

**HERNANDO COUNTY PORT AUTHORITY
DECEMBER 6, 2006**

The meeting of the Hernando County Port Authority was held at the USCG Auxiliary Building, Wednesday, December 6, 2006, and was called to order at 7:02 p.m. by Chairman Capt. John Saittis.

Members Present: Chairman Capt. John Saittis, Vice-Chairman Capt. Susan Harman, Mr. Roy Martin, Capt. Dan McCann, and Capt. Chuck Morton

Others Present: Charles "Pat" Fagan, Parks & Recreation Director, Roy Link, Parks & Waterways Maintenance Manager, Kent Weissinger, Assistant County Attorney, Phil Jones and George Bennett, Waterways Maintenance Technicians, Laurel Richardson, Operations Assistant, and Brandy Estridge, Administrative Secretary.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES: October 3, 2006

Mr. Martin: Motion to approve. **Capt. Morton:** Second. Motion carried 5-0.

HERNANDO BEACH DREDGE PRESENTATION

Mr. Gregg Sutton, Assistant County Engineer, advised that he is the Project Manager for the Hernando Beach Dredge project. He stated that he has been involved with this project for a little over a year and he was assigned this project just as the Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) project collapsed. He advised that the County has been trying to draft a feasible, permittable, and affordable project, and he believes this has been accomplished. He advised that the County has been working closely with the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and the ACOE, and the County has a good project and it will be permitted. The necessary funds are in place to pay for this project and it will be done.

Mr. Sutton advised that he prepared a handout pertaining to the dredge project (copy attached). He stated that everything in this handout is what he knows. Mr. Sutton stated that the bottom line is that the channel is in terrible shape and it was last dredged in 1984. He advised that this project will be dredged to a mean depth of -6 feet below mean lower low water. You then have to allow for shoaling so you over dredge about a half a foot then you have to factor in the precision of the equipment. Mr. Sutton advised that the depth of the channel could be as much as 7 ½ feet below mean lower low water or as little as 6 ½ feet. He stated that this is based on a typical vessel that would draw about 4 ½ feet. The channel width will be 60 feet at the bottom of the channel then it will slope out at a 2 or 3 to 1 slope. Mr. Sutton indicated that this will be a lot wider than the current channel.

Mr. Sutton advised that he has received a lot of questions regarding all of the rocks. He advised that during the last dredge in 1984, only sand was removed. He advised that with this project the entire channel will be taken down to six feet, including all of the rocks. This will be a fully navigable channel at 6 feet, starting at the beginning of the channel and extending to the tripod.

Mr. Sutton advised that to improve the safety of the channel, the dogleg will be straightened out and some of the rock and sand will be placed in the current area to better define the channel.

Mr. Sutton advised that the current calculations are that 60,000 cubic yards of sand will be removed and about 17,000 cubic yards of rock. He advised that the spoil material will be pumped ashore and the rock will be placed in the existing channel to better define the new channel. The spoil material will be placed on land, dewatered, and then hauled away.

Mr. Sutton advised that the project cost estimate is \$9 million and the County has almost \$3 million to contribute and through the good efforts of Senator Fasano and former State Representative Russell, who is now our County Commissioner, we were able to put through a small county dredging program and Hernando County was able to get \$4 million. The County has the opportunity to get up

to \$3 million more once the true project cost is determined. Between the County and the State funds the money for this dredge project should be covered.

Mr. Sutton advised that this project is currently in the permitting stage. All of the information has been sent to the state and federal agencies. The County is very close to receiving the permit from the DEP and the federal permitting will follow behind the state permitting a little later. Once all permits are received, the project will be bid out. The bid process will be a competitive bid.

Mr. Sutton advised that once the contractor starts the work the channel will have to remain open. Navigation will be restrictive and as a result, it will take longer than normal to complete this project. He advised that he is estimating that the dredge will take the contractor six to nine months to complete.

A citizen asked how sure the County is that the required permits will be received and is there anything that could stop this project. Mr. Sutton stated that he is very confident and comfortable that all of the agencies will be satisfied and all of the necessary permits will be received. He stated that unless the bids come in way over what was anticipated this project will be completed.

