

MINUTES OF THE COLLIER COUNTY
COASTAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

Naples, Florida, December 8, 2022

LET IT BE REMEMBERED, the Collier County Coastal Advisory Committee, in and for the County of Collier, having conducted business herein, met on this date at 1:00 P.M. in REGULAR SESSION at Administrative Building “F,” 3rd Floor, Collier County Government Complex, Naples, Florida, with the following members present:

CHAIRMAN: David Trecker
VICE CHAIRMAN: Joseph Burke
Steve Koziar
Thomas McCann
Jim Burke
Robert Raymond
Robert Roth
Raymond Christman
Erik Brechnitz

ALSO PRESENT: Andy Miller, Coastal Zone Manager
Colleen Green, Assistant County Attorney
Farron Bevard, Management Analyst I

Any persons in need of the verbatim record of the meeting may request a copy of the video recording from the Communications, Government & Public Affairs Division, or view it online.

I. Call to Order

Chairman Trecker called the meeting to order at 1:03 p.m.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

III. Roll Call

Roll call was taken and a quorum of nine was established.

IV. Changes and Approval of Agenda

Mr. McCann moved to approve the agenda. Second by Mr. Koziar. The motion passed unanimously, 9-0.

V. Presentations

[Tigertail Lagoon/Sand Dollar Island Ecosystem Restoration Project](#)

Chairman Trecker said this item is a request to support TDC funding for a project on Marco Island. If approved by the CAC, the funding request would go to the TDC and then the Board of County Commissioners would have the last say. We'll hear the presentation today, ask questions, take time over the next month to assimilate the information and develop more questions before voting on it at our January meeting. We can present this in 30 minutes. He asked that speakers limit comments to 15 minutes.

Mr. Brechnitz said he asked for this to be put on the agenda. This is the largest project Marco Island has tried to accomplish. The City Manager, Mike McNees, is here, as is Commissioner Rick LoCastro.

Mr. McNees said we are appreciative of the opportunity today to discuss your support for a very important project, not only for the Hideaway Beach Taxing District, but for Marco Island and Collier County residents and the county's tourism economy. We are asking for supplemental support of the Tigertail Lagoon and Sand Dollar Beach Ecosystem Restoration Project because Hideaway Beach Taxing District is footing most of the bill. He reported that:

- For Collier County, Tigertail Beach Park is a critical tourist and recreational asset for county and Marco Island residents.
- 200,000 visitors visit there yearly and it's a county park that's part of the ecosystem. We don't think the county wants to abandon it and let it turn into a stagnant pond, with the associated hazards that come with that.
- The rebuilding of Sand Dollar Island is important for coastal resiliency for Marco Island. There's a lot of value in the property there and coastal resiliency is important.
- This ecosystem has been discussed repeatedly in these chambers for at least the past 40 years because it's an ever-evolving, ever-changing system.
- All improvements over the past 10-plus years have been paid for by the Hideaway Beach Taxing District and this is the first time they've asked for help.
- This is important because this ecosystem benefits far more than residents of the taxing district and Marco Island. It has a huge countywide benefit.

- Also speaking will be Linda Ryan, chair of the Highway Beach Taxing District; Justin Martin, Marco Island Public Works director, and Mohamed Dabees, the engineer from Humiston & Moore Engineers who designed and managed the project.

Mr. Dabees detailed a PowerPoint presentation and reported that:

