



The Town of Fenwick Island

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DREDGING COMMITTEE DECEMBER 1, 2017 AT 3:00 PM

MINUTES

In Attendance

Bernie Merritt, Gardner Bunting, Vicki Carmean, Pat Schuchman, Terry Tieman, Bud Tingle, Mark Tingle, Bill Weistling

Absent

Alex Daly, Charlie Hastings, Karin Lakin

Bernie called the meeting to order at 2:57 PM.

Discussion

Terry stated that she and Bernie have recently attended the Association of Coastal Towns (ACT) meeting. After discussion, it was determined that no one is sure if the Little Assawoman Bay has ever been dredged. The ACT are aware that dredging and beach replenishment are a major concern and need to be completed.

At the November ACT, Senator Carper and Senator Coons were both in attendance, along with Tony Pratt from DNREC. Tony Pratt commented that our Town does not meet the Army Corp. of Engineers metric standards to get dredged due to no broad impact since the Little Assawoman Bay is not used for commercial vessels. DNREC recommended the Town complete a comprehensive study to determine our needs for dredging.

Tony Pratt also stated that an average of \$3.5-\$4 million is needed to complete dredging. He suggested we look into obtaining funding through DelDOT and utilizing a percentage of the gas tax. He also commented that we should communicate with Federal, State, County, and local representatives to get dredging done. Bernie commented that he knows that Senator Hocker and Representative Gray are on board with dredging, and both have encouraged the Town to keep writing to State and local contacts.

Bernie asked the Committee for ideas on how they feel the Town should proceed. Vicki commented that we could possibly do a petition in the summer season. Bill stated that dredging concerns could be enforced in the Town newsletter as well as holding a workshop to citizens in the summer time.

Bill asked what ACT's next step is. Terry commented that she and Bernie plan to attend the ACT meeting in January.

Vicki commented that the only funding she thinks the Town will receive is Federal money.

Bernie asked the Committee on suggestions on what else could be done to alert the Governor's office with our concerns. Terry suggested in contacting Senator Hocker and ask him how we could support him to support us.

Mark suggested that maybe would get funding through the recently raised boat registration fee. He also asked where the Town is looking to dredge. Bernie responded that right now the concern is with the two channels closed up in the Little Assawoman Bay.

Terry mentioned that at the ACT meeting, it was suggested that dredging could possibly help with the coastal flooding problem.

Vicki asked if the Town has the authority to dredge on our own without approval. Terry responded no, that it needs to be approved by the State.

Vicki would like to see an estimated costs on dredging. Bernie commented that Tony Pratt should have the cost analysis. Bill stated the majority of the costs will be locating a place to put the spoils. Terry commented that Tony Pratt suggested that Seal Island be rebuilt.

Terry will contact Tony Pratt to see if he can attend the next Dredging Committee meeting. Bernie then said that the next meeting will be based upon the availability of Tony Pratt to attend (either in January or February).

Bill suggested forming a lobbyist group. Bernie responded that we should continue to voice our concerns through ACT.

Terry stated the Lewes, Rehoboth Beach, and Cape Henlopen have funded their own dredging of canals. She also commented that we could possibly do the same for our canals, but not for the Little Assawoman Bay. Vicki said that she approached Senator Hocker and asked him to stop State assisted dredging and have the dredging completed by a separate contractor.

Bud added that taking the revenue from the boat registration may be the way to go for funding. Vicki suggested looking into setting up funding by the Town. Terry stated if need be, we could pull money from reserves to fund a portion of the project.

Adjournment

Motion – Bill asked for a motion to adjourn.

Second – Gardner.

The meeting adjourned at 3:20 PM.