

**Sebastian Inlet District**  
Regular Commission Meeting  
Wednesday, 4:30 PM, Sept. 13, 2023  
North Indian River County Library  
1001 Sebastian Blvd., Sebastian FL 32958

Minutes

Present at the meeting were: Chairman Jenny Lawton Seal, Commissioner Beth Mitchell (Vice Chair), Commissioner Michael Rowland (Secretary/Treasurer), Commissioner David Barney and Commissioner Lisa Frazier. Also, in attendance were: Executive Director James Gray, Contracts & Accounting Manager Dave Kershaw, SID Public Outreach Associate Ed Garland, SID Legal Counsel Jack Kirschenbaum, Kenneth Torres (SISP), Sam Cox (SISP), Valerie Seidel (Balmoral Group), and Cortney Cortez (Balmoral Group).

Under Agenda Item I

Call to Order – Chairman Lawton Seal called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.

Under Agenda Item II

Approval of the Minutes of the regular Commission meeting of August 9, 2023. Vice Chairman Mitchell made a motion to approve the minutes. Commissioner Frazier seconded the motion. The **motion carried 5-0.**

Under Agenda Item III

The Sebastian Inlet District Economic Impact Update 2023 Draft Report — Cortney Cortez and Valerie Seidel, The Balmoral Group

Ms. Cortez gave a detailed PowerPoint presentation summarizing the findings in Balmoral Group's draft 2023 Sebastian Inlet District Economic Impact report. The draft report, which provides an estimate of the economic impact of Sebastian Inlet District's management activities in Brevard and Indian River Counties as of August 2023, is an update to an economic analysis completed for the District by Cardno Entrix in 2013. Ms. Cortez thoroughly explained the objective and scope of work, as well as citing an extensive list of literature sources used for the study. The key list of evaluated impacts included spending by recreational boaters and tourists, proximity effect of the Sebastian Inlet on real estate, spending by specialized sectors (such as maintenance dredging and commercial fish landings) and the value of key natural resources sustained by the District, particularly seagrasses. The total economic impact of the Sebastian Inlet District's activities is estimated at \$1.124 billion. Following her presentation, Ms. Cortez opened the meeting to questions. Commissioner Barney asked whether the study captures revenue created from fishing tournaments. Ms. Cortez said the information is captured in the annual impacts of recreational boating. Commissioner Frazier asked whether the results from the surveys are included in the draft report. Ms. Cortez said that survey results are included. Mr. Gray reminded the Commission that his staff and he are reviewing the report and working with the Balmoral Group to refine the information for the final report. He asked the commission to send him any requests or changes that they would like to see included in the final report as it will be a key piece of information the District will utilize in the coming decade. Commissioner Barney said he would like to see the inlet's impact on the surfing industry. Commissioner Frazier, building on Commissioner Barney's

request, asked whether the activities such as surfing and pier fishing should be included in the final report. Mr. Gray said this information is included in the report as visits to Sebastian Inlet State Park but is not teased out specifically. He suggested that activities outside of boating could be referenced in the final report. Mr. Gray noted that the information about vessel size is helpful to the District in managing the channel as well as showing that the District's management activities allow navigation by large and small vessels to continue, which also supports area businesses. He said the draft report is a success and will be useful for the District in showing that its activities exceed the intent of its charter and provides a beneficial return on investment to taxpayers in Brevard and Indian River counties.

Vice Chairman Mitchell said she was pleased to see how the draft report builds on the 2013 report. She said the draft report is very well done. Ms. Cortez' entire presentation is available in the recorded meeting minutes.