A citizen suggested rather than hauling all of the dredge material off, it would benefit the community to pump the material to Pine Island and make a place for people to moor their vessels. Mr. Sutton advised that this idea sounds good but the environmentalists would not like this idea because of the turbidity this could cause. Capt. McCann stated that this could cause a 3-year permitting delay. Mr. Sutton stated that this would change the scope of work for the dredge project. He stated that he wants to get this channel dredged and start maintaining it on a periodic basis. He stated that the County cannot wait 20 years to perform a maintenance dredge.

A citizen stated that at one time the United States Coast Guard was going to maintain the aids to navigation once the channel was dredged. He asked if the County will continue with the maintenance. Mr. Sutton advised yes, this will not be a federally maintained channel and the responsibility of maintenance of the navigational aids will go to the County.

A citizen advised that he was Chairman of the Port Authority when the original maintenance dredge was completed in the 1980's. He stated that they were advised then that once the initial engineering work was completed, additional work would be considered maintenance and no additional permit would be needed. He stated that he finds it hard to believe that maintenance dredging will not be a problem in the future. Mr. Sutton advised that one of the problems was that when originally dredged, the permitting agencies assumed maintenance would be done every 10 years and not wait over 20 years. The citizen asked if there is an exact date of when a permit expires. Mr. Sutton stated that he will ask DEP, but they have given an idea of an 8 to 10 year time frame. Mr. Sutton stated that the County will not let this expiration date come and go.

A citizen stated that originally he was hearing that the permits would be issued in December 2006 and dredging would start January 2007. He asked what happened. Mr. Sutton advised that there were some delays with the permitting and getting the necessary state funding took a little longer than expected. Mr. Sutton advised that the new schedule is current and a best estimate.

A citizen asked if the site the spoil material will be hauled to will be the same site as agreed upon before. He asked if this is the property they want to develop on Eagles Nest? Mr. Sutton indicated the area on the map. The citizen stated that there would be a lot of interested parties that would like to see if this property has more real estate once this material's been placed. He stated that if so, there could be lawsuits. Mr. Sutton stated that the property has been carefully surveyed and mapped. The wetlands have been carefully delineated and are not allowed to be impacted. He stated that berms will be constructed away from the wetlands and the dredge spoil will be placed in them for dewatering. Once dewatered this material basically becomes fill and it can be hauled away.

This same citizen stated that previously it was discussed that some of the rocks in the side canals could be removed and there was a possibility to tie this removal in as a separate project with the dredge project. He asked at what point would the citizens know if this could be done. Mr. Sutton stated that when this job is put out for bids, the basic project will be to dredge the channel and the only permit will be for the channel dredging. The rocks are within Hernando County waters and what will probably wind up happening is listing the different rock locations in the bid documents and the contractors will list the price for removal. Once the bids are open, the county will see how much money is available and if they can afford to remove some of these rocks. If there is not enough money, then they will not be removed.

A citizen asked how long the spoil material will remain on the property. Will it take over a year before it is removed? Mr. Sutton advised no, he stated that the material is pumped on site and dewatered. The time for dewatering depends on the nature of the material. Mr. Sutton indicated that the sand and material that will be removed is very good sand and it has a nominal amount of soot. He indicated that the more sand and less soot, the faster it dewateres. Mr. Sutton stated that he cannot give a precise time but when the contractor is done, the berm will be knocked down. This is only a temporary spoil disposal site. Mr. Weissinger stated that the formal easement agreement with the property owner expires when the project is finished. He advised that the property must be back to the way it was which is concurrent with the end of the project. Mr. Weissinger stated, "going back to the concerns about the property being altered, there is a master plan that has been approved by the County and is in place that indicates: here is where you can build and no further." He stated that nothing is going to happen between now and the end of the project that will change this plan.

Mr. Sutton stated that this property will be a spoil disposal site and what happens after the County's project is complete is beyond the scope of work for this project.

A citizen asked what happens if the bids for this project come back over the \$9 million budget. Mr. Sutton stated that the County would have to come up with more money and try to secure additional money from the State.

