

WEST COAST INLAND NAVIGATION DISTRICT
BOARD MEETING
MINUTES OF JULY 25, 1997
SOUTH COUNTY ADMINISTRATION CENTER, VENICE, FLORIDA

MINUTES OF JULY 25, 1997:

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Joe McClash, Chairman
Adam Cummings, Vice-Chairman
Jack O'Neil, Secretary
Ray Judah, Treasurer

STAFF PRESENT:

Charles W. Listowski, Executive Director
Philip E. Perrey, Counsel
Evan Brown, Information Specialist

ADMINISTRATION

Chairman McClash called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m. Mr. Listowski called the roll, and all commissioners were present. Commissioner O'Neil moved and Commissioner Judah seconded to approve the minutes of May 23, 1997. Motion passed unanimously. Commissioner Judah moved and Commissioner O'Neil seconded to approve the invoices paid for May and June. Motion passed unanimously. Commissioner Judah moved and Commissioner Cummings seconded to approve the treasurer's reports for April and May. Motion approved unanimously. There were no deletions to the agenda, but Mr. Listowski asked that as item #3 under New Business a brief overview of WCIND property research be added. Also, Officer Rebon from the Florida Marine Patrol is present to explain a public relations effort that would like WCIND funding. His presentation would be added under DEP Comments.

PUBLIC COMMENT - No one wished to speak from the audience.

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION'S COMMENTS - Officer Rebon spoke of working with Officer Jane Seckman in trying to develop a proactive approach to stemming the tide of personal watercraft problems in all the respective counties. A brochure has been developed that is generic to the entire state about personal watercraft operation, safety equipment, what's needed, and helpful hints. Officer Rebon passed around a proof of the brochure to the Board. Funding is required to obtain a first printing of approximately 50,000 copies. A local two-hour seminar is planned at the Southwest Regional Airport Training Center to introduce the brochure to the local vendors and dealers in Charlotte, Lee and Collier Counties. Brochures will be handed out to those at the seminar so that they, in turn, can distribute them to the public for education in personal watercraft safety before operating on the water.

Officer Rebon said that he had been homicide investigator for the Florida Marine Patrol covering Lee, Charlotte and Collier Counties for four years and that in his last full year, 1995, 75% of all boating fatalities involved personal watercraft. He stated that personal watercraft in the State of Florida make up 8% of the registered vessels and are involved in nearly 40% of the accidents.

Press Printing of Ft. Myers has donated \$850 in photo work and their estimate for 50,000 copies of an 8-1/2 x 14 four-fold brochure is \$5,449 and for 75,000 copies the cost is \$8,044; 100,000 copies would be \$10,559.

Mr. Listowski stated that he would like to commend Officers Rebon and Seckman on the initiative from a grass roots departmental level in the production of the brochure and that he strongly recommends that we fund the 50,000 copies but that we also need to alert the state that we would like them to contribute to the statewide effort for this project. We may need to do a Resolution.

Commissioner McClash agreed this was a step in the right direction and suggested that maybe 100,000 be done at the first printing. Mr. Listowski reminded the Board that WCIND has a \$10,000 limit on what can be contracted without going through a bidding process.

Motion was made by Commission O'Neil to have 100,000 copies printed and to have the printer invoice a dollar amount not to exceed \$9,999 from WCIND funds. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Judah. It was approved unanimously.

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS' COMMENTS:

Mr. Listowski introduced A.C.O.E. representative Pat Hanson who will address ideas on the Venice Inlet area dredging project and also give an updated report on the emergency payback.

Ms. Hanson reported that the Corps budget for FY 98 is \$127,00 for the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway. She stated the amount had been reduced by about \$60,000-70,000 and that all of the accounts had been cut down. Several projects have been submitted for the FY 99 budget in hopes of obtaining more money and one of the things that will be designed will be the rehabilitation of the north bulkhead in Venice. Another funding request has been made for dredging the Venice area. Funding information will not be available until March.

Ms. Hanson reported that the permit and surveys had been done for the Venice Inlet project, but that by the time the contract had been put out new surveys would be needed. The question for funding this project is because of it's small size in cubic yards. The biggest expense in this project would be bringing in the equipment.

Commissioner McClash suggested that someone other than their regular contractors be contacted for a project this small. Ms. Hanson said they are required to put the job up for bid, but the money has to be up front for designing and advertising. A request has been made for \$1,000,000 for Venice dredging.