- This project has been many years in the making. We initiated it post-Hurricane Irma, with damages to the ecosystem, and obtained all permit authorizations.
- Immediately before construction, we were hit by another storm, Hurricane Ian, which was almost the final blow to a declining ecosystem.
- We are fortunate that we're able to intervene at almost the last minute to restore a system that is vital, not just to the upland community, but for the ecosystem.
- [He showed an aerial view of Sand Dollar Island and Tigertail Lagoon, with Hideaway Beach on the north portion of Marco Island.]
- The project looks at the entire sandspit that stems from the central part of Marco Island, around the county park and wraps around the northwest corner of the island. Sand Dollar Island and the lagoon are not part of Hideaway Beach and or anything other than being a critical wildlife area mandated by the state as a protected wildlife area.
- We're excited that we're doing something good for the upland community and the environment, but we're also setting a good precedent for restoring valuable preserves and natural areas to maintain those natural barriers as our main protection.
- Building walls and building structures to protect upland property is a last resort and allowing those systems to decline until we qualify for barriers is not a proactive or a natural-based solution.
- We're trying to work more with nature so we can not only protect our uplands but also protect the valuable features of a barrier island system that forms Southwest Florida's identity.
- The polygon in red, an official picture from the state Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission website, shows where the valuable critical wildlife areas are on Sand Dollar Island and Tigertail Lagoon.
- The project in its entirety is not on Hideaway Beach. It's on state lands or Fish and Wildlife Commission critical wildlife areas and areas administered by Rookery Bay Preserve.
- The critical wildlife area has evolved over decades. We've done a lot of history and work over this area for decades. In past few years, especially post-Irma, it has been collapsing from the middle section. Although it's not on Hideaway Beach, the Hideaway community recognized that its neighboring area, a preserve, is under significant decline and they needed to see what they could do to preserve the beautiful nature that is their neighbor.
- The middle part of it is collapsing onshore, and it's already now onshore. The critical wildlife area is over 450 acres and fronts both Hideaway Beach and the county park.
- The ratio of that frontage for Hideaway Beach totals 70% and 30% for the county park.
- This is a valuable resource not just for Hideaway Beach, but for tourism.
- There are multiple values to this system other than just being the coastal front of Hideaway Beach, Marco Island and Sand Dollar Island.
- The main access is from the county park. You can't walk to Sand Dollar Island but can get there from Hideaway Beach. You must wade through water or kayak across Tigertail Lagoon, which is not part of Hideaway Beach.
- The top picture shows the number of boats that anchor on Sand Dollar Island on a weekend day. If you survey people on Sand Dollar Island on any day, you'll find nine out of 10 are not from Hideaway. Most walked from the park or came by boat.
- There are commercial boats and tour boats that regularly bring tourists to the island.
- Tigertail Beach Park is a distinct park because it has many features that attract specific birds

and other species. It's of significant value to avid birdwatchers, who come to the park to observe birds. On some days, the parking lot is full and a line of cars extends outside the park's gate, so the access and tourism value for this park is valuable.

- The photo shows a comparison of what we want to return the island and lagoon to, what it was prior to Hurricane Irma in 2017. There are significant differences in the images, the mangrove forest and shoreline, coastal vegetation, the lagoon and a sandy barrier that provide multi-tier protection from the open gulf.
- Over the years, as Hurricane Irma first lowered the middle section and started the regression of the sandspit, the sand that used to be a barrier island has already welded onshore post-Ian.
- The mangrove shoreline is degrading and the beach in front of it is lowered. The rate of the regression is among the highest you'll see not only in Collier County, but probably in all Southwest Florida. That area retreated almost 400 feet in less than six years.
- If we look at the rectified aerials and the changes, the main change is that the central part of that area retreated 400 feet. We lost about 20 acres of wetland habitat and choked the middle section of the lagoon, which separated the north part of the lagoon from the south part.
- Most of the sand went to the north end. If you look at the comparison, we have a growth that's 2½ to 3 acres per year at the north end that repeatedly tries to attach to Hideaway Beach.
- The Hideaway Beach Taxing District has been trying to maintain it over the years through artificial dredging, a lifeline that kept that system open today.
- We see a problem and an opportunity. Our plan is to work with the agencies and stakeholders to develop a solution.

Mr. Dabeas said the plan, which is currently under construction, has three main aspects:

- One is to relocate the sandspit to where it was in 2017 in the marked yellow area, make the berm higher and more resilient, create a flow channel that will reconnect the southern part of the lagoon where the county park is with the entrance to the lagoon, and have this two-mile long sandspit and lagoon be the barrier that protects the upland community and preserves all the natural features and vital habitat for many federally and state listed species.
- We've worked with those agencies for two years to ensure we follow guidelines and developed a plan that eventually was permitted by all federal and state agencies. It's a natural based solution, which means we're working with nature, so it's a plan that will have an initial construction and we will continue to maintain it, similar to what we're doing with Pelican Bay, NRPA (National Recreation and Park Association) and Clam Pass for Collier County.
- The diagram illustrates the physics behind the plan and how we're taking the opportunity of where the sand ends up at the terminal end of the sandspit, recycling it back to the weaker area and then restoring the flow so the whole bay can be flushed and circulated.
- Tigertail Lagoon dead-ends at the park and one of the main benefits is the flushing of the system and the water quality, which were critical elements of our 2017 plan. They're also a big part of the project's state and federal review.
- In the model results, the flow can go all the way through, but in 2020, the area in the middle chokes off at low tide and then you get disconnected between the system. That's why we have been experiencing multiple water-quality problems in Tigertail Lagoon; it's unable to flush.
- The area in the middle is like an artery that was 80 to 90% clogged and now it's totally closed after Hurricane Ian. It will improve significantly if the project is implemented.
- The stakeholders and critical wildlife area will benefit by restoring a natural preserve, Hideaway Beach will have a stable neighbor and a wildlife area that's their coastal front, and the county park will be able to continue having an attraction from a preserve with a vibrant wildlife park while improving the flushing and the water quality to the park.
- The analysis includes all activities in the system, including the entrance to Capri Pass, the

offshore borough area and the Collier Creek disposal area.