A citizen asked how many bids are expected to be received. Mr. Sutton stated that you will not get as many contractors as you would with a project at the Port of Miami and he is expecting smaller companies to bid this project. He indicated that there are a lot of smaller companies out there that can complete this project and three to five contractors bidding this project would be fine. Mr. Sutton stated that if anyone knows of any companies that would be interested in completing this dredge project then send them his way, he would be interested in talking with them.

A citizen asked Mr. Sutton if he realizes how much spoil material will be placed on the dewatering property. Mr. Sutton indicated yes, 60,000 cubic yards. The citizen stated that this will be a pretty big pile. Mr. Sutton advised that he did a calculation to determine how high the spoil material will be once the berm is built and it will be 9 feet tall.

Mr. Sutton advised that if anyone has any additional questions, he could be reached at the County Engineering Office at 352-754-4062.

Mr. Fagan advised that all of the navigational markers, pilings and signs will be totally replaced and re-permitted.

OPERATIONS REVIEW – October and November 2006

Mr. Link gave a description of some of the Waterways Maintenance responsibilities.

Mr. Link – For the benefit of the audience, Mr. Link gave an overview of the responsibilities of the Waterways Maintenance Department. Trimmed numerous trees along the Weeki Wachee River, yard and office work, cleaned the Hernando Beach Boat Ramp restrooms, truck and boat

maintenance, and miscellaneous navigational aid maintenance. He advised that there is currently an issue with the Hernando Beach Tower Light, it is out. Staff recently had this light replaced and they were advised that the wiring was getting old and they were not sure how long it would last. The wiring has finally failed and staff has gotten an estimate to replace this wiring, which will cost over \$4,000. Staff is researching the option of a track system to raise and lower this light so a company will not have to be hired to change this light every time it burns out.

Staff also checked on an abandoned boat at Rogers Park, installed piling and signs at the Rogers Park swim area, watered the Big Cypress Property, which was used as a staging area for the Big Cypress Dredge project, painted the barge, ordered and picked up signs from the Department of Public Works (DPW), researched barges, inspected and trimmed trees along the Mud River, installed the aerator in Bay Lake, checked into Gulfview and Newport Drive Variances, met with the Construction Foreman regarding the possibility of permitting the floating docks at Rogers Park, removed a sign from DBN 50 in the Aripeka Channel, changed the bulb for the Chassahowitzka light, met with DPW regarding mangroves blocking a drainage culvert, picked up and spread rocks in the Hernando Beach Boat Ramp parking lot, checked on the sunken shrimp boat "The Shawn", and removed the booms from the Big Cypress property. Staff completed 23 service requests and 9 permit applications.

BAYPORT PARK EXPANSION

Mr. Fagan advised that just last year the boat ramps were renovated. The County is working with the Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) to complete major improvements to the park site. The money SWFWMD allocated for this project is \$1.2 million and the Tampa Bay Engineering firm is completing the plans and specifications for this project. This project could go out to bid in the next few months. The projects will have to be prioritized. There are two major issues, the first is the parking and the other is the problem with the sewer. This park will be hooked up to the Hernando County sewer and water at the Bayport Inn for the new restrooms that will be built. The plan is to also improve the roadway and install an observation deck and picnic shelters.

LINDA PEDERSEN PARK PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE

Mr. Fagan advised that the installation of this bridge is almost complete. He advised that the Weeki Wachee Swamp Fest has been using this facility for the past couple of years and one of the major problems was people having to walk from the parking area to the event. Mr. Fagan advised that there will be sidewalks from the parking lot to the bridge that will allow people easy access into the back side of this park. He stated that this will be a major improvement to this facility.

Mr. Knotts stated that he wants to clarify that the plans for this bridge were in place when the park was established but it was never installed. He wanted to make sure everyone understands this bridge was not installed just for the Swamp Fest.

