

# TOWN OF PALM BEACH

Office of the Town Clerk

## REPORT OF THE SHORE PROTECTION BOARD MEETING HELD ON MAY 23, 1996

### **I. CALL TO ORDER**

The Shore Protection Board Meeting was called to order by George M. Moffett, II, Vice Chairman, on Thursday, May 23, 1996, at 2:00 p.m. in the Town Hall Council Chambers.

### **II. ROLL CALL**

On roll call the following Shore Protection Board Members were found to be in attendance: Vice Chairman George Moffett, II, Board Member Eileen C. Curran, Board Member Wayne Dimm, Board Member Charles Isiminger, Board Member Joel Martino, and Board Member Richard Raffo. Absent were Board Chairman Garrison Lickle, Board Member Edward Hennessy, Jr., and Board Member Gerald H. Levy. Also in attendance were Town Councilman Sam McLendon, Town Manager Robert Doney, Assistant Town Manager Peter Elwell, Director of Public Works Al Dusey, and Town Clerk Secretary Jackie Reedy.

### **II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

The following changes were made to the Agenda:

Add item VII.a. - Deerfield Beach Beach Erosion Material.

Add item VII.b. - Resignation of Shore Protection Board Member Judy Schrafft.

Add item VII.c. - Summer Schedule of Shore Protection Board Members.

The agenda was unanimously approved by all Shore Protection Board Members present.

### **IV. PRESENTATION BY DR. CHARLES W. FINKL, PROFESSOR OF MARINE GEOLOGY, FLORIDA ATLANTIC UNIVERSITY**

Dr. Finkl addressed the Shore Protection Board, pointing out some of the main problems

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concerning coastal protection such as beach erosion, different types of engineering structures, loss of coastal lands, running out of sand for beach renourishment, and public policy. He commented that the reason for beach erosion was largely attributed to the rise in sea level, with most people believing that as sea level rises the coastal erosion problem would become worse. He suggested that there were some problems with the sea level rise scenario: The term "eustatic rise" implied causes of sea level change, with the most common cause being the growth and shrinkage of glaciers (which would be termed glacioeustatic rise or fall of sea level). Dr Finkl suggested that in order to make some intelligent solutions on the protection of the shore, there must be some idea regarding the cause of erosion.

Dr. Finkl explained that on the southeast coast of Florida the land mass was very stable, with the concern being whether water was rising in an absolute sense or not. The relative rise in southeast Florida would be the absolute rise in sea level. The rate of sea level rise in southeast Florida was between 1-4 mm. per year. Studies of stable volcanic islands proved that the rate of sea level rise was 0.00 mm. Per year over the last 50 years; in other words sea level had not risen at all--thus, other mechanisms could be involved in the erosion of beaches.

Commenting on the unique environmental qualities of Palm Beach, Dr. Finkl noted that there was a very narrow continental shelf close proximity to the largest, most powerful ocean current in the world (the Gulfstream), close off-shore reefs, coastal cliffs, sand on the beaches was largely comprised of silica, and there was a thin wedge of sand actually on the beach with underlying rock. He noted that when the flow of sand was interrupted with jetties, for example, erosion problems could occur along the coast. Ground water tables were another important factor related to erosion of the beach.

Dr. Finkl remarked that the Town of Palm Beach had approached beach erosion in a progressive manner, advising that he often cited the groins in Palm Beach County as one of the best examples of a good, successful use of groins, even though their use had limitations. The main objection was that groins had to stop somewhere, and areas downdrift from the groin field would suffer the effects of erosion.

Recognizing that people involved in the beach erosion problem hold different points of view, Dr. Finkl suggested that a realistic approach must be taken. The public must be given statistical information as to the life of renourished beaches, as well as criteria for success in meeting goals. Integrated coastal zone management was a further recommendation of Dr. Finkl, including improved sand management, more near and off shore resource surveys, better by-passing systems, and smaller, more frequent renourishment. Dr. Finkl offered to answer any questions.

Mr. Martino asked Dr. Finkl his opinion of the importance of the by-passing operation of the Lake Worth Inlet Sand Transfer Plant to the maintenance of the beaches?

Dr. Finkl responded that the transfer of sand around the inlet was absolutely essential, and the

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more sand that could be by-passed around the inlet, the healthier the shore would be. He added that in an integrated coastal management plan, renourishment, hot-spot control, and by-passing would all operate together.