- With the current permit, we have a nearshore, or an onshore, disposal at the beach berm of Sand Dollar Island that will be easier and more economic to dispose of the Collier Creek shoaling sand, rather than disposing it offshore, where it intersects with the authorized navigation channel of Capri Pass.
- The project is funded and fully supported by the Hideaway Beach Taxing District and the City of Marco Island is administering the project.
- One of the reasons we're here is that post-Hurricane Ian, in the area where we're building, the project was significantly impacted, so it needs more sand and funds than were allocated.
- If you do nothing, sand will continue to build at the south end of Marco Point. The erosion would expose upland communities and you'd have to install a long emergency seawall before a storm.

Chairman Trecker said his understanding is that they want to obtain \$600,000 in TDC funds to supplement the project, which the CAC will consider. He noted that he knows Mr. Dabees' work in Pelican Bay and Clam Pass and he's a fine engineer. His prerogative as chairman is to consider the pros and cons:

- Hideaway Beach Taxing District initiated the project for its own benefit and will be the principal beneficiary.
- Tigertail Beach, Tigertail lagoon and Sand Dollar Island will get secondary benefits.
- When the CAC considers using public funds for private benefit, we're dealing with beach access.
- A public beach in an area where there are only private, not public accesses, is a different type of project.
- Here we're talking about access from both, not accessing through Hideaway Beach, and we're talking about a lagoon, not a beach.
- Mr. Dabees made the analogy that Pelican Bay residents derive an indirect benefit from TDC funding of the dredging of Clam Pass, which has gone on for years.
- Not everyone on Marco Island supports this. We've had some bitter opposition, but we can deal with that at the January meeting.
- The issue is using public funds for private benefit. If it's not setting a precedent, it's extending a precedent and opens the way for similar future requests.
- The project is not a one-off. Maintenance will be needed and more dredging will be required.
- Approval could set the stage for additional TDC payments.
- A key question is whether tourism benefits to the extent of 15% of the total project.
- What are some options other than TDC funding? A direct appeal to FEMA, the Florida DEP or funding from the City of Marco Island, or should the Hideaway Beach Taxing District pay for it all?

The chairman asked for comments from other Marco Island residents.

Mr. Brechnitz said he takes exception to some of his statements and noted that:

- This is a public beach called Tigertail Beach Park, which has 200,000 visitors a year, mostly tourists. Cars line up there on the weekend and stretch all the way down Hernando Drive.
- The area has traditionally been a kayaking and paddleboarding area, not for Hideaway residents, but for Marco Island residents and tourists. If you let it go, those activities will end. Those activities have involved county-contracted park vendors that rent out equipment to residents and tourists.
- The Hideaway Beach Taxing District did not have to continue the project into Tigertail. We

could have stopped at our property line, said it doesn't belong to us and we won't pay for it, but we didn't because it didn't make sense.

- Once the project started, we had an opportunity to restore the ecosystem. We thought it was a worthwhile investment, but Hurricane Ian's damage made the project significantly more expensive.
- About 25% to 30% of the project is adjacent to county land that tourists use. It's a bird habitat and provides an opportunity for manatees. We hope the seagrass will grow again and there have been significant benefits.
- The notion that Hideaway Beach Taxing District is a major beneficiary of the Tigertail Beach portion isn't true. We could have let it go, but it helps the community if we continue the project. We didn't expect Hurricane Ian.
- The idea that it doesn't promote tourism is incorrect. This is one of only three access points to the beach. When you're talking about beach access, the portion that TDC funds would go for are public lands with beach access.
- If we've ever had a project that promotes tourism, this is it. Boaters use that channel for shelling, the Marriott and other hotel resorts bring people there, Rose Marina brings tourists there. It has nothing to do with Hideaway Beach and everything to do with tourism.
- This is a project that fits the CAC/TDC definition.
- Marco Island is a significant contributor to TDC funds, especially the Marriott and the Hilton. The Marriott is the single biggest contributor of tourist development funds countywide.
- Marco Island has been a significant contributor to TDC funding but has asked for very little in exchange. There have been very few Marco Island projects relative to other parts of Collier County, so this is an appropriate request and would aid tourism.
- He encouraged fellow CAC members to support it.