#### Under Agenda Item IV

#### Information and Discussion Agenda

- A. Media and Information No Discussion.
- B. Executive Director's Reports

Before giving his report, Mr. Gray requested that the Commission vote to amend the order of the Consent Agenda so that the Commission votes on Item 2 first because it is tied to Item 3. He explained that if Item 2 was not approved, Item 3 would not be applicable. Vice Chairman Mitchell made a motion to amend the order of the agenda and separate Item 3 from 1 and 2. Commissioner Frazier seconded the motion. **The motion carried 5-0.**

1. Update on the DRAFT FDEP Sebastian Inlet Management Plan  
Mr. Gray said all parties who served on the Technical Advisory Committee have submitted to FDEP their comments on the draft Sebastian Inlet Management Plan. FDEP is reviewing all comments and a final version of the management plan is expected in October. FDEP included a historical account of dredging and an updated target bypass objective of 75,000 cubic yards annually, a reduction from 90,000 cubic yards. The Management Plan also identifies management strategies for the District, which gives the District the opportunity to continue to be eligible for FDEP cost-share funding.
2. Update on the North Jetty Maintenance Project  
Mr. Gray said the District has begun pre-application meetings with FDEP and engaged USACE regarding the North Jetty Maintenance Project. USACE has assigned the District a permit manager but a meeting date has not been set yet. Jetty repairs are scheduled to occur in summer 2024.
3. Update on the 2023 Post-Construction Monitoring efforts  
Mr. Gray said the District conducts permit required post construction monitoring. Monitoring has shown a significant increase in sea turtle nesting activity so far this year. The numbers are 1,233 loggerhead nests, 272 green sea turtle nests and two leatherback nests. The District has been unable to complete hardbottom monitoring or seagrass monitoring this year due to poor visibility and rough seas. FDEP allows for a more relaxed hardbottom monitoring protocol if the District provides documentation.

*Chairman Lawton Seal called for a meeting recess at 5:25 p.m. so that the Commission could convene the Tentative Millage and Budget Hearing. Chairman Lawton Seal reconvened the meeting at 5:44 p.m.*

4. Discussion of the District FY 2022-23 Accomplishments and FY 2023-24 Goals and Objectives

Mr. Gray shared District accomplishments during the 2022-23 fiscal year and goals and objectives for the 2023-24 fiscal year. His list included the implementation of the District Management Plan, inlet maintenance-related activities, public outreach and grant-related activities. The complete list of accomplishments, goals and objectives is available in the recorded meeting minutes.

5. Informational — Recently received FDEP Grant Reimbursement

Mr. Gray shared copies of three grant reimbursement checks totaling approximately \$135,000 that the District received from FDEP over the past month. Vice Chairman Mitchell sought clarification as to why the District doesn't include grant funds when developing the budget. Mr. Gray explained that the grant revenue is not included because it is not guaranteed at the time of budget development. He discussed, although the District routinely applies for grants (ex. FDEP Beaches Funding) funding does not become awarded until the following year due to Legislative approvals and the State's fiscal year. Grant funding, however, is captured in the District's Use of Fund balance in the budget. The grants are reimbursements, which tend to lag behind the annual budget development process. Mr. Gray suggested that a notation at the bottom of the budget could reference anticipated grant funding in the following year.

6. Informational — Sept. 16, 2023, Coastal Cleanup

Mr. Gray said the District has partnered with Coastal Connections and SISF to participate in the International Coastal Cleanup on the north side of the park on September 16. Mr. Garland will serve as a site leader and all volunteer slots have been filled.

7. Discussion of Consent Agenda

Mr. Gray reviewed the three Consent Agenda items for the Commission's consideration. (Details are found under Item IX)

Under Agenda Item V

Public Outreach Activities

Mr. Garland updated the commission on recent and upcoming outreach activities, including a record-breaking social media post that reached nearly 370,000 people on August 18, and plans for the third installment of his Website series on fish species that inhabit Sebastian Inlet.

Under Agenda Item VI

Park Matters — Mr. Torres gave an update on state park activities, including plans to install replacement grates at the north jetty.

Under Agenda Item VII

Legal Counsel Update

Mr. Kirschenbaum had nothing to report.

Under Agenda Item VIII

Public Comment Period

There was no public comment.