STATE ROAD CANAL PROJECT

Mr. Fagan advised that the DEP is currently reviewing this project for permitting. A request for additional information (RAI) was received and the County along with Florida Engineering and Design, Inc (FEDINC), the engineering company handling this permitting, met with DEP to discuss some of the questions with the RAI. After this meeting, DEP agreed that the bathymetry of the river would not be required and they will approve dredging the mouth of the canal because of the depth of the river. One issue that is still required is the sediment sampling and analysis. FEDINC has 90 days to gather this information and respond to DEP on behalf of Hernando County.

Mr. Fagan advised that the County will get this project permitted but the big issue will be getting the funding to complete the work.

NEW BUSINESS – RECCOMENDATIONS FOR THE OPEN PORT AUTHORITY BOARD POSITIONS

Capt. Saittis advised that there was one applicant. A citizen asked how you apply to become a

member of the Board. Capt. Saittis advised that the County advertises the positions and they also post the openings on the County website. Capt. Saittis advised that the Port Authority is not actually a County Board, the Board is actually chartered by the Governor of the State of Florida and the State Legislature, but the County BOCC appoints members to the Board. Capt. Morton advised that open positions are advertised in the paper the same as any other Board. Mr. Weissinger also advised that it is advertised on Channel 19.

Capt. Saittis: Motion to retain Capt. Morton to an additional 4-year term. **Mr. Martin:** Second. Motion carried 5-0.

Mrs. Estridge advised that she needs a recommendation from the Board for the County to re-advertise for the remaining open position. The Board agreed to make this recommendation.

MANATEE PROTECTION PLAN

Mr. Martin asked if Hernando County has a Manatee Protection Program. Mr. Weissinger stated no, nothing he is aware of. Mr. Martin stated that during the Cocoa Beach Conference this was one of the requirements that counties should have. Mr. Weissinger stated that the County does not have a program but what was referred to at the conference was the requirement that counties provide for certain things in their comprehensive plan. Mr. Weissinger stated that he believes there is some language in the Hernando County Plan that relates to this, but he does not know of anything specific in the way of regulations to implement it.

Mr. Martin stated that he would like to be provided copies of the sections in the Comp Plan that addresses water and waterfront issues. Mr. Weissinger stated that he did pull this information after the conference and that is why he is thinking there is something in there relating to manatees, but he will provide this information.

DRAFT ORDINANCE RELATING TO MARINE CONSTRUCTION

Mr. Weissinger advised that the latest version of this matter was included in the packets. He stated that he is glad there are a lot of citizens at this meeting because he wants them to know about possible new regulations that could affect them.

Mr. Weissinger advised that concern has been primarily raised by Building Officials as to whether there is a need to regulate boathouses, which are described in the proposed ordinance as any roofed structure over a dock or over water. He stated that there has been some concern raised that there is no limitation on size right now for these types of structures in Hernando County. He stated that a few years back specific regulations were developed to determine the size shed on your land, but there is nothing that says you can't build a huge roofed structure over your dock or water.

Mr. Weissinger stated that he has looked at other counties who have stricter or less strict regulations on this issue and he tried to adapt something somewhere in the middle. He stated that he does not believe there have been significant changes made in the standards for boathouses beyond what was shown the last time. He stated that one of the main things that was done was to take out a couple onerous conditions and leave it very basic.

Mr. Weissinger stated that this is very early in form and he has no idea when or even if there will be an attempt made to adopt this as a regulation. Mr. Weissinger stated that proposed in the current draft is a minimum side setback requirement of 5 feet and a maximum protrusion into the waterway equal to what is now essentially the maximum for docks. He advised that a maximum height has been discussed and several ideas have been tossed around, and right now the draft says a maximum height of 15 feet above mean low water or 10 feet above any seawall constructed or to be constructed, whichever is greater. He stated that he is not sure how this will work out in terms of practicality.

Mr. Weissinger stated that the primary concern is maximum size and what has been done in the current draft is to specify that no boathouse or other roofed structure over water can exceed the maximum size. He stated that this is a very early draft and he wants to get everyone's input and ideas. He advised that this draft ordinance would also limit the number of structures to one per lot and it would require the land it is adjacent to either have an existing family dwelling or one that is under construction.