Chairman Trecker said he didn't dispute any of that. The issue here is that the support for a project like this, for a county park, is something that would go through the normal channels, Coastal Zone Management and staff, who take the initiative to begin projects and seek funding, so it's a matter of sequencing. This started with the Hideaway Beach Taxing District's benefit. It's unclear to me when the county was approached to see if it would carry the project into the county park area.

Mr. Brechnitz said this is the approach.

Mr. Burke asked Attorney Greene if there was any reason they couldn't consider it.

Attorney Greene said the CAC can consider this and noted:

- This is a presentation to allow fact-finding before it becomes an agenda item.
- You've all made good points. Pass and inlet maintenance and lagoon maintenance are all authorized expenditures of the Tourist Development Tax.
- The key question is the benefit to the county, the promotion of tourism and public access.
- We need to get all the facts and review them with staff and consultants, if necessary. For example, Chairman Trecker mentioned a 15% benefit and Mr. Brechnitz mentioned a 25% benefit, so all those questions need to be answered today.
- These are authorized uses of TDC revenues, with the appropriate findings.

Chairman Trecker asked for Mr. Roth's opinion.

Mr. Roth said he didn't want to consider this as a Marco Island resident, but as a CAC member.

When the Friends of Tigertail came to this board in July 2020 to ask for the same thing, Gary McAlpin said it had nothing to do with the park and tourism money was not available, so we've considered this before. If the need is based on additional damages from Hurricane Ian, how did we come up with \$600,000 so quickly? Is there a change order from a contractor or documentation of \$600,000?

Mr. Dabees said the added amount is due to Hurricane Ian damage and reported that:

- As soon as we got the survey, we communicated to the City of Marco Island and the Hideaway Beach Taxing District that we had a 40,000 to 80,000-yard shortage.
- Given that we're building a berm on the Gulf, we're assuming conditions that are dynamic and will change, so we estimated that a supplemental amount of material between 60,000 and 80,000 yards was needed to complete the project, as intended, prior to Hurricane Ian.
- The other option would be to build it with less, which means resiliency standards will not be met because in some parts, the island moved over 100 feet due to Hurricane Ian, so we have to build it in deeper water.
- The board did not direct us to ask for the benefit-cost ratio and everybody pays their fair share.
- The options are the Hideaway Beach Taxing District could raise funds, put the project out for bid, take a loan from the city, in addition to all the taxes they raised. Now contractors are on the ground and they're short.
- It is a small amount that would have an exponential benefit to the investment. We're saying \$600,000 plus or minus, depending on when we finish the change-order and come up with a work plan.
- Contractors will have to get the sand from what's labeled as an offshore borough area that was not on the bid. This is part of our contingency plan in the permit, that we can take sand from an approved source. Taking sand from farther offshore might have more mobilization or more booster pumps that need to be put in, but because of the calendar and because we know the environmental construction window will be closing soon, we have to give the City of Marco Island an estimate of the supplemental funds needed.
- Before we do that, the district looked at all funds in its budget and how they can survive until the next year if they spend every penny they have, so we're not asking for a fair share, we're asking if the benefit to the county justifies completing the project to its design standards – or we'll have to do it with less.

Mr. Roth said his question is whether there is backup documentation for the \$600,000 amount. If this were to be audited, do you have unit prices from the contractor or a change-order to show it's just not a number being used to make up a shortfall because of some other reason.

Mr. Dabees said they will have documentation. This is an informational meeting and the documentation is pending.

Mr. Roth noted that the Marco Island City Manager said this is part of a county park but does the park designation extend that far – because the work has to stop at the end of Hideaway. Is this really a park? That's a different consideration. History shows that prior work was paid for by the Hideaway Beach Taxing District, so why is this different? Sand Dollar Island is a critical environmental area, so maybe that's the reason?

Mr. Dabees said that in all past incidents, the sand was dredged from the entrance and placed on Hideaway Beach. None of this sand is placed on Hideaway Beach. It's all placed on the preserve.

Mr. Roth said he heard this also was needed to avoid future damage, to keep things in arrest now. But is that to avoid some point in the future where revetments of private property or something would be needed to secure private lands versus having anything to do with tourist tax dollars now?

