

Emerald Tidings / Island Review – December 22, 2004 Print Edition

Bogue Inlet Channel / Western Phase Beach Nourishment Project Set to Begin Construction in Early January

The Board of Commissioners has awarded a contract to Weeks Marine, Inc. to complete the Bogue Inlet Channel / Western Phase Beach Nourishment Project. The total contact cost is \$9.8 million, and is funded with \$6 million from the Town of Emerald Isle (bond proceeds and special district tax revenues) and a \$3.8 million grant from the NC Department of Environment and Natural Resources (NCDENR).

The Town was fortunate to be awarded a Water Resources Development Grant from NCDENR, and is very appreciative of this financial assistance for this important project. The Water Resources Development Grant program has been in place for several years, and is specifically earmarked to assist NC communities with beach nourishment, navigation, and other water resources projects. The Town extends its sincere appreciation to Representative Jean Preston, Senator Scott Thomas, Secretary Ross, Deputy Secretary Dempsey Benton, Water Resources Director John Morris, and Water Projects Section Chief John Sutherland for their assistance with this grant award.

The project will involve the dredging of a new main channel in Bogue Inlet approximately 3,500 feet west of the existing main channel. The new channel will be located equidistant between Emerald Isle and Bear Island, and will involve the removal of approximately 1 million cubic yards of material. A minimum of 710,000 cubic yards of this material will be used to nourish approximately 4 miles of ocean in western and central Emerald Isle, and the remaining material will be used to construct a closure dike across the existing main channel.

Weeks Marine expects to begin delivery of land-based equipment in mid/late December, with actual dredging beginning on or around January 7. Work is expected to be completed by the end of February. The Town's permits for this project stipulate that all work must be completed by March 31.

Construction Contract Awarded for Coast Guard Road Storm Water Project

The Board of Commissioners has awarded a construction contract to Thomas Simpson Construction Company, Inc., for Phase I of the Coast Guard Road Storm Water Project. The total construction cost for Phase I is \$500,000, and is being funded with "pay-as-you-go" revenues in the FY 04-05 Town budget.

This project involves the installation of drainage improvements on Fawn Drive, the construction of a new retention pond on Deer Horn Drive, the installation of fixed pumps on Deer Horn Drive and Conch Court, and associated piping to convey storm water from these neighborhoods to the Emerald Isle Woods site on the north side of Coast Guard Road. Site work at the Emerald Isle Woods site and the Deer Horn Drive pond site is expected to begin in late December, and actual construction of the improvements will begin in January. The project is expected to be completed by Easter weekend.

Residents and property owners in the Deer Horn Dunes and Sea Dunes subdivisions should expect some minor inconveniences associated with construction of the project. Town staff will be carefully coordinating this work to insure that any inconveniences are minor and short-lived. Your patience during the construction phase is greatly appreciated. The completion of this project is expected to significantly reduce storm water flooding in these areas, which have been plagued by chronic storm water problems for several years. The Town is pleased to finally move forward with a solution to these problems.

Board of Commissioners Approves Revised AICUZ Disclosure Statements

At its October regular meeting, the Board of Commissioners adopted an ordinance creating the Bogue Field AICUZ Overlay District. The new ordinance includes mechanisms to make current owners and potential buyers of properties in

the flight path of Bogue Field flight operations aware of the impacts of Bogue Field.

There were concerns expressed by the public about the language in the original Disclosure Forms presented in October, and the Board of Commissioners concurred that the suggested language was somewhat misleading. The Board requested that Town staff revise the language in the Disclosure Forms, and the Board approved new language at their November meeting. The Board of Commissioners believes the revised language in the new Disclosure Forms is more appropriate to promote awareness of the impacts of Bogue Field on Emerald Isle.

The language included in the Disclosure Forms is presented below:

"The property at the following location, _____ , is situated within the
The Town of Emerald Isle wants you to be aware that this property is located wi
Before purchasing or leasing (or improving) the above property, you may wish to

Disclosure forms are available at the Town's Planning and Inspections Department for use when selling property within the AICUZ district, and the Town encourages the public to make use of these forms. Disclosure forms will also be utilized by the Town when a property owner seeks a building permit, and as part of the land subdivision and multi-family residential approval process. The Town has also prepared a Fact Sheet about Bogue Field to explain the impacts associated with flight operations at Bogue Field.

Please contact the Planning and Inspections Department at 252-354-3338 for more information.

Should the Mayor of Emerald Isle Serve a 2-Year Term or a 4-Year Term?

The Mayor of Emerald Isle is elected every 2 years to serve a 2-year term. Of the 5-member Board of Commissioners, 4 of the members will now serve 4-year terms, while the 5th member will serve a 2-year term. The Board of Commissioners is considering amending the Town's Charter to also make the Mayor's term a 4-year term, and wants the input of our residents and property owners before a decision is made on this matter.