Mr. Weissinger advised that the first part of this draft ordinance is new, but almost all of Section 2, Standards for Docks, Piers, and Seawalls, is currently in the Code of Ordinances, but the main purpose of including it here is to better organize the section and divide it up so it reads better than the current code, and also the part on docks that says, "side yard setbacks on a manmade waterbody are not required unless the construction encroaches on the riparian rights of other property owners." This draft proposes to add to that, "and obstructs the ability of other property owners to navigate to or from their property or any existing dock or pier."

Mr. Weissinger stated that there have been issues regarding what exactly riparian may mean when it comes to dock construction and adjacent properties so he thought the ordinance should clarify what the real intent is, which is to make sure construction on your neighbor's lot doesn't adversely affect your ability to use the waterfront of your lot.

He advised the other thing that was added was B-1, on page 2 of the draft. This says that the Building Official or his designee may request assistance from the Port Authority or the Waterways staff in making such determination. He stated that one thing he tossed around and wanted to get the Port Authority's views on was if the Port Authority thought there was any place in the draft for a formal role for the Port Authority, by actually holding hearings for dock variance requests before going before the Commissioners for a final appeal. Right now, as written in the draft, it is discretionary if the Building Official feels like he needs the help or recommendation of the Port Authority. He stated that the way it works in practice now is that Mr. Link or his Waterways Staff looks at every permit and they make basic recommendations to the Building Officials.

Capt. Saittis said that historically, all marine projects came before the Port Authority Board. Then around 1995, the functions were given to the County. However, there are people competent enough on the Board to advise Building Officials as to marine safety and whether a vessel can pass safely. He stated that the Board does not know much about Building Codes but they can give guidance as to safety.

Mr. Weissinger stated that there might be some things in this draft ordinance that he, as a non-boater, might have missed that may need to be considered. Mr. Weissinger stated that he did not bring extra copies of this ordinance with him, but if anyone would like a copy they can take one of his business cards and contact him.

A citizen stated that there is a situation adjacent to his lot where the property owner applied for a variance and they are building one boatlift for a 35-foot boat, which is 12-feet wide, and they are building another lift that is parallel to the seawall to accommodate a 45-foot boat. He stated that this property is a 76-foot lot and they have about 60-feet of boatlift and the County approved this. He stated that with a horizontal lift you need an additional 45-feet to bring your boat into the lift. He advised that when you call the County the only thing they are concerned about is if the structure is a hazard to navigation. Mr. Weissinger stated that this is why there has been a proposed change to the rather vague legal term of riparian right, to also consider whether the proposal affects the ability of other property owners to navigate to and from their property or to use any dock they have.

The same citizen stated that by giving this person these rights the property owners on either side

could not do the same thing. He stated that the other issue is that if you raise this vessel 5 feet out of the water then you have a structure blocking the neighbors view. Mr. Weissinger stated that good points were raised and that is why a proposal is being brought forward, because the County anticipates that once the dredge project is complete, there may be larger boats coming into Hernando Beach and more people may be interested in lifting larger vessels.

Mr. Weissinger stated that right now, when it comes to boathouses and roofed structures over the water, there are really no regulations in place that either the Port Authority or the County Commissioners can enforce. A citizen stated that the size of boatlifts and docks should also be looked at in comparison to the size of the lot. Mr. Weissinger stated that this is not something in his draft but he understands the concerns and he will look into this.

Capt. Saittis asked the location of the structure in question. The citizen advised that it is located off of Newport Drive. Capt. Saittis advised that the Board is aware of this structure. Mr. Link advised that this structure has been discussed at the past two Port Authority meetings and a meeting is being set up between Waterways staff, the Building Department, and the County Attorney's Office to come up with a solution or an agreement on this structure.

Mr. Weissinger advised that the owner of the property in question received the first variance and an additional variance is being applied for. The meeting Mr. Link is talking about is a meeting of County staff to determine what type of recommendation to formulate for the County Commissioners for the additional variance. He stated that when this issue is scheduled to go before the Commissioners, the adjoining property owners should get notice, so if you have a concern then you should attend the variance meeting before the County Commission.