Mr. Martino asked if it would be advantageous to operate the Sand Transfer Plant as much as possible, stockpiling sand all year round?

Dr. Finkl responded affirmatively, noting that further studies would have to be made in order to measure erosion over a long period of time, with the gross transport being more important than the net transport.

Mrs. Curran asked if the location of the Great Bahama and Little Bahama Banks, east of the Florida coast, exacerbated the problem in southeast Florida?

Dr. Finkl replied that it actually would help, as the coast was therefore not a true open coast and was in the wave shadow.

Mrs. Curran responded that she understood that the waves went out to sea, but did not return the sand.

Dr. Finkl explained that the reason the sand would not come back was because of the reefs. Once the sand moved offshore and past the second reef, it would be gone forever, as it could not get back over the reef.

Mr. Moffett referred to a paper written by Dr. Finkl, "Preemptive Strategies for Enhanced Sand By-Passage", and asked about the data bank mentioned, and how lacking the Town of Palm Beach was in numbers?

Dr. Finkl responded that it may be a good idea to contact the sister city of Palm Beach, in Queensland, where an engineer by the name of Sam Smith was in charge of shore protection. Data had been collected there for about 20 years, and it was the claim of Mr. Smith that, because of the data, a much better job could be done regarding beach renourishment and shore protection. Dr. Finkl pointed out that it must be understood *why* erosion was happening, working with nature, not against nature.

Mrs. Curran asked if any studies had been done about the relationship of the depth of an inlet to the degree of erosion?

Dr. Finkl replied that the deeper and wider the inlet, the greater the erosion downdrift. Most natural Florida inlets on the east coast were only 3-5' deep, and now Port Everglades was 48', and virtually nothing by-passes. That was the reason the by-passing plants were so needed.

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Mr. Isiminger asked if there was a certain depth at which sand could move back on shore?

Dr. Finkl replied that the dept of closure would vary depending on the configuration of the shoreline--if there were no reefs, it could be as much as 60', however, with the reefs the depth of closure would get shallower.

Mr. Dimm asked how serious the effect of the current mid-town renourishment and the possible future plans for groins was on the natural reefs?

Dr. Finkl responded that he had not seen any damage that the groins had caused to reefs. The whole purpose of a groin was to collect sand on the updrift side, and if installed properly, the sand should not be adversely affected. The only problem with groins was where they end--erosion occurred downdrift from that.

Mr. Dimm asked if the groin problem could be solved by going from inlet to inlet?

Dr. Finkl replied that would partly solve the problem, however, there would have to be insurance that sand was by-passed past the last groin on a groin field.

Mrs. Curran asked if there was a formula for the horsepower that should be included in a Sand Transfer Plant related to the depth of the inlet?

Dr. Finkl responded that it wold depend on the area where the sand was collected; usually the amount of sand collected would depend on the boom link and the time spent operating.

Mr. Raffo asked Dr. Finkl how he would solve the erosion problems in Palm Beach?

Dr. Finkl replied that once the Sand Transfer Plant was going, it would be a good start to solving the problem, but he had not looked at everything in detail.

Mr. Raffo asked Dr. Finkl if he was familiar with the permitting process?

Dr. Finkl replied negatively.

Mr. Moffett asked about testing of aragonite?

Dr. Finkl responded that it may work. There was a test site on Fisher Island, which was a success. Broward County was talking about getting a million cubic yard full scale test of aragonite, however, the Bahamians would not sell it to the, because of the tourist trade.

Mr. Raffo pointed out the Port of Palm Beach was getting bigger and trying to induce large cruise ships to come into the area, which he believed would impact the beaches. There would be

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more traffic, and less sand being by-passed.

Mr. Moffett stated that if the inlet was deepened, increasing the economy for the Port of Palm Beach, it seemed that there would be some generation of repayment for the new sand that would not get to the beaches.

Dr. Finkl stated that he believed the federal government should pay for damages at federally maintained inlets.

Mr. Elwell commented that there were talks being conducted between the Town of Palm Beach, the County, and the Port of Palm Beach that had shown promise that the Port of Pal Beach was ready to participate in the management of Lake Worth Inlet.

