



The Town of Fenwick Island

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DREDGING COMMITTEE APRIL 5, 2018 AT 1:30 PM

MINUTES

In Attendance

Bernie Merritt, Vicki Carmean, Karin Lakin, Terry Tieman, Bud Tingle, Bill Weistling

Absent

Gardner Bunting, Alex Daly, Charlie Hastings, Mark Tingle

Also in Attendance

Chris Bason (Center for Inland Bays), Chuck Williams (DNREC), Terry Deputy (DNREC), Jessie Haymond (DNREC), Mike Powell (DNREC)

Bernie called the meeting to order at 1:31 PM.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Vicki, seconded by Karin, to accept the March 2, 2018 meeting minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

Discussion

Bernie stated that the John Hynes Geotechnical Study will begin next week, and he should receive the report back from them sometime in May.

DNREC Discussion:

Chuck Williams from DNREC presented a map of the channel sounding survey completed in July 2017 of the Little Assawoman Bay. During the survey, no defined channels were found to place channel markers.

Bernie asked that after the John Hynes study is completed on the southern end of the Bay what should be the next steps we need to complete in order for the Bay to be dredged. Chuck responded that he is not aware that the Bay has ever been dredged and unfortunately the Bay is not a federal channel, so no federal funding would be available, just State and Town funding. Chris Bason added that although federal money is not available for the project that federal resources could be available for depositing dredging spoils in wetland areas.

Chuck added that the Bay dredging would be added to the list of projects. Karin asked how DNREC prioritizes projects. Chuck responded that DNREC takes into account emergency situations and navigation. Bill commented that the Bay is getting worse every year and there is no way of getting in or out during low tide.

Terry questioned if our only options are State and local funding. Chuck responded that the Voting Registration Fee and the Gas Tax could possibly be used. Terry then asked if the Clean Water Fund

could be used. Terry Deputy responded that the fund could not be used for dredging, but the State Revolving Fund could be used instead, but the money would need to be paid back.

Chuck stated that currently, DNREC only has \$1.4 million available. DNREC is currently looking into completing the Massey's Ditch project with the money available.

Chuck added that after reviewing the previous Dredging Committee minutes, it was mentioned about using the Marine Fuel Tax. Unfortunately this cannot be used since this tax is strictly used for DelDOT purposes only and dredging of the Bay would be a DNREC project. Chris Bason noted that he is currently working with Representative Gray on getting \$60,000-\$100,000 transferred over from DelDOT on certain projects, but could use additional help to have the legislation changed.

Terry commented that the dredging project could possibly be a flood mediation issue. Mike Powell urged caution on using flooding as a reason for needing dredging. Karin questioned why not since Route 54 is constantly flooded due to wetland loss. Mike responded that the loss of wetland area does not play a role in flood risk.

Vicki commented that the #2 industry in Delaware is tourism, which should also include the recreational use of the Bay. Chuck stated that he will look into the economic analysis.

Vicki asked what the criteria is to determine who is to be dredged next. Chuck responded that our project would cost an estimated \$3-\$4 million which DNREC currently does not have, and also DNREC is short-staffed, so limited employee and equipment resources are available to actually complete the project.

Terry commented that other communities would benefit if we dredge the Bay and not just Fenwick Island. Terry Deputy responded as stated earlier, the project would be available for funding through the State Revolving Fund, but would need a dedicated source of repayment. Chuck added that if the Bay would be dredged, the outcome would only last 5-10 years and would need to be dredged again due to filling back in with sediment. Mike added that the Bay would also need a yearly maintenance dredge after the initial project was completed.

Bernie asked if the south end of the Bay could be dredged by the Town on our own. Chuck responded yes, but it would cost a lot of money. He suggested waiting until the whole channel could be completed. In the meantime, Chuck suggested that he could ask a surveyor to reassess the Bay and install channel markers in the navigational areas. Bernie questioned if there was any way to mark the entry points of the channels north and south. Chuck responded no, that the areas are too shallow. Karin commented that the south end near the marsh land is particularly bad, especially to paddle boarders.

Chuck commented to begin any projects, a DNREC consultant firm would have to plan the project and obtain the necessary permits. Terry suggested that we need to push Sussex County to become more aware of the problem.

Bud asked if Seal Island was to be used for dredging spoils would it need to be contained. Chuck responded that he would need to check with the DNREC consultant. He will send Terry a list of consultants available for us to contact if we would like to pursue the project on our own.