Mr. Dabees said it's not about cost and noted that:

- It's a proactive measure to protect our environment.

- Having a park and an environment like this is much better from a resiliency standard than just having a wall.
- When you have that wall of energy that comes with the storm surge like we saw with Ian, the homes in Hideaway that have this multi-tier system got flooded but they did not get the wave energy that leveled homes in Fort Myers Beach.
- That's why we need to have a vision of how we can work with nature to establish sustainable resiliency, rather than wait until we're eligible to put in hard structures, like the building he showed the CAC in Fort Myers Beach. Two decades ago, the shoreline there was 500 feet away from that building. Now they must put up a seawall.

Mr. Roth called that a good factor in favor of this proposal. He noted that:

- He lives in Cape Cod during the summer and this would never happen there. What happens is eventually a beach is eroded to the point where some private homes have to put up, prevent and stabilize their own shores. Some homes were lost and washed out to sea.
- It looks like Sand Dollar Island will keep trying to collapse toward the shore, so maybe this will become a long-term liability if nature doesn't have her way.
- Boats are a good argument in favor. He owns a boat that's often there on a Saturday afternoon and he accesses the area by boat.
- We're talking about this as an ecological restoration for the benefit of the environment, but why did the Audubon Society take such a defensive role on this?

Mr. Dabees noted that:

- When we started this project, we spoke with Audubon, all agencies and stakeholders for years before applying for a permit.
- It came to the sand trap, the triangle at the top of the island (in the PowerPoint).
- Audubon was supportive of all the other features, but because the black skimmer favored this area and they feel like it's been a struggling species and due to illnesses from bacteria levels, etc., they said to find another source and not to touch this area.
- We took that argument and minimized the area to maintain the integrity of the project because this is the dead-end where all the sand comes and builds up. It's the terminal end, so we must find a line where we carve it and then take the sand that gets there and recycle it to the weak area. Otherwise, we don't have a sustainable solution.
- We worked on this with the agencies, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and came to the balance that we have, but Audubon wanted to protect that species over any other, while all the federal, state and local agencies looked at the entire picture, whether it's seagrasses, manatees, other birds, etc., Audubon was laser-focused on one element versus looking at the big picture.
- It took a lot of time due to the Audubon Society.
- We came up with conditions and a plan that includes grading and vegetation control on the regraded tip of the island to mimic the conditions so the black skimmer would return.
- We took their comments seriously, we worked with them and other agencies and we eventually obtained the permits and authorizations. Audubon decided to oppose us, rather than work with us.

Mr. Koziar noted that:

- The chairman mentioned a precedent, but the county put significant dollars into erosion-control structures at Hideaway Beach, so as far as a precedent, the county has funded erosion-control structures just for Hideaway Beach. That was about 15 years ago and it was a

roughly \$6 million project, with the county contributing about \$3 million – and that was just for the benefit of Hideaway Beach.

- The county added erosion-control structures because the beach was defined as a Class-B Beach, because it didn't have public access and restrooms, so there is a precedent for this.

Mr. McCann noted that:

- When he lived in Pelican Bay, he chaired the Legal Committee and it was our understanding and acceptance that periodic dredging of Clam Pass would benefit us and the City of Naples, so we pushed for it. Boats could get in and out but couldn't before dredging.
- It appears using public funds for private benefit happens all the time, even if it's not intended as a consequence of governmental action.

Chairman Trecker said the question is whether we want to propagate that precedent.

Mr. Christman said he wasn't familiar with the geography or history and asked if this was initiated due to Hurricane Irma.

Chairman Trecker said no.

Mr. Dabees said that:

- That was a big part of it, but the project was planned before that. The picnic area was shoaling due to the system's deterioration, so they wanted to find a way to get kayaks from the kayak area to the lagoon. As of now, with this project, there is no dredging by the kayak area.
- The main impetus is they had a bigger problem than just the kayak launch. The system is degrading and if you allow it to continue to degrade, we saw what's happening. This spit is going to weld on, you're going to lose the mangrove shoreline and the area, instead of being a tidal lagoon, it would be a landlocked lagoon similar to what occurred on Estero Island.
- The project was initiated to protect the environment, the pristine coastal front administered by the state, rather than watch it from your balconies as it degrades during every storm.

Chairman Trecker noted that the project was initiated by the Hideaway Beach Taxing District.

Mr. Christman said the project originated as a project to improve and support Hideaway Beach and the lagoon in that area and was funded by the Hideaway Beach Tax District. Is that a private beach?