Mr. Martino asked if anyone had thought of the possibility of actually charging the Port of Palm Beach to put a few hundred thousand cubic yards of sand on the beaches, if the inlet was deepened?

Dr. Finkl stated that the Hillsborough Inlet District had received tremendous PR from their by-passing efforts.

Mr. Bresee addressed the Shore Protection Board, asking if sand would be going over the reefs, as there was an 800,000 cubic yard hole in the face of the north beach, with the shallowest water being 25'. In addition, Mr. Bresee questioned the digestion of the sand output from the Sand Transfer Plant--if there were southeast waves, the sand would be pushed up to the corner; if there were northeast waves they would be defracted and would push it up to the corner.

Dr. Finkl responded that the depth of closure was defined as the seaward-most depth that sand was moved offshore in one direction. The depth of closure would vary, depending on the location. Talking about depth of closure along the shore where there were reefs would not really make sense, because the reefs would interrupt the flow.

Regarding the digestion of the sand, Dr. Finkl stated that the southeast waves would tend to push the sand up in the corner; the northeast waves would be defracted, but would set up an eddy, and that would cause erosion on the downdrift side, so when the winds were from the northeast there was the defraction, then the eddy, then the sand was eroded away. Normally, during the summertime, the sand would accumulate more than it would in the wintertime.

Mr. Bresee said that he was concerned with getting the material to move south, and asked if the eddy would do it?

Dr. Finkl responded negatively--usually the eddy would move sand offshore. One way around that would be to put the pipe further south.

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Mr. Louis Pryor, 227 Brazilian Ave., addressed the Shore Protection Board, stating that it was generally concluded by people who had done long term studies of the shore line of the Town of Palm Beach that in the last 70 years 11-12 million cubic yards of sand had been lost. The cost of replacing all of that sand would be \$6-7 per cubic yard, and aerial photographs showed that the shoreline was so eroded that a big storm would be disastrous. He asked how much sand was necessary to replace what had been lost?

Dr. Finkl explained that frequent renourishments may be more appropriate, perhaps on an annual basis, or attacking the hot spots in order to avoid the tremendous expense of the very large renourishments.

Mr. McLendon commented that he was hearing references to groins, and reminded all that the Mid-Town beach project had included 11 groins. He noted that he had initially wondered why fill-in had to be done above the top of the groins, and had learned that the purpose was that the groins would stay filled after the beach assumed its more natural angle.

Mr. Martino asked for a definition of hot spots?

Dr. Finkl replied that hot spots were usually defined where the erosion rate was at least twice the background of historical levels. Broward County had about three hot spots, which were always in the same place. The one south of Port Everglades was about one-half block long. The problem was that once they started, they tended to spread and cause more erosion downdrift, so the idea was to try and control the hot spots by dumping coarser grain sand there.

Mr. Moffett commented on the environmental impact of beach renourishment, referring again to the Finkl paper wherein it was stated "no obvious renourishment associated damage or pattern of ecological degradation was found in investigating the offshore reefs a John Lloyd State Park," asking if that comment could be applied to the situation in Palm Beach.

Dr. Finkl responded that if the dredging was done properly the environmental impact was of minor concern.

Mr. Moffett thanked Dr. Finkl for his appearance.

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*(The following items were discussed out of order and were to be included under VII. ANY OTHER MATTERS, Items a., b., c.):*

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### **a. Deerfield Beach Beach Erosion Material**

Mrs. Curran submitted a copy of the excerpt from the City of Deerfield Beach Engineering Department Manual, discussing the analysis of the erosion problem, along with the plan of improvement. She enclosed a copy of the application for the Corps of Engineer's permit, because location specifics of the groin project were given. Included also was a copy of the Bureau of Beaches and Shores Tallahassee Meeting Report from October, 1976, relating to the groin project. There was a copy of the chronological history of beach erosion control in the City of Deerfield Beach from 1970-1983. There was also a copy of the plan for complete construction of boulder mounds at the City of Deerfield Beach, and a copy of beach erosion control financial data from 1961-1974, and engineering charts. She offered the material as background for the study being undertaken.

### **b. Resignation of Shore Protection Board Member Judy Schrafft**

Mr. Moffett commented that he was disturbed that Mrs. Judy Schrafft had chosen to resign from the Shore Protection Board, as she was a great environmentalist. He proposed that Gary Lickle or he communicate with the President of the Town Council, asking for Council direction regarding another individual being appointed to the Shore Protection Board.

