

Beaches and Waterways Advisory Commission Meeting Minutes

April 7, 2025, 3:00 pm- 5:00 pm

Municipal Center
2401 Courthouse Drive
Building #1, Rooms 1009 & 1010
Virginia Beach, VA 23456

Board Members Present

Steven “Skip” Gibson, Lance Leshner, Daniel Murphy, Joe Bourne, Bob Mandigo, Patrick Clark, Mike Hall, Rob Goodman, Connie Agresti

Board Members Absent

John Oneal, Brianna Nichols

City Staff Present

Tori Eisenberg – Deputy City Attorney

Toni Utterback – Public Works, City Engineer

Jim White, PE – Public Works, Acting Coastal Program Administrator

D’Juan Tucker – Public Works Admin

Skip Gibson called the April 7th, 2025, Beaches and Waterways Advisory Commission meeting to order at 3:00 PM.

Minutes of March 3, 2025

The March 3, 2025, Minutes were approved.

Vote: 7-0

Members voting Aye:

Skip Gibson, Lance Leshner, Daniel Murphy, Joe Bourne, Bob Mandigo, Patrick Clark, Mike Hall

Members Absent:

Brianna Nichols, John Oneal

Members Abstain:

Rob Goodman, Connie Agresti (Absent previous meeting)

Beach Management Plan

Report Writing Progress

- The commission is beginning to write the report that will undergo multiple reviews to ensure accuracy and legal compliance.
- Members are encouraged to start drafting their sections.
- Each area will have a principal writer and a secondary writer to ensure participation from all commission members.

Report Structure and Content

- A proposed format for the report includes an executive summary and recommendations for each beach area.
- The document will be professionally produced for public consumption, incorporating visuals and structured layout.
- Each Beach has unique characteristics that should be highlighted in the report, alongside commonalities.

Community Input and Metrics

- The commission aims to gather community input on safety and environmental concerns to include in the report.
- Metrics from previous reports will be used to evaluate progress and effectiveness of recommendations.

Collaboration with City Resources

- The commission discussed the possibility of collaborating with a city consultant for professional document production.
- Previous reports were completed with the help of consulting firms, and this approach may be revisited.

Sand Sourcing Discussion

- The city is exploring new sand sources due to depletion from traditional dredging methods.
- Organizations like Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) and the Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) are involved in identifying usable sand sources.
- Biological assessments will be conducted to ensure minimal impact on sea life during sand sourcing.

Old Business:

Discussion on Encroachments

- The commission discussed the classification of encroachments into permitted and unpermitted categories, emphasizing the need for clarity in handling existing cases.
- A letter from 1980 acknowledging existing encroachments was deemed invalid, leading to confusion amongst some residents who believed they had approval based on it.
- The commission noted that only a small number of encroachments have been formally approved by City Council.

Process for Addressing Encroachments

- The commission discussed the existing process for evaluating encroachments, which involves city evaluations and potential civil penalties for violations.

- There was a consensus that the focus should remain on beachfront encroachments, as that aligns with the commission's primary responsibilities.

Recommendations for Future Actions

- The commission agreed that the city follow existing rules and processes for managing encroachments, allowing for discretion in enforcement.
- Members acknowledged the need to address a few major violations that prompted the reestablishment of the commission.
- The importance of civic engagement was emphasized, with plans to involve community members in discussions about encroachments and the upcoming public comment period for the master plan.

Beach Walkways

- A Commission member expressed dissatisfaction with the current state of the beach walkways, noting that the bulldozer work has made it look unattractive.
- Community input on walkway maintenance decisions was brought up, with a street-by-street approach discussed.
- Beach operations is looking into individual requests from citizens regarding walkway maintenance.

New Business:

Student involvement in the Commission

- The commission discussed the selection of two student members from a pool of applications, with a proposal to form a subcommittee for additional student participation.
- Policies and procedures regarding the participation of non-commission members in subcommittees will need to be reviewed and potentially amended.

Remote Participation Policy

- A discussion took place regarding the possibility of adopting a remote participation policy for commission members who cannot attend in person.

- Two options were proposed: a remote participation policy allowing virtual attendance while maintaining a physical quorum, and a full virtual meeting policy.
- The commission agreed to draft both policies for review and potential voting at the next meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 4:24 PM.