Under NC General Statutes, the Board of Commissioners has the authority to make this decision on its own, or may decide to put this issue before the voters of Emerald Isle as a special referendum. If the Mayor's term is changed from a 2-year term to a 4-year term, this change would not be effective until either the 2005 or 2007 election for Mayor. Depending on the timing of this change, the winner of the 2005 or 2007 election for Mayor would be the first to serve a 4-year term.

As of 2002 (the last year for which data is available), there are 541 municipalities in North Carolina. A total of 333 municipalities utilize a 2-year term for the Mayor, and a total of 192 municipalities utilize a 4-year term for the Mayor. A total of 16 municipalities have alternative arrangements for the Mayor's term. Of the 83 municipalities in Emerald Isle's population range (2,500 – 5,000 permanent population), a total of 39 utilize a 2-year term, and 39 utilize a 4-year term. The remaining 5 have alternative arrangements.

Please visit www.emeraldisle-nc.org to send an email with your opinions on this issue to the Mayor, Board of Commissioners, and Town Manager. Please be sure to include your name and Emerald Isle address, as we will be verifying that comments are from Emerald Isle residents and property owners only. The Town will accept input on this issue until January 31, 2005, and the Board will consider this issue after that time.

General Fund Property Tax Rates – NC Beach Towns

Emerald Isle enjoys the 5th lowest General Fund property tax rate of the 21 incorporated towns along the NC oceanfront!

**General Fund Tax Rate Comparison
North Carolina Beach Communities
FY 2004-2005**

Rank	Municipality	Tax Rate
1	Indian Beach	\$ 0.090
2	Sunset Beach	\$ 0.130
3	Wrightsville Beach	\$ 0.143
4	Ocean Isle Beach	\$ 0.150
5	Emerald Isle	\$ 0.165
6	Holden Beach	\$ 0.180
7	Pine Knoll Shores	\$ 0.180
8	Southern Shores	\$ 0.200
9	Duck	\$ 0.200
10	Caswell Beach	\$ 0.220
11	Atlantic Beach	\$ 0.230
12	Kure Beach	\$ 0.295
13	Topsail Beach	\$ 0.310
14	Surf City	\$ 0.350
15	Oak Island	\$ 0.350
16	Nags Head	\$ 0.373
17	Kitty Hawk	\$ 0.380
18	Carolina Beach	\$ 0.385
19	Kill Devil Hills	\$ 0.425
20	North Topsail Beach	\$ 0.450
21	Bald Head Island	\$ 0.465

Town's Bond Ratings Upgraded

The Town was recently assigned upgraded bond ratings from Moody's Investors Services and Standard & Poor's. Moody's assigned a one-step upgrade from an A3 rating to an A2. Standard & Poor's assigned a two-step upgrade from an A- to an A+. Moody's and Standard & Poor's cited the Town's continuing desirability as a tourism and retirement destination, growth in the property tax base, low debt levels, consistently strong overall financial position, and sound financial management practices as the main factors contributing to the ratings upgrades.

The ratings upgrades increase the likelihood that the Town will secure the lowest possible interest rate for the soon-to-be-issued General Obligation bonds for the Bogue Inlet / Western Beach Nourishment project, and also reflect an objective, third-party assessment of the Town's financial and economic condition. The Town is very pleased to secure these upgraded bond ratings.

Employee Spotlight – Bruce Norman, Fire Captain

The Town of Emerald Isle is very proud (and rightfully so!) of its experienced, professional, and well-trained Fire Department. Our spotlight this month falls upon Bruce Norman, currently serving as a Captain in the Emerald Isle Fire Department. Bruce served as a volunteer firefighter for about a year before coming aboard as full-time firefighter for the Town of Emerald Isle 14 years ago.

In addition to the regular duties of Fire Department Captain, Bruce also heads up the public education programs for the Emerald Isle Fire Department. One of the most important educational services provided is the special program designed for kindergarten students during Fire Prevention Week each year. This program was started a few years ago initially serving the kindergarten students of White Oak Elementary, and has quickly grown by word of mouth, into a much larger outreach encompassing kindergartners from public and private elementary schools all over Carteret County.

Bruce was born and raised in Salter Path. Growing up in a fishing family and fishing community, Bruce was a commercial fisherman for many years before deciding to change professions, and still loves fishing whenever possible. Bruce moved to Emerald Isle in 1981 when he married his wife Jo Ann, a Guidance Counselor at Broad Creek Middle

School. They have been married for 23 years and both stay busy with school and sports activities with their son Bennett, a senior at Croatan High, and daughter, Adrienne, a 5th grader at White Oak Elementary. Oh, and we can't forget to mention a *most* important member of their family – Scooter, their pet dog!