Under Agenda Item IX

Consent Agenda

A. Authorized Work For Commission Review

1. There were no items.

B. Recommended for Approval

1. Work Order No. 2324-001-LLW, Lewis, Longman & Walker, P.A. 2023-2024 Legislative Representation

Mr. Gray said Lewis, Longman & Walker have represented the District on legislative issues with good result. Unfortunately, the FY23/24 appropriation for the North Jetty project was vetoed by the Governor. For fiscal year 24/25, Lewis, Longman & Walker will assist the District again in seeking the legislative appropriation for the North Jetty project as part of their District representation. The work order engages LLW to represent the District during the 2024 Legislation Session for a flat fee of \$48,000.

2. Approval of Master Services Agreements — For Continuing Professional Hydrographic Surveying and Mapping Services RFQ No. 2023001

Mr. Gray said the District has negotiated identical standard fee schedules and “master” agreements with Morgan & Eklund, Inc., and Olin Hydrographic Solutions for continuing professional hydrographic surveying and mapping services. Mr. Gray added that the District has made changes to its master services agreement as a result of last year’s audit that referenced submitting deliverables and invoices on time. The change protects the District and standardizes its contracts. The District’s previous surveying and mapping provider, Land & Sea Surveying, did not agree to the changes in the master agreement that the other firms did and will not be providing new services to the District at this time.

3. Work Order No. 2324-002-M&E, Morgan & Eklund, Inc. 2023 September/October Hydrographic Survey

Mr. Gray said the proposed work order provides 2023 September/October hydrographic survey to support the District’s monitoring program. The total amount of the work order is \$101,440 and will be invoiced on a lump sum basis.

The Commission voted on the consent agenda as amended. Commissioner Rowland voted to approve the first two items of the Consent Agenda. Vice Chairman Mitchell seconded the motion. **The motion carried 5-0.**

The Commission voted on Item 3 of the amended Consent Agenda. Commissioner Frazier voted to approve Item 3. Commissioner Barney seconded the motion. **The motion carried 5-0.**

Under Item X  
Commissioner Items

Chairman Lawton Seal — Nothing.

Commissioner Frazier — Nothing.

Secretary/Treasurer Rowland — Commissioners' Compensation Discussion

Commissioner Rowland said the Commission has not discussed increasing its compensation in 20 years and asked fellow commissioners to consider increasing Commissioner compensation from \$300 monthly to \$400 a month. Mr. Kirschenbaum said Section 5 of the Charter allows the Commission to set its own compensation within a prescribed range. Vice Chairman Mitchell said she agreed with Commissioner Rowland and that the Commission has been extremely frugal over the years. Mr. Kirschenbaum said \$100 is within the range of a legal increase in compensation. Commissioner Barney said Jupiter Inlet Commissioners increased their monthly compensation from \$200 to \$500 a month. The increase becomes effective in the 2023-24 fiscal year. Commissioner Rowland made a motion to increase Commissioners' compensation from \$300 a month to \$400 a month. Vice Chairman Mitchell seconded the motion. **The motion carried 5-0.**

Vice Chairman Mitchell — The Sebastian Inlet District Economic Benefit draft report is a beneficial document. She asked Mr. Gray how the final report will be used by the District. Mr. Gray the District plans to disseminate the product to Brevard and Indian River County governments, elected officials, senators, representatives and the Governor's office. It can also be used by District lobbyists to advocate the importance of receiving funding for North jetty repair funding. The information in the report can also assist in public outreach activities. Commissioner Mitchell said the report shows that Brevard is receiving as much or more of a benefit due to the inlet. Mr. Kirschenbaum added the economic report would be of interest to regional media outlets, such as Florida Today.

Commissioner Barney — Request that the Balmoral group use accurate photographs in the final economic report.

Under Item XI  
Unfinished Business  
No unfinished business.

Under Item XII  
New Business  
No new business.

Under Item XIII  
Adjournment — Chairman Lawton Seal adjourned the meeting at 6:26 p.m.

  
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Secretary/Treasurer

10/11/2023  
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Date