Mr. Dabees said that:

- The project is not on a private beach. All of the project, sand and benefit is on state lands and publicly accessed beaches from the south.
- You can only access Sand Dollar Island through the park, unless you want to get wet. You cannot access it from Hideaway.
- He spoke to many people who arrived there at dawn to catch the low tide. Many drove from Miami and left homes at 3 a.m. to observe a specific bird and take a picture from the lagoon. Many avid birders come to that spot, just like in Sanibel. It's almost a world-renowned spot.

Mr. Christman acknowledged that it was open to the public, depending on the means of access.

Mr. Dabees showed the Hideaway area on a PowerPoint slide and noted that:

- The neighboring lands, a preserve, are owned by the state, which monitors it.
- The state doesn't have programs to restore eroding beaches.

- If nothing was done, sand would move toward Hideaway Beach and build up until it's overwhelming. They cannot keep the entrance open and the middle part is collapsing, so it's going to end up with that scenario.
- Do we intervene now and try to sustain something we can preserve or wait until it becomes a coastal protection issue? That comes at the loss of all those other environmental and ecological benefits that no one is in charge of protecting.

A discussion ensued and the following points were made:

- The City of Marco Island initiated this application and is the project administrator.
- Additional funding is needed due to Hurricane Ian.
- The entire project area is in red on the PowerPoint slide.
- The project and its benefits are the same as pre-storm, but the costs increased afterward.

Mr. Dabees noted that:

- Hideaway Beach Taxing District proposed using its tax dollars to carry out this improvement for the entire area in red, but because of increased costs due to Hurricane Ian, the project's estimated cost grew from \$3.4 million to \$4 million.
- As soon as we reported that there was a bigger problem than Hideaway Beach, the Hideaway Beach Taxing District board directed us to come to the County Commission, the Marco Island City Council and the Coastal Zone.
- We spoke with all and the main point at that time was that this is critical-wildlife area and a preserve and there are many environmental issues, so you won't be able to get permits. Let nature take its course.
- It's not like we did not reach out to the county and waited two years. The Hideaway board was waiting. Friends of Tigertail came before this board more than once.
- As our projection and predictions materialized after each storm, the Hideaway Beach Taxing District came back and said we understand now that the county doesn't have funds or doesn't intend to do this, so can we do it in our own time because this is our neighbor and we don't want to be next to a landlocked area?
- Hideaway was a good citizen, a good example of a community working with its local government, taxing themselves to do something for the public good and then coming up short due to Hurricane Ian's impact, only to be told that they started this on their own. No good deed goes unpunished. That's the message he doesn't think we want to propagate.

Vice Chairman Burke noted that:

- Attorney Greene said we could do this if it's within our jurisdiction or care, custody and control to do it.
- It's not necessarily precedent-setting.
- From a presentation standpoint, whether it promotes tourism or by not doing it, it detracts from tourism so that's equally important.
- It doesn't necessarily have to be a net-benefit. By not doing it, it could be a net-negative and we need to consider that.
- If there is a water-quality argument, that is very important, especially with all the water-quality issues we've discussed over the past years and with Hurricane Ian, it's worse.
- It's important to get Andy's and other experts at the county from the engineering side to weigh in on this before we commit funding.

Chairman Trecker suggested they wait until the January meeting.

Mr. Dabees noted that:

- The water-quality issue was one of the elements the agencies focused on.
- We had to install a fixed water-quality and water-level monitor in the Tigertail Beach Park in the lagoon.
- They were more interested in the seagrasses in the park section of the lagoon, and that's part of our permit and authorization.
- The focus is how we can improve the agencies' understanding that this park is the dead-end and we need to improve it, so it's part of this program and our commitment moving forward.

Chairman Trecker thanked everyone for their input and comments and said he'd put this discussion in a coherent form before the January meeting so they could review it.

VI. Public Comments

Commissioner LoCastro reported that:

- He's not here to exert undue influence on this decision, but said he's been before the CAC multiple times and the county is very involved in this project.
- Water doesn't know where the county lines are drawn, storm surge doesn't know what's the county or Hideaway Beach or Marco Island.
- The positive effects of this project affect the county and the overall footprint of not only Hideaway Beach but Tigertail Beach Park.
- When you reach out to the county, you will find that county experts are involved and have been very involved in these discussions and are very supportive, even after talking with Brad from Audubon and other environmental groups that had concerns.
- You can't please everyone, but we're supportive of the overall approved project.
- The residual effects of what Hideaway is funding is massive for the county portion downwind.
- It's not asking too much to have the TDC consider if this would make its shortlist for funding.
- If it doesn't, his biggest concern is that this project be done right.
- If the TDC says it has limited funds, he hopes we won't make this project \$600,000 cheaper and cut corners only to be standing here two years from now, saying, "If only we'd done it right, it would have been a better project."
- He and the county have been very involved in this project. It's an investment and we've postponed it a lot. It's not just Hurricane Ian, we need to catch up environmentally to where we should have been 10 years ago.
- There's a reason why Tigertail Lagoon looks like a mud puddle. There are many things that should have been done years ago.
- What Hideaway Beach Taxing District is investing in is helping downstream in a significant way to make the county, the county park and Tigertail Lagoon much better.

Ally Delventhal, of the Friends of Tigertail board of directors, spoke on behalf of Linda Colombo, the president, who could not attend. She said:

- Linda explained the proposed lagoon restoration project at a previous meeting and it's now in progress and set to be completed prior to bird-nesting season.
- The Friends of Tigertail has been an active supporter of this project, and as early as September 2019, held an informational presentation for the public and stakeholders about the need to restore the area.

- The engineer, Dr. Dabees, has addressed the strategy and the Friends of Tigertail would like to provide insight about why it's necessary to restore the lagoon area, which is in front of the county's Tigertail Beach and park.
- The lagoon's health has been declining for many years and this project will promote healing.
- Tidal flow is restricted, choked off by the shallowing of the channel leading north to the river, resulting in the lagging of tidal flush by two to three hours. This can, and has, caused park closures several times, and also affected wildlife.
- Statistics show that in 2018, more than 170,000 people came to the area. Obviously it's more like 100,000 now.
- As Collier County's population grows, you can expect residents to want a nice clean area for recreation. This project will do that.
- It will improve visitors' and residents' use of their own watercraft and those available from the concession area.
- It will improve fishing for many fishermen who come to the area.
- It will improve the area for over 200,000 recorded bird species. Birders are a huge part of the tourist population and they come and spend money in the area, including at local hotels and restaurants.
- This will improve the area for crabs and other invertebrates that are at the lagoon and are necessary for bird life.
- It will increase water flow, which will improve the water quality for waders and wildlife.
- It will vastly improve manatees' ingress and egress into channels for feeding on seagrasses.
- The health of the wetlands will improve with better water flow.
- Visitors will come, but all the above will have an effect on whether they return to the area.
- The park brings in revenue and that is important to maintain for the county.
- Tigertail Beach Park and South Beach are the only two public beaches on Marco Island, so it is vital to improve the lagoon area.
- Children's playgrounds are a nice feature but people also want to use the park for other reasons.
- Tigertail Beach Park is a valuable asset to tourism and residents, so we need to keep the area healthy and attractive.

VII. Approval of CAC Minutes

November 10, 2022

Chairman Trecker said he had some corrections on page 7:

- Where it says, "In general, the scope of the project was reduced and we..." "We" should be replaced with "the Army Corps Planning Team."
- At the end of the second full paragraph, cross out "he" and insert "Chairman Trecker."
- And under announcements, where Chairman Trecker "congratulated Eric" on his re-election, it should be Erik with a K.

Mr. Koziar moved to approve the minutes of the November 10, 2022, meeting. Second by Mr. Raymond. The motion passed unanimously, 9-0.

VIII. Staff Reports

1. **Extended Revenue Report**

"FY22 TDT Collections Revenue Report" dated October 31, 2022.

Mr. Miller noted that surpluses are becoming common. We ended FY22 with the October numbers well over what we anticipated. We have a 59% overage from what was budgeted, so it's good news.

Chairman Trecker noted that it's still a very positive variance and that's encouraging.

IX. New Business

1. [ES – APTIM – Emergency Berm Design and Permitting](#)

Mr. Miller reported that:

- We went through a significant storm in September and have been assessing the damage and the quantities, especially quantities of erosional damage that occurred on beaches and dunes.
- We just received preliminary numbers from the engineer on Tuesday and have close to 550,000 cubic yards of dune losses, in addition to losses to the beach proper.
- What we want to do as an immediate mitigation before next year's hurricane season is start the Emergency Berm Project. It's a FEMA-eligible reimbursable project we'd like to do quickly, mainly because FEMA will reimburse us if we get it done in six months.
- Typically, FEMA will allow a six-month extension if you show good faith, so now that we have survey numbers, we need to start the design and get a construction project together as quickly as possible.
- We put this recommendation together based on a meeting yesterday with department leaders.