Mr. Martins stated that he is aware that this issue has been brought up at previous meetings by reviewing copies of the minutes. He stated that his parents own this property and he would like to present the other side of the story. He stated that his family is not above any law and everything has been done by the rules. He stated that there is a problem with the dock laws in Hernando County. He stated that in his canal a dock is allowed to go out 22-feet and if you have a 14 foot beam on your vessel, and his vessel is 42-feet, then he would be extending 36 feet into the canal. He stated that anytime a boatlift is installed and you go past the 22 feet, then a variance is required because you need a pole at the end of the boat to lift it. He stated that with the slope of the earth in this canal it would be impossible for a 42-foot or a 25-foot boat to meet the 22-foot requirement with a boatlift. He advised that originally the contractor thought the variance of 27 feet would be sufficient, but after he commenced construction he noted that it would be physically impossible to have the boatlift 27 feet away because of the slope of the land. He stated that this is why he applied for the additional variance.

Mr. Martins stated that the 35 feet is the outside of the last pole. He stated that if you had a dock and the boat then you would be out a foot further than what he is requesting. Mr. Martins stated that he and his family are not trying to be the bad guys; they are just trying to enjoy the property that they worked hard for. He stated that with the dredge project a lot of larger vessels could be coming into this area.

Mr. Weissinger stated that he appreciated Mr. Martins offering his side and the County is simply looking into options for the future and nothing with the draft ordinance will affect his rights to ask for a variance.

Capt. Saittis stated that once the channel is dredged it may be possible for a person to bring a 75 to 80-foot vessel into the Hernando Beach area. He stated that things will change drastically and issues will need to be resolved.

A citizen stated that he has noticed that it is not so much docks that have been a problem, but the size vessels being docked at them. He asked if there is any recourse for this. Mr. Weissinger

stated no, the draft ordinance that is proposed takes small steps to deal with this, but it is only in the context of when a variance is requested from the dock standards. He stated that he is not sure if people want to go to the point of regulating the size boats and it may be the only thing to regulate the size of the docks. Mr. Weissinger also stated that he understands the concern for allowing people to be creative and what the BOCC will be concerned about is balancing rights. You want to leave as much flexibility for a property owner to be creative in such a way that they do not impact the rights of other property owners. He stated that a lot of things will be taken into consideration as he works on this draft.

BOARD & STAFF COMMENTS

The Board thanked Capt. Saittis for all of his hard work and years on the Port Authority Board.

Capt. Saittis stated that before he leaves he would like to recommend to the Board to not get rid of the State Charter and continue focusing on marine safety.

PUBLIC INPUT

A citizen stated that he lives off of Paradise Circle and this canal drops to 1 foot of water because it is filling in with silt. The channel was originally 10 foot deep. Capt. Saittis stated that if this is indeed silt then it might be possible to have the dredge contractor see what it would take to get this material removed. He stated that if this were done as a separate item, it would have to be permitted.

A citizen asked if there is a list of where the rocks are located in the canals. He stated that he might want to get a few more rocks added to this list. Capt. Saittis noted that HB Shrimp Company has a chart and as his captains lose a prop they mark them on this chart, so this will give a good idea of where the rocks are located in the Channel. Mr. Link stated that the Hernando Beach Channel is the main project and his staff has in the past gone out and marked the rocks in the canals and Waterways is fully aware of where these rocks are located. He stated that there is no guarantee that these rocks will be removed. The citizen stated that he would like to be able to add rocks to this list. Capt. Saittis advised that they could be added to the wish list.

A citizen asked if there is a way to set up an assessment, if there is not enough County money to get these canals cleaned up and rocks removed. Mr. Weissinger stated that this would be something like a MSBU. Capt. Saittis stated that a dredge barge will be brought in for the Hernando Beach Dredge and this barge will be limited to where it can go. Mr. Link advised that from past small dredging projects, like the Big Cypress Canal project, it took over a year to secure the permit for the removal of around 600 cubic yards of material. Mr. Link agreed that work needs to be done in some of the canals in Hernando Beach, but it would take a long time to secure the additional permits that will be required. He stated that this could be something to look at in the future and he does not think this should be something that could be added on to the Hernando Beach Dredge project.