Mr. Martino suggested that Mrs. Schrafft provide evidence in detail, and more explanation concerning her environmental concerns.

Mr. McLendon stated that he would not have expected that the ten members of the Shore Protection Board would have agreed 100% on everything, and was very disappointed to see Mrs. Schrafft resign.

Mr. Louis Pryor addressed the Board, stating that he had attended most of the meetings, and had sensed that there was an attempt to find a balanced approach to beach erosion, with a great deal of regard for environmental impacts.

Mr. Dimm made a motion that the Board approve the proposal for Town Council direction regarding the resignation of Mrs. Schrafft and the appointment of another individual to the Shore Protection Board. Mr. Martino seconded the motion. On roll call, the motion passed 4/1 with Mr. Raffo casting a negative vote.

### **c. Summer Schedule of Shore Protection Board Members**

*(This item was addressed under Item V.)*

## **V. CONSIDERATION AND DISCUSSION OF SHORE PROTECTION BOARD'S**

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### **DRAFT FINAL REPORT, WITH RECOMMENDATIONS**

Mr. Elwell stated that a revised date had not yet been confirmed with Mr. Kirby Green, Deputy Secretary, Department of Environmental Protection, as the meeting had been canceled two weeks ago. Mr. Elwell expressed that it was important to hear from Mr. Green personally, and asked that board members be flexible with schedules; Mr. Green had been notified of scheduled meeting dates and had been asked to advise alternate dates of when he may be able to address the Board. Mr. Green would be qualified to speak about both the regulatory and funding points of view.

Mr. Elwell addressed the issue of the Sunshine Law, as it related directly to discussions today concerning preparation of the Shore Protection Board Report to submit to the Town Council. He explained that various methods had been discussed about how to prepare the report, and clearly the responsible method was for everyone to have as much input as possible. The question of whether that input needed to occur at a public meeting or whether there could be an exchange of written correspondence was something that had been brought to the table last month, and had been discussed with the Town Attorney. It was clear, under Florida Sunshine Law, that it would not be possible to exchange written correspondence among members, as it would violate the Sunshine Law. Mr. Elwell suggested that a person or persons be designated to write the report, with staff ultimately putting the package together as a draft report. This draft report would be distributed for each member of the board to consider, but not discuss, prior to a public meeting. The actual deliberations regarding the draft report must occur at a public meeting.

Mr. Dimm asked why each member could not fill out a form with his proposal for the report, turning all forms in to Mr. Elwell, with Mr. Elwell distributing all proposals at the next meeting, where discussion would then take place?

Mr. Elwell replied that could be done, however, the actual discussion and refinement must be done at a public meeting. A consolidation of the proposals, based on nine written opinion, could not be done other than in a public meeting.

Mr. Moffett suggested that it may be best to nominate individuals to do parts of the form.

Mr. Dimm suggested that each member fill out the form, and turn it in for discussion and consolidation at a future meeting.

Mr. Martino suggested a simple question and answer format be used to give opinions.

Mr. Dimm recommended that all nine paragraphs should be answered as concisely as possible.

Mr. Isiminger recommended a simple yes/no format, using those answers as a framework.

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Mr. Martino agreed with his recommendation.

Mr. Dimm suggested that a copy of Mr. Raffo's report be distributed to each member at the present meeting, which would then be discussed.

Mr. Doney stated that the discussion would entail a review of how Mr. Raffo had completed the questionnaire, and from there members could determine individual opinions. Mr. Doney explained that each member would then complete the same type of form that Mr. Raffo had completed, and then an exchange could take place at the next meeting.

Mr. Elwell stated that assimilating the nine opinions into one opinion was the process that had to happen publicly. Once a resolution on all of the points was arrived at, that would become the outline for the person who would then write the report.

Mrs. Curran pointed out that at the last meeting discussion had been held indicating that there had not been an opportunity to exchange views on items proposed by Mr. Lickle. She suggested that if all members had a chance to see the responses of Mr. Raffo, perhaps that would generate discussion.

Mr. Raffo commented that he thought the word "opinion" was not a good word to use, since opinions were not being given, but knowledge of experts was being relied upon.