The recommendation is to approve an expenditure not to exceed an amount of \$250,000 for the design and permitting required for the construction of an emergency berm needed for the protection of open structures left vulnerable by Hurricane Ian in September 2022 and make a finding that this item promotes tourism.

Chairman Trecker said he'd like to discuss the multiple recovery stages, but we need to get the project under way. There's a limited window and the hope is that by getting it started and showing it was in place and under way, that will set the stage for an extension.

Mr. Miller said that's correct.

Mr. Brechnitz voted to approve and it was seconded by Mr. Burke.

A discussion ensued and the following points were made:

- \$250,000 covers design and permitting.
- There's a need for a half-million yards just for the berm.
- FEMA toured the beaches in early October, was impressed by all the damage and encouraged the county to apply.
- The county hopes the costs will be fully reimbursed.
- The timeline for construction will start once the project receives TDC approval and we hope the TDC can hold a special meeting before its regular January meeting.
- The county hopes to go to the BCC in early January, get this approved and get a design.
- The county plans to expedite this and have encouraged the designer to get staff ready.
- The design will take at least one to two months. Construction may follow immediately. The best-case scenario is February, or March and April, with possible construction in May.
- Eligible beaches are those with developed beachfront property, including Barefoot Beach. Even though we don't engineer that beach, because it has structures along the beach, it's eligible. We're going to go after every linear foot of county beaches that have damage, which is most of the county, and the structures behind them.

- All beaches with structures behind them, from the county line north to the tip of Marco Island, would be eligible.

Mr. Brechnitz moved to recommend approval of an expenditure not to exceed \$250,000 for the design and permitting required for the construction of an emergency berm needed for the protection of open structures left vulnerable by Hurricane Ian in September 2022 and found that this item promotes tourism. Second by Mr. Burke. The motion passed unanimously, 9-0.

Chairman Trecker said his understanding is that this will be done in three stages. The first is underway to make the beaches usable in a safe way by cleaning trash off and bulldozing in the depressions. Work that's underway at Vanderbilt will be continued elsewhere and requires no permitting and that's going on now. The emergency berm project, the second stage, is restoring the dunes, and the primary purpose is to provide protection to the buildings beyond it, which is likely to take all of next year.

Mr. Miller said that was all correct.

Chairman Trecker said and the final major restoration project, which will take a great deal of sand and probably last for two to three years will be done in phases. There are three stages and one is underway, another we've got to get underway shortly and another will be in the future.

Mr. Miller said that was correct.

Chairman Trecker asked if there were any questions.

Vice Chairman Burke asked if the existing elevation meant pre-storm or if there's flexibility to go up.

Mr. Miller said we have flexibility. That won't be reimbursed, but in general, the rule involves two criteria. One is the elevation required to protect against a five-year storm, plus runoff. Or the existing quantity of sand above the berm elevation, meaning that the quantity of sand that was in the dune that was lost, whichever is less. In our case, almost throughout the county, it's going to be what was there before, so the elevation is about 6.0 to 7.0, but the designer needs to complete the calculations.

Vice Chairman Burke asked if FEMA would pay for the crossovers.

Mr. Miller said not as part of this project.

Vice Chairman Burke asked if they'd pay for planting and re-establishing grass.

Mr. Miller said plantings would be eligible.

Mr. Roth asked if the county has a template of what it would look like. Is it a three on one and a flat top and then you're going to vegetate it? But it was vegetated, so it was probably steeper than we'll be able to construct now.

Mr. Miller said we're looking at a template like a 2-foot-high raised berm, maybe 15-20 feet of flat top and then six to ones or five to ones on either side of that back in front.

Mr. Roth thanked him, saying that helps him to visualize.

Mr. Miller said he revised his answer about whether it's 100% reimbursable by FEMA. He believes his discussions with FEMA were more like 90% reimbursement, but he'll get back to the CAC on that at the next meeting.

X. Old Business

Mr. Roth said the CAC Water Quality Subcommittee would be meeting in January before the full CAC meeting, so he'll be able to provide a report to the CAC.

XI. Announcements

None

XII. Committee Member Discussion

None

XIII. Next Meeting

January 12, 2023, 1 p.m.

XIV. Adjournment

There being no further business for the good of the County, the meeting was adjourned by order of the Chairman at 2:22 p.m.

Collier County Coastal Advisory Committee

David Trecker, Chairman

These minutes were approved by the Committee on _____, (check one) as presented, ___ or as amended _____.