



A G E N D A
BEACH TASK FORCE VIA ZOOM
August 19, 2021 at 12:00 PM

Call to Order

Approval of Minutes

1. Minutes, May 20, 2021

City Manager Comments

Old Business

New Business

2. DNR's assistance on updating the City's Beach Management Plan
3. BTF Future Role

Adjournment

File Attachments for Item:

1. Minutes, May 20, 2021

Cathy Lewis called the meeting to order at 12:00PM, May 20, 2021. Ms. Lewis welcomed visitors to the meeting. Those in attendance were: Joe Richardson, Jimmy Burke, Sam Adams, Michael Foran, Kate Burns, Frank Woolridge, Harvey Ferrell, Mark Padgett, Alan Robertson and Helen Downing. Officials in attendance were Council persons Nancy DeVetter and Monty Parks; and City Manager, Shawn Gillen and Jan LeViner, Clerk of Council.

Jimmy Burke made a motion to approve the minutes from February 18, 2021. Michael Foran seconded. Vote was unanimous to approve.

Old Business

Alan Robertson approached to give an update on the beach. Mr. Robertson stated the City continues to repair and maintain crossovers. They are going to Department of Natural Resources for permission for the crossover at 15 1/2, Taylor, mid north beach, and Chatham which will be done in the fall. He made reference to the Coastal Incentive Grant which is Georgia Southern's dune vegetation project. Mr. Robertson asked if anyone has taken pictures, to please send them to him so he can forward. On June 10, 2021 Georgia Southern will have a group on student on site to do back-fill planting on the dunes which will be sea oats and footpaths will be narrowed with these plantings. There will be a town hall meeting to include a presentation to Mayor and Council on June 10, 2021 showing the work of the students. He continued, the Ship Wake Study did not get launched as the US Corps of Engineers was not able to get Coast Guard approval to use the station in the channel for the equipment. This was very disturbing. Mr. Robertson gave an update on the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Back River project is moving ahead. UGA will also be on the Island for an assessment and presenting conventional plans. The City is also applying for a Sea Grant, \$150,000, two year project, to update the Sea Level Adaption Study. Ms. Lewis thanked Mr. Robertson for his presentation.

Ms. Lewis introduced Abby Sterling, Manomet. Ms. Sterling did a presentation on **Shorebirds** Stewards on Tybee Island as this program will raise awareness on the Island. She discussed the different birds that come to Tybee Island to include Piping Plovers and Whimbrel's that come in the spring during the migration. Tybee Island is important due to the climate and beach makeup. Main issues for shorebirds is disturbance, habitat loss, climate change, and low reproductive success. Ms. Sterling discussed each of these topics and how they affect shorebirds. She stated ways to protect shorebirds is with increased steward presence with materials, messaging and visual aids. Ms. Sterling asked that everyone be aware of the shorebirds and be good stewards. Mr. Adams asked how the bird activity compares to other beach municipalities. Ms. Sterling responded Tybee generally has fewer shorebirds than other communities although there is a presence of nesting on the far north and south areas of the beach. Little Tybee has a presence of shorebird nesting areas. Ms. Lewis thanked Ms. Sterling and feels this is a good program for Tybee and does not see an issue with obtaining volunteers.

Kate Burns approached to speak on **Dogs on the Beach**. Ms. Burns would like to share the beach with her dog as many other residents feel the same way. She stated a committee was formed which reached out to other beach communities for their programs regarding allowing dogs on the beach. The plan is to have a pilot season which will have a restricted area from 14th to Gullick. It would only be from November 1 through March 31 and dogs would require to be on leash. Owners would need have poops bags on their person which could be monitored by Code Enforcement Officers. Ms. Burns stated there will be a Community Forum on May 26, 2021 to discuss moving forward to include a survey for residents. Mark Padgett asked if it would take a change of City ordinance to allow dogs on the beach. Dr. Gillen confirmed. Mr. Padgett then asked if the Tybee Island Police Department has been contacted as to the, if any, work increase and enforcement. Frank Woolridge stated he is against dogs on the beach he does not see how it can be controlled.

Ms. Burns thanked Mr. Woolridge for his comments. Mr. Adams expressed his concerns with ensuring dogs do not go into the dunes and how to control them. Mr. Ferrell stated at Folly Beach dogs are permitted on the beach prior to 10:00AM and it seems to work for them – why then couldn't work for Tybee. Ms. Lewis thanked Ms. Burns for her presentation.

Ms. Lewis asked Beth Reed to approach. Ms. Reed stated she is speaking in response to Ms. Burns' presentation regarding dogs on the beach. She is not in favor of dogs on the beach as it a threat to the shorebirds. It is her wish the Beach Task Force recognizes the implications for the bird population as well as conserving our beautiful three (3) miles of beach by choosing to deny this proposal for allowing dogs on the beach. Ms. Lewis thanked Ms. Reed.

Ms. Lewis stated she will defer the future role of the Beach Task Force until next month.

Dr. Gillen stated the fifty year agreement with the Corps of Engineers will expire in 2024 and he is working closely with our lobbyist in Washington, D.C. as well as the Georgia Port Authority and Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to look the beneficial use of the dredge materials from the channel as it would need to be beach quality sand approved by DNR. This all relates to future beach re-nourishments.

As there was no further business, Ms. Lewis adjourned the meeting.

Jan LeViner, MMC
City Clerk