

Town of North Topsail Beach

Daniel Tuman, Mayor
Suzanne Gray, Mayor Pro Tem
Aldermen:
Michael Yawn
Tom Leonard
Richard Macartney
Don Harte



Steven H. Foster
Town Manager
Carin Z. Faulkner, MPA
Town Clerk

August 2, 2012

Attention: Mr. Tim Romocki
North Carolina Local Government Commission
325 North Salisbury Street
Raleigh, NC 27603-1388

Regarding: Response by the Town to Letter of Concern by Mr. Robert Swantek – Channel Realignment Project

Dear Sirs,

Mr. Swantek concern as written:

I am Robert Swantek, former Alderman of North Topsail Beach. I am writing to beg you not to allow the current board to establish Special Obligation Bonds to pay for the beach nourishment project they purpose. For the four years that I was on the board I have fought to stop this enormous project with a lot of success. It took the current Mayor 6 years to manipulate the voting to gain a board who will follow his lead for beach nourishment. the citizens of North Topsail Beach in 2006 voted down this project and again in 2011 a survey of not only the residents but all property owners voted not to proceed because they did not want the burden of paying. There is approximately 20% of the town which this will affect with 100% paying for it, those numbers do not compute to good management to drain all the town's funds for only 20%. I implore you not to consider Special bonds to fund this project, but if you must do something let the citizens decide by voting on General Obligation Bonds. Thank you for your time and hope you see my point.

The Town's reply is:

The Town has planned beach projects for the entire Town and not a small portion of the town as Mr. Swantek alleges. The Town of North Topsail Beach does not share Mr. Swantek's concern that the Project does not have public support. These same concerns were addressed in the Town's response to the LGC dated July 30, 2012 regarding the letter by Mr. Michael Yawn dated July 16, 2012.

This program was developed over a period of more than three years with significant public input. The project calls for placement of sand dredged from New River Inlet and offshore sand banks and placed along all eleven miles of shoreline in the community. As it is physically impossible to restore all eleven miles of shoreline in a single project construction season and to allow the Town to better manage the long-term project costs, the project is divided into phases designated 1 through 5, with Phase 5 projected to be undertaken by the US Army Corps of Engineers as a federal project segment. The plan calls for periodic renourishment of each section over time resulting in a comprehensive, long-term beach erosion management protocol for the community.

In preparation for the project, the Town has been setting aside funds dedicated to paying for the Phase 1 project, which is expected to begin this year. The funds set aside are a combination of ad valorem taxes (1 cent per \$100 assessed value) plus occupancy taxes collected within the town. These revenue sources are commonly used in North Carolina to finance beach restoration efforts. The Town has, consistent with its discretion and authority, elected to pursue a community-wide funding strategy, one that reflects the fundamental fact that the beach is a community asset critical to all property owners and residents of the community. Funds saved to date will, as expected, be used to undertake Phase I and subsequent collections of ad valorem and occupancy taxes will be dedicated to sustaining the entire beach over time. A wide beach is an asset to the entire community and the funding strategy reflects this important understanding.

Consistent with state and federal guidelines, the Town is currently developing a comprehensive long-term funding strategy for all beach restoration phases and the on-going maintenance of the beach. With substantial public input, this plan will be completed by the end of 2012 and will be brought before the Board of Alderman for action. The Town is fortunate to have saved funds and to be in a position to undertake Phase I while the long-term financing plan is being developed.

Dan Tuman, Mayor

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dan Tuman', written over a faint, illegible printed name.

North Topsail Beach

Cc: Board of Aldermen