



EAGLES ISLAND COALITION

February 26, 2014

Ward Room, Battleship USS NORTH CAROLINA

Wilmington, North Carolina

Attendance list at end.

Welcome and Introductions / brief announcements

The meeting was called to order at 2:05 pm by Chair Niel Brooks. Attendees introduced themselves and the organizations they represent.

Minutes – January 16, 2013 and May 10, 2013

Motion by James Kapetsky to approve minutes as presented; second by Capt. Terry Bragg; minutes approved unanimously.

Committee Updates:

- Acquisition and Conservation Planning Committee – Niel reported in the absence of Kristina Fisher that this committee will meet in March to discuss the development of a conservation plan for the entire Eagles Island.
- Funding and Development Committee – Marilyn Meares reported there were no significant items to brief to the group.
- Outreach and Education Committee –
 - Gordon Johnson reminded the group that this committee currently has a staff of one and can use additional volunteers;
 - Capt Bragg, Executive Director of the Battleship, updated the group on the Battleship's plans to renovate spaces to allow for overnight camping onboard the ship. The renovations may begin in the summer of 2014.
 - Additional information was passed on the efforts to design and construct a cofferdam around the Battleship to allow in-place repairs of the ship's aging hull. This project is estimated to cost around \$15M. The Battleship continues to raise funds for this project and recently received \$500,000 from the State of NC to begin design, permitting and engineering including core borings around the Battleship.
 - The Battleship recently received a \$150K grant for education and \$75K for a kayak launch. These grants will enhance the public's access and awareness of Eagle's Island. The kayak launch will be incorporated in the design of the cofferdam around the Battleship.

Property Ownership – Management Challenges

Ms. Dru Harrison – New Hanover Soil and Water Conservation District (NHSWCD)

- An Eagles Island Landowners meeting was held on January 21, 2014, at the NHC Government Building to discuss several issues related to Eagles Island.
 - Dru briefed the group on the meeting and the challenges and concerns the NHSWCD has with managing the tracts of land under their control;
 - NHSWCD owns about 900 acres of land on Eagles Island with no endowments;
 - Dru discussed the recent vandalism on the property including pallets that were used for a makeshift bridge;
 - NHSWCD is specifically concerned with trespassers and the liability they assume as landowners;
 - The District wants to keep the land open for public use but has no resources to manage it;
 - Several options were discussed at the land owners meeting as well as at this meeting of the Coalition, including: making the land State game lands and engaging Brunswick Co. and the Town of Leland for help;
 - Niel Brooks reported that they recently posted the property by painting the trees with a purple line, giving NC Wildlife permission and authority to enforce laws on the property;
 - Doug Springer suggested that other groups be considered for ownership and management of the land such as the Cape Fear River Watch;



- Niel reminded the group that the Eagles Island Coalition is not yet a 501c(s) and thus, cannot own or manage land.
- Niel Brooks briefed the group on a meeting that he and past chair Phil Prete had with Mary McLaughlin who owns the McLaughlin tract on the north end of Eagles Island.
 - The McLaughlin land is the only land on the undeveloped portion of Eagles Island that has significant high ground;
 - Ms. McLaughlin is not interested in parting with the land but would consider partnering with a university for education purposes;
 - Ms. McLaughlin owns the land with her brother; their father, John McLaughlin, owned the land until his death at which time it went to their mother, who has since passed;
 - Mary lives in Maryland but may be moving back to the area.

Potential New Members for Consideration/Nomination

Niel Brooks

- Three new member applicants introduced themselves to the Coalition and gave a brief presentation on their backgrounds and organizations.
 - Charlie Robbins "CR" of Cape Fear River Adventures briefed the group on his ties to the Cape Fear River dating back to the early 40s. He discussed his concerns for the River and his work to promote awareness through his work as a charter boat captain; CR offered the use of his boat, as he has done in the past, to the EIC.
 - A motion was made, seconded and unanimously approved to accept Cape Fear River Adventures as a member of the EIC.
 - Mr. Joe Breault, representing the Town of Belville, NC, briefed the group on the Brunswick Riverwalk at Belville project. In his presentation he discussed the 2000' total project along the west bank of the Brunswick River that will include a fishing pier, restaurant, shopping and a pavilion; the Riverwalk will help connect to the history of Eagles Island including rice farming, navel stores and shipbuilding; Mr. Breault requested the address on the EIC website for the Brunswick Park be changed to indicate the new name and correct address.
 - A motion was made, seconded and unanimously approved, to accept The Town of Belville, NC, as a member of the EIC.
 - Mr. Bill Graham, representing the Cape Fear Economic Development Council, briefed the group on his background and the mission of the CFEDC as a "pro economic development group." He discussed the CFEDC's work to implement the use of Apple's iBeacon app as a way to interpret the history of Downtown Wilmington. Marilyn Mears suggested connecting with ECU to get the data from their research on all the ship wrecks on the Cape Fear River to include in iBeacon.
 - A motion was made, seconded and unanimously approved to accept The Cape Fear Economic Development Council as a member of the EIC.

Presentation "Enhancing the History of Eagles Island through Maps, Charts, Air Photos and Satellite Images"

Dr. Jim Kapetsky

- Dr. Kapetsky presented his research on the history of Eagles Island, focusing on the mapping, roads, railroads and agriculture.
 - Dr. Kapetsky discussed the different levels and quality of mapping of Eagles Island over time and produced overlays of modern satellite images with historic hand drawn maps to show the similarities and differences;
 - He spoke about the Wilmington and Manchester Railroad that briefly served Eagles Island and how the earthen base that supported the railroads can be seen today from satellite images and in the field in certain areas;
 - There was discussion on the need to capture Dr. Kapetsky's presentation for future use.



Next Meeting
Niel Brooks

- The date and time of the next meeting TBD

Adjourn

Being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:11.

Attendees

Niel Brooks
Capt Terry Bragg
Ms. Dru Harrison
Dr. Jim Herstine
Gordon Johnson
Doug Springer
Dr. Jim Kapetsky
Eileen Kapetsky
Nancy Keith
Marilyn Meares
Rosemary Toumey
Charles Robbins
Bill Graham
Joseph Breault
Monika Lazo
Elissa Riley
Devon Rhodes
Chris Vargo