



Meeting Minutes - Final-revised

Watershore and Beach Advisory Committee

Thursday, April 6, 2023

5:30 PM

Staff Conference Room 1st Floor, City Hall.

A. Call To Order

B. Roll Call

Present: 6 - Harrison A. McNeil, Philip Blackmar, Armon D. Alex, David Zill, Larisa A. Ford, and Scott Lawson

Excused: 3 - Chair Meredith Darden, Philippe Tissot, and Ruben Macias

C. Public Comment

There was no one from the public that wanted to speak.

D. Approval of Minutes and Action on Absences

Scott pointed out that in the section with Staff Report, the jet ski should be plural not singular. He also noted duplicate wording in #8 under Unfinished Business. With those corrections Scott made a motion to accept the minutes as corrected, Philip seconded, unanimously approved.

E. Committee Reports

1. [23-0464](#) PRAC Report - Howard Schauer

Howard reported that their meeting was uneventful but did share that there is work being done at Labonte Park, they are installing benches, BBQs and shade structures. He also stated that PRAC would like to be kept in the loop with the erosion plan for the Bayfront parks.

2. [23-0465](#) ISAC Report

Harrison reported that ISAC's chair, Jay Gardner has some concerns about the erosion response plan and that it is not moving as fast as he would like.

3. [23-0466](#) BMAC Report - Cliff Schlabach

Cliff reported that they have been receiving a whole bunch of new applications. They are also getting request to review the boardwalk widths and height requirements. This committee will be working on a policy regarding these. Cliff will be meeting with Scott Cross to discuss boardwalk lengths, later this month.

F. Staff Reports

Darren reported that Spring Break was not great; the first weekend was, but then between the weather and the coastal flooding, the following week and weekend were not good. He reported that the lifeguards had to do several rescues at the jetties due to the rip currents. Harrison relayed that he thought it would have been beneficial to have the lifeguards use the rescue boards. Darren explained that the issue with the boards is that the guards don't feel comfortable using them and would prefer to swim. Darren also noted that the guards would be getting more training on the boards and that the ones rescue currently have are too big. He reported that we are still looking for lifeguards. He did tell the committee that he has not gotten word on the permit to move sand.

G. Unfinished Business

4. 23-0526 Update on Erosion Response Plan for Bayfront Parks - By Kevin Johnson

Kevin Johnson told Howard that he will be presenting to PRAC after he presents to WBAC on the erosion response.

Deidre reported on the erosion response activities to this committee. She had a presentation that she and Kevin put together. The current focus is communications with the current funding groups and finding other sources. They are working on updating the scope for the CEPRA grant and working on the online application. They will meet with the TGLO for more assistance. If invited to apply, they will do that by August. The hope is to be approved for a "3 shovel ready" design and the next phase would be construction. Deidre then went into the details of the process. She spoke about the pilot program which would take one of the locations and complete that project and used what was learned for the other two.

5. [22-1576](#) Gulf Beach & Packery Channel Monitoring Sub-Committee Report

Harrison reported that the subcommittee did some refinements to this after the previous meeting with the committees suggestions and everyone has a copy. Larisa made a motion to accept the resolution and get signatures, Armon seconded, unanimously approved.

6. [22-1575](#) WBAC By-laws

There was no update at this time

H. New Business for Discussion and Possible Action

7. 23-0240 Chapter 2 Amendments Sub-Committee Report

Larisa reported on this for the subcommittee. Dan Suckley had asked for more definition on the categories that makeup WBAC so a subcommittee was formed to do

that.

Currently there is a position that reads "A scientist, e.g. marine biologist" and the proposed position would now read "A scientist, e.g. a coastal scientist, marine biologist, oceanographer or other professional with experience and credentials in coastal and/or marine sciences". Another position reads "An engineer", the proposed change would be "A Coastal Engineer or an engineer with related ocean and/or coastal engineering experience and credentials". Darren said that this would be a change to the ordinance so it would have to go to Council.

Larisa also added that the committee thought it would be good if WBAC could provide assessment of candidates fit and experience to guide the City Council's final decision. This will be presented next meeting for a vote.

8. 23-0468 Possible preservation methods for restoration methods regarding the oil spill.

Armon spoke about the oil spill issue and expanded that to speaking about the need for a City Environmental staff. Armon spoke of the City Council retreat where the Council members and the City Manager discussed the need for environmental staffing.

Armon and Harrison will look at wording for a recommendation or a resolution.

9. 23-0469 Capital improvement budgets

Darren spoke about the 2023 budget, which he and his staff are working on. The biggest capital improvement project is the new restrooms that will be built on Zahn Road. He also included shoreline surveys in the budget. The plan is for Deidre to present on the surveys next month. Bids are open for the dredging of the Packery Channel.

10. 23-0470 Senate Bill 434 - Beach Access and Private Property

This bill is currently before the Texas Senate and a similar bill (HB 3114) is before the legislators. These bills will restrict access to public beach areas. This bill would give the owner of the property the responsibility for the maintenance of the area in front of their property, including the sand. Cliff, who is also co-chair of the Surfrider Foundation spoke next. He said that the Surfrider Foundation has been on this from day one. He told the committee that 3 former GLO commissioners also opposed this bill. He relayed the magnitude of emails and phone calls made in protest of these bills. Cliff also spoke about others bills that the Surfriders were watching; SB 2550, SB 2026 & HB 3859, SB 2551 and HB 5062.

Armon spoke with the mayor and she, along with the other council members are opposed to Bill 434. Armon, Harrison and Philip will get together to come up with a resolution against Senate Bill 434.

I. Future Agenda Items

Beach Budgets - Darren Gurley

J. Adjournment

As there was no further business the meeting was adjourned at 6:49 pm.

This meeting may be held via videoconference call pursuant to Texas Government Code § 551.127. If this meeting is held via videoconference call or other remote method of meeting, then a member of this governmental body presiding over this meeting will be physically present at the location of this meeting unless this meeting is held pursuant to Texas Government Code § 551.125 due to an emergency or other public necessity pursuant to Texas Government Code § 551.045.