Mr. Listowski reported that he and Ms. Hanson had had some discussion about the new trend in trying to get some of the projects done that are designed and permitted, that there is a certain

value given to local participation, like a match. On this project if the local sponsor or local governing bodies could come forward with match funding the project could be brought up to the top of the list. Perhaps we could also become involved in the bidding process to lower administrative costs.

Ms. Hanson and Mr. Listowski were directed to bring back before the Board one or two options to let them handle the bid, maybe an agreement could be done like the one with DOT where the funds could be advanced and then refunded by the Corps. Ms. Hanson stated that is not normally done on maintenance work. She will have an estimate worked up to see what the actual cost of the dredging would be.

Commissioner O'Neil asked if only \$127,000 was budgeted and the request was for \$1,000,000 where would the balance be obtained. Ms. Hanson explained that the project design could be divided up into separate budget years, i.e., designing one year and dredging the other, or to cross a fiscal year with the dredging.

Discussion was held about ways to cut mobilization costs for small dredging projects by using contractors on a local level. A meeting of Corps officials and Board representatives was suggested by Commissioner McClash to see if some agreement could be worked out. Ms. Hanson will set up the meeting.

As for the payback on emergency dredging in Ft. Myers, it is totally contingent on getting the correct version through both the House and the Senate with the right language.

Commissioner Judah reported that he had heard from the office of Congressman Goss that the language was in the bill to be heard in September. They seem to be confident that we would receive the \$375,000 we originally requested.

Mr. Listowski said that he had been in contact with F.I.N.D and Ms. Hanson discussing whether it would be feasible to formulate the same kind of agreement they have wherein we fund the project and the Corps does the work. Commissioner McClash directed Mr. Listowski to present an outline at the next Board meeting showing exactly what is needed.

Commissioner Cummings interjected that he thought he had heard two different things being discussed. (1) Commissioners expressed the desire to have the Corps turn their money over to us and we contract out the work. (2) Staff saying that we turn money over to the Corps and the Corps do the work.

Commissioner McClash said that our policy is the one that we need to get on paper, the one where we get the Corps money - not give them money.

Mr. Listowski stated that he understood that policy, but that since there seems to be an accepted alternative, maybe we should explore that.

Commissioner McClash said that was to be the last alternative and when we meet with them our first option should be to ask them for money and do the project ourselves.

Commissioner Cummings said that he just wanted to be sure that everyone was on the same page and if the concern is that the Corps methodology is driving up the costs it doesn't help us if we take local dollars and send it to them to spend.

Commissioner O'Neil asked Ms. Hanson to report at the next Board meeting on Sec. 1135. Mr. Listowski said that Sec. 1135 is a Corps mechanism to repair damage that may or may not have been done in the construction of the ICW. It is a restoration oriented type mechanism.

It was stated that dredging was taking place at New Pass and that Longboat Pass is finished. Mr. Listowski reported that the cost of maintaining the Venice berms would be about \$25,000 a year based on previous mowing costs. The cost will be absorbed under our spoil management line item.

Commissioner McClash called on Mr. Ralph Strubel for public comment. His concern is dredging of tributaries into the Intracoastal and the depth of some areas of the Intracoastal itself.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Venice Marine Park/Train Depot - Motion was made by Commissioner Judah to accept staff recommendation approving the request by the City of Venice for an N.T.E. amount of \$50,000 for removal/clean up of MSA S-32, ROW S-28, and MSA S-28 as a needed supplement to the construction contract administered by the city and for direction to participate in the formulation of anticipated agreements relative to the acquisition of the historic train depot property. Commissioner O'Neil seconded the motion. Motion approved unanimously.

Mr. Listowski said he wanted to make the Board aware that the recommendation included approval to move forward into interlocal agreements that might be required for the acquisition. There is presently a figure of \$50,000 to be part of that acquisition partnership.

2. Resolution 97-4, Big Sarasota Pass - Commissioner Judah made the motion to accept staff recommendation for approval of Resolution 97-4. It is an F.D.E.P. requirement to be eligible for the Erosion Control Assistance Program consideration. Commissioner O'Neil seconded the motion. Motion approved unanimously.
3. Stump Pass Progress Report - Commissioner Judah made the motion to accept staff recommendation regarding a request for funding assistance from Charlotte County. The request is for funding to implement an interim three-year project approach which will improve conditions at Stump Pass by removing shoaled material around the southern tip of Manasota Key. The motion was seconded by Commissioner O'Neil. Motion approved unanimously.