A copy of the questionnaire filled out by Mr. Raffo was distributed to each of the Board members.

Mr. Raffo explained that he was suggesting the appointment of a full-time Shore Protection Director; the implementation of the Plan of Strategic Placement Shoreline Stabilization Structures similar to Deerfield Beach; declaring a state of emergency to acquire permits unconditionally to protect the island, and dredging no less than 150,000 cubic yards of sand. Mr. Raffo recommended Tom Campbell of Coastal Planning & Engineering, as a full-time Shore Protection Director, who had the local knowledge of Palm Beach, and the experience to develop the shoreline structures. He concluded that the Port of Palm Beach and the Town must work together to dredge the Inlet. He stated that the legal action (eminent domain) was a waste of time and money. He stated that the Mid-Town beach project was working.

Mr. Dimm stated that Mr. Raffo did a great job in making his recommendations concise, and suggested that everyone keep it down to two or three pages.

Mr. Elwell explained that after the nine opinions had been gathered, and a draft report made, the Board would need to review the report again at a public meeting. He suggested that the Board set a deadline for a meeting to discuss the nine viewpoints, so that an outline could be made to create a draft report.

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Mr. Doney pointed out that the Resolution creating the Shore Protection Board called for completion of the report in one year, and suggested that if the report was finalized at the October Shore Protection Board Meeting, then it could be advanced to the Town Council at the November Town Council Meeting.

Mr. Elwell noted that the back-up materials for Town Council Meetings needed to be in about a week before the meeting, so the target date for submission of the final report would be approximately November 1, 1996.

Mr. Moffett suggested that the educational meetings would be finished by the middle of July.

Mr. Doney said it was hopeful that Kirby Green could make a presentation at the June 13, 1996, Shore Protection Meeting, and the Shore Protection Board July, August, and September meetings would be for refinement and exchange of individual written responses, with a draft report culminating from those meetings.

Mr. Moffett asked if the Chairman would read the opinion of any board members not present?

Mr. Doney replied that a consensus would have to be arrived at among the members, with votes being called for.

Mr. Dimm asked if voting could take place at the September meeting, allowing discussion to take place at the July and August meetings?

Mr. Elwell replied that the later votes were taken and decisions made as a group, the harder it would be to turn that into a report in time to meet the deadline. He suggested that consideration be given to point by point discussion, rather than a presentation by each member, in an effort to expedite the final report.

Mr. Doney said that for the July meeting, it would be helpful to set a deadline for June 30, 1996, to submit the written materials to the Town Manager's office; these materials would be copied in entirety and redistributed to all members within a few days. There would be time for all members to review the materials by the July 11, 1996, meeting.

Mr. Raffo asked if Kirby Green was being asked to speak regarding finances, or the permitting?

Mr. Elwell replied that he would be speaking to both.

Mr. Doney stated that if the Shore Protection Board could have their written reports in the Town Manager's office by June 27, they could be re-distributed to each member of the Board, leaving another week for the Board to consider them.

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Mr. Elwell commented that if Mr. Green could not appear on June 13, and gave alternate dates, all members would be contacted by phone in order to set up a meeting early enough in June so that the Shore Protection Board could adhere to the proposed schedule. He noted that a complete first draft should probably be reviewed by September 12, because it would be reasonable to anticipate that there would be some changes required.

Mr. Moffett said that if the proposals were in by June 27, considered and discussed in July, with a written outline for a report presented and discussed in August, the first draft could be prepared by September.

Mr. Elwell agreed that schedule would work, because the final revisions could be made publicly, with the changes being incorporated for a final document to approve at the October meeting. Mr. Elwell suggested that this time schedule should be adhered to in order to accomplish the task.

Mr. Dusey addressed the Board, stating that the Corps of Engineers had received permission to extend the deadline for dredging from May 15 to June 1, so that they could hopefully get the full amount of 175,000 cubic yards of sand on the beach. The Sand Transfer Plant had been running very effectively for several weeks. Normally, a large amount of sand was not pumped in the summertime, as wave action was needed to bring the sand through the Plant. There had been 26,000 cubic yards pumped thus far. The State Legislature had included a State share for the Inlet Management Plan implementation of about \$500,000, which needed to be signed by the Governor in order to become effective.

Mr. Martino asked the capacity of the Sand Transfer Plant?