ADJOURNMENT

Capt. Harman: Motion to adjourn. **Mr. Martin:** Second. Motion carried 5-0.

The meeting of the Hernando County Port Authority ended at 8:50 p.m.

Attachment :
Hernando Beach Channel Dredging Project
Status Report December 6, 2006

HERNANDO BEACH CHANNEL DREDGING PROJECT STATUS REPORT AS OF DECEMBER 6, 2006

1. BACKGROUND:

- a. The Hernando Beach channel was last dredged in 1984. At that time, only sand was dredged & none of the rocks were removed.
- b. In the 1990'S Hernando County began an effort with the D.S Army Corps of Engineers to improve the channel. The project as conceived, would have created a federally maintained channel 80 feet in width & 8 feet deep at Mean Lower Low Water (MLLW). The channel would have been straightened & markedly lengthened. The project planning proceeded slowly until 2003. At that time, environmental agencies expressed concerns over the extensive impacts to seagrass. The mitigation necessary to offset the seagrass impacts increased the project cost such that it was no longer an economical project. As a result, the Federal agencies declined to participate. Without Federal participation & funding, the project was terminated.
- c. In 2003, in the aftermath of the failed Federal dredging project, County staff scaled down the scope of the dredging into essentially a maintenance type dredging project.

2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

- a. The project can best be described as a maintenance-dredging project with enhancements. The existing channel will be lengthened, widened, deepened, & straightened to improve overall safety & navigability.
- b. The channel will be dredged & extended out to the tower. At the beginning of the channel, the existing "dogleg" will be eliminated & a new channel created to make the beginning of the channel a "T" type intersection.
- c. The project is based upon a design vessel that draws 4.5 feet. This is intended to encompass most of the commercial vessels that are homeported at Hernando Beach.
- d. The channel will be dredged to -6 feet at Mean Lower Low Water (MLLW). The bottom channel width will be 60 feet & the sides will slope up at nominally a 3 to 1 slope.
- e. New navigational aids/markers will be installed to mark the new channel.
- f. The project will require removal of approximately 60,000 cubic yards of sand & 17,000 cubic yards of rock. The sand will be pumped ashore to a temporary spoil dewatering site & then hauled away. The rock will be deposited in the "dogleg" at the beginning of the channel as part of the channel straightening.

3. COST ESTIMATE & FUNDING:

- a. Current Total Project Cost Estimate = \$9,000,000.

b. Project funding will come from a combination of Hernando County Capital Improvement Funds & State funds from the Small County Dredging Project Program. The Small County Dredging Project Program provides State funds to small Counties (such as Hernando) for dredging projects. The program was spearheaded by State Sen. Michael Fasano & former State Rep. (& now County Commissioner David Russell. The program is administered by the Florida Ports Council for the Florida Seaport, Transportation, & Economic Development (FSTED) Council. The participating County must provide at least 25% of the project cost & up to 75% of the project cost may be obtained from program funds. At the June 2006 meeting of the FSTED Council, the Hernando Beach channel dredging project was reviewed & approved. The FSTED Council elected to provide initial State funds in the amount of \$3,750,000 with the understanding that Hernando County may request up to \$3,000,000 of additional State funds once bids are opened & the actual construction cost is known. Based upon the 25% requirement, Hernando County's cost share of the project is \$2,250,000.

4. SCHEDULE:

- a. State Permit Issued by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection - January 2007
- b. Federal Permit Issued by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers - April 2007
- c. Begin Coordination with the Florida Department of Transportation to Obtain State Funds - January 2007
- d. Finalize Plans, Specifications & Cost Estimate - April 2007
- e. Bid Advertisement - May 2007
- f. Bid Opening - June 2007
- g. Finalize Agreement with Florida Department of Transportation & Obtain State Funds - May 2007
- h. Dredge Contract Award - July 2007
- i. Begin Dredging - August 2007
- j. Complete Dredging & Project Closeout - May 2008