home owner regarding the resources that may be available until approval is received.

**Beach Trail Status –** Rick Raus indicated that regarding the meeting held a week or two ago on the same subject, it is necessary to focus primarily on what the Committee wants. At that time, he will be able to obtain updated costs and the source of funding. In regard to the existing trail, Rick stated he met with Steve West a few weeks ago, and the main questions were raking, redistributing the sand at the wall, and raking within 10 feet of the dune. He noted that currently, the raking is being done in the no rake area and looks good. Steve West stated that that distance allowed according to the City's permit is 10 feet. He stated that the sand on the east side of wall, is up to the City unless there are protected plants in the area in which case all protected plants have been transplanted. Rick stated that Steve West will advise us regarding the west side of the wall and will incorporate these areas within the regular annual permit. Steve West stated that where allowed, the sand may be dispersed 10 -100 feet away from the wall. Any areas not indicated by Steve West would require getting a permit from FDEP in Tallahassee. This permit will require a permit fee, a landscape architect, how many cubic yards of sand will be removed, and where the sand will be going. This sand must create an additional dune elsewhere or be incorporated with a current dune.

**Elnor Island Update –** Mayor Minning reminded the Committee that Elnor Island includes two projects with the first being the USDA rodent control project which is still being reviewed by the FL Fish and Wildlife. The second project is with Tampa Bay Watch, by enhancing the oyster beds around Elnor Island. Tampa Bay Watch filed for permit; and after providing additional information, they have submitted the permit including a $700.00 permit fee of which the city agreed to pay $500.00 of that fee. It is hopeful that they will receive permission in the near future. Mayor Minning asked that the Committee coordinate with Tampa Bay Watch to initiate a volunteer effort to do the oyster bed and re-vegetation of the salt water grass around Elnor Island. Concern was expressed regarding the boat traffic and the impact they may have on the oyster beds. It was noted that the boats tie up primarily on the sandbar and hopefully will not interfere with this project.

**Mid-Island Beach Trail –** Dennis recommended that the Committee gather information and come up with recommendations and suggestions for the Commission to consider. Dennis reiterated the Phil Graham design which was for the whole beach walk – north, south, and central. It was agreed to eliminate the north and south trail, and focus on the central beach trial. A cost estimate handout which had been prepared by Phil Graham was distributed regarding the new beach trail. It was noted that these costs are approximations and outdated. A handout of Phil Graham's original specifications and designs was distributed for review also. Jim Murphy reviewed the scope of the proposed beach walk of which the Committee agreed including removal of the existing sand wall; build and design a meandering concrete sidewalk including etching designs with a minimum of 12 feet width which would change in width to meet the locations of the "bulb-outs" for activity areas; provision for the lighting, and provide signage. Also included, but will require a decision, are the trash receptacles, bike racks, and benches with most of the trash receptacles and benches being used primarily in the "bulb-out" areas. The ultimate goal is to provide a walkway that would be attractive to visitors and the public.

The Committee would also like the City of consider street vendors similar to Clearwater and Mallory Square in Key West. Mayor Minning advised the Committee that Cathy Hayduke is lining up vendors on specific weekends similar to Mallory Square to get an idea of how receptive this will be from public including attendance. These weekends will be the 1st and 3rd Saturdays of July and August.

Other issues included are whether the sand wall cap be designed for seating and whether the lighting be solar or hard wired It was recommended to consider removing the current benches and replace with cement benches noting they would be free of maintenance and would be incorporated with the cap for sitting similar to the Clearwater's cap.

Jim Murphy cautioned the Committee regarding the ongoing maintenance operation in the expense of this project. This may require a significant amount of resources to keep this project in a condition the City wishes. He noted that Clearwater

has 12 people just to keep the appearance of their beach walk; therefore, considerations need to be made on not only fixed costs but also the long term obligation.

Mary Daughtry inquired as to what funds are available at the present time, however, Jim Murphy indicated there were no funds available at the present time. He stressed the importance to prioritize this project and complete portions at a time. Mary felt that to cost out the whole project would be a waste of time due to the fact that when that particular portion of the project is being considered the costs will be different. Jim Murphy recommended costing out the realistic cost of a particular portion of the project to undertake and then take to the Commission for approval and insertion in the budget. It is necessary to proceed in steps keeping in mind that certain parts of the projects will need to be done together such as requiring the sidewalk to be done along with the sand wall.

A lengthy discussion took place regarding the cost and financing of the central beach project including various revenue sources. Jim Murphy made recommendation to obtain the services of a consultant/engineer who would be able to define current costs, refine the scope and then document costs and scope. At that time, it may be presented to the Commission. A motion was made to make a recommendation to the Commission to hire a consultant to formulate an overall plan for the central beach trail. Jim Murphy suggested that first it is necessary to define a complete scope and the fees for the services and then take to commission. He stated he will have the scope and the approximate cost of the consultant/engineer available for the next meeting.

**Remarks by Members –** Commissioner Bildz met with a person from a company called Turf Magic. They indicated that their product should cut down on watering and fertilization of the grass. Commission Bildz will contact this person to call Jim Murphy; and if appropriate, the Beach Stewardship Committee will recommend this for public use. He advised the Committee that the County prohibits the use of fertilizer at specific times of the year.

George Greenfield indicated the new Visioning Committee met and want input from the public as to what they would like to see for Treasure Island now and in the future. He felt they would be interested in the scope of the beach walk as well.

Dennis wished to thank everyone for participation and getting started on the main beach trail.

Chairman Velasco advised all that the next Beach Stewardship Committee Meeting is on Wednesday, April 14, 2010 at 1:30 here at the City Hall Auditorium.