Mr. Dusey replied that the problem had always been getting the sand to the Plant. If the sand was available to the Plant, large amounts could be pumped. He noted that the Inlet Management Plan included provisions to help get more sand to the Plant, but even with that, the Inlet Management Plan was anticipating an average transfer of about 100,000 cubic yards per year. The rest was supposed to be made up by the Corps of Engineer dredging.

Mr. Martino asked if the Inlet Management Plan was part of the whole coastal plan?

Mr. Dusey responded that the Inlet Management Plan was a supplement to the Comprehensive Coastal Management Plan; it was in greater detail as to what to do at the Inlet to make things work.

Mr. Martino commented that any big decisions regarding the Inlet Management Plan would not be arrived at for quite a while.

Mr. Dusey explained that the State would probably move very quickly in finalizing the Plan. A key player was the Corps of Engineers, who now had a copy of the Plan and were reviewing it.

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They would be meeting with the Town in the very near future to discuss implementation and participation.

Mr. Martino said that the Sand Transfer Plant was a key and critical part of any recommendation made by the Shore Protection Board, and expectations from it would have to be known.

Mr. Dusey stated that the Inlet Management Plan was estimating about 100,000 cubic yards per year, so that figure would be used in planning.

Mr. Raffo asked Mr. Dusey if there was any way to obtain a relay pump in order to get the sand in a southerly direction.

Mr. Dusey replied that the sand would not move south this time of year.

Mr. Raffo explained that it was not a question of moving, but getting the sand down there.

Mr. Dusey advised that involvement with the near shore reefs in that area would prohibit much being done in the south. The Inlet Management Plan suggested that most of the sand be put approximately at Reef Road, so that it would get into the system sooner, and move south. There would be discharge pipes very close to the south jetty, and also about 1,000 feet south of the south jetty, so that problems occurring there could be taken care of.

Mr. Raffo asked if anything could be done about a longer arm?

Mr. Dusey said that was possible; the Palm Beach Shores had a great interest in what was being done, so anything proposed there had to be handled carefully. The plans were not final yet.

Mr. Martino asked if it was possible to place sand on the beach from the roadway with the use of a crane?

Mr. Dusey replied that sand could be trucked in, with about 20 cubic yards per truck load. Normally, thousands of yards would be added in order to see any benefit. He also noted that the sand from Reef Road north would move south very quickly as soon as the northeast waves started coming in.

Mr. Raffo asked how much sand had been lost in the Mid-Town beach area?

Mr. Dusey responded that information was not yet available. He added that the beach was performing very well, and he was very happy with what was happening.

Mr. Bresee addressed the Board, stating that the people who were dredging the Inlet had

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dumped sand in deep water. If sand was put in the inlet, no one knew where it was going--it could go to a place where dredging was not done. He advised that this information should be put out to the public, and he hoped that people having the attitude that it is not important if sand went into the Inlet because the Corps of Engineers would pull it out and dumped it on the beach. Would rethink their position. He emphasized that the problems at the north and south jetties should be attacked.

Mr. Bresee suggested that each member of the Board walk north on the beach after the Reef Road area to see what the Corps of Engineers had done. A famous geologist had made the statement that the problem with the Corps was that they never looked back. He advised that yesterday he noticed a fairly large sized berm on top of the sluice zone, which was predicted; garbage was going over the top of it, which would be held in the area between that berm and the dunes until it rotted. As the Berm got bigger, waves would top it, and any turtle nests in the area would be destroyed. A rip tide would come out through the berm, which could be disastrous, as a child could be swept out to sea from any place along the dunes. He asked that each member of the Board look at the area every 3-4 weeks and watch the script unfold.

### **VI. CONFIRMATION OF DATE & TIME FOR THE NEXT MEETING (June 13, 1996, at 2:00 p.m.) AND THE SCHEDULE OF FUTURE MEETINGS OF THE SHORE PROTECTION BOARD**

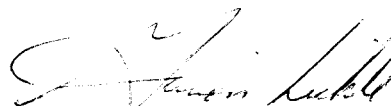
*(Discussion of this item took place under Item V.)*

### **VII. ANY OTHER MATTERS**

*(Items a., b., and c. were heard under Item V.)*

### **VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 5:15 p.m.



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Garrison D. Lickle, Chairman