Mr. Listowski said that the Charlotte County Commission had approved moving forward with an RFP to do the design and permitting work for an interim project for that pass. That would be the \$110,000 and subsequent to that would be the construction phase.

Commissioner Cummings verified that statement.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Lee County Request for Supplemental Marine Enforcement Funds - Commissioner Judah made the motion to accept staff recommendation for approval of a policy amendment to allow more than 20% dedicated funding for Lee County Marine Patrol in the next fiscal year. Commissioner Cummings seconded the motion. Motion approved unanimously.
2. FY97/98 Budget Review - Mr. Listowski reported that the District had received the following requests for assistance outside the Waterway Development Program guidelines: Stump Pass Interim Dredge Project; matching funds with the state to accomplish improvements at Big Sarasota Pass; Historic Train Depot acquisition; commitment to participate with the University of Florida in a region wide study of our waters which will then be transposed into a plan for maintenance dredging; there may be a requirement to match funds with the Corps on some projects which they would normally have funded historically independent of any matched funding; a 50% match with the DEP for an erosion control assistance program; and all the counties have their projects. We also made a commitment to the Sarasota Bay NEP to participate in Sec. 1135 which has to do with the restoration of part of Sarasota Bay from impacts by the Corps construction. The list of projects is lengthy and staff recommends an increase in millage to .0300.

Mr. Listowski explained that a regional fund had been created with the increased ad valorem, not earmarked by county project requests, and he had submitted a list of projects that the monies from increased millage could be spent on, but the Board would have to make decisions on each individual proposed project.

Commissioner O'Neil said that he encourages an increase in the millage rate based on his knowledge that the District is doing things for the counties that have merit for purposes for which the agency was created. The agency has a position now in the way that evolution is occurring and without misusing its ad valorem power to become an agency that can be more beneficial to the counties that participate.

Commissioner McClash said he had some questions about specific projects. For example, where would future funding associated with Dr. Antonini's work come from, regarding waterway management? The recent study work was paid for by the individual counties, should that policy be continued?

Mr. Listowski stated that it is his understanding that in order to qualify for monies from the state erosion control assistance program and also for some federally authorized projects a local sponsor such as WCIND would be required to supply more local funding than has ever been previously required.

Commissioner McClash agreed that increased millage would raise the amount of money available to the counties and that the regional projects would be discussed when they come up as to the amount of participation that is needed from each county.

Commissioner Cummings questioned the basic purpose of the District millage rate by hypothetically proposing a county imposed rate to take its place. He wanted clarification on the regional benefits derived from participation in the District.

Commissioner McClash stated that the regional benefit, which is always available, is not used every single year. There has to be some organization to make sure that one county doesn't impede waterway use in the region by not adequately maintaining it. The reason the District is valuable is based on economic issues. All the communities depend on it for commercial/recreation benefits. The question here is do we raise the millage and if the millage is increased, what do we use the money for. The District can loan money to a county to help maintain their channels or improve a situation like Stump Pass. Funding for regional projects will require more planning in the future, but as a regional entity the District allows for collaborative efforts to remedy individual county needs.

Mr. Listowski pointed out that what makes it even more logistically feasible is when you consider this money being used as a building block for other grants like the erosion control program.

Commissioner O'Neil moved and Commissioner Judah seconded to accept .0300 as the advertised proposed WCIND millage rate for FY 97/98. Motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Cummings raised some question about increasing the amount of the regional fund. Discussion ensued concerning the benefits of a regional fund. It was decided that the dollar amount to be deposited into the fund would be \$75,000 with the balance of the monies from increased millage to be put into a CIP line item, for each county period.

3. Brief Overview of WCIND property - Spread sheets prepared by WCIND staff indicate a need to do more research into understanding what we have. Right-of-way properties we have in Pinellas County were discussed and Mr. Listowski was directed to present maps showing the property locations at a future meeting.

NEXT MEETING DATES AND TIMES: Friday, September 12th at 4:00 in Venice, Fl.

FIRST PUBLIC HEARING: Friday, September 12th at 5:01 P.M.

FINAL PUBLIC HEARING: Friday, September 19th at 5:01 P.M.

Adjournment: 12:10 p.m.

Joe McClash, Chairman

Jack O'Neil, Secretary

