



Final Minutes
May 6, 2019 Annual BEAT Membership Meeting

1. WELCOME

- Chair Pete Key welcomed attendees and provided a brief summary of the current status of the fight against offshore drilling and seismic blasting. He announced that three Brunswick County towns (Caswell Beach, Oak Island, and Sunset Beach) had joined the lawsuit filed by the Southern Environmental Law Center to stop offshore drilling and seismic blasting, by signing an amicus brief. He listed several other groups supporting this effort including the Beach Preservation Society, Southport Indivisibles Stepping Forward, Crabby against Drilling, Oceana, and Coastal Water Watch.
- Pete recognized new and returning board members Tom Goodwin, Neil Gilbert, Dwight Willis, and new board members Teddy Altreuter, Bob Jakus, Marilyn Priddy, and Dr. Sybil Burgess Murray.

2. Annual BEAT Environmental Awards

- Dwight Willis introduced BC County Commissioner Randy Thompson who was awarded BEAT's 2018 Friend of the Environment award for his support of solar energy and clean water and his position against offshore drilling and seismic blasting. Mr. Thompson, who is a member of the Economic Development Commission, told the audience that the State owns a large parcel near Southport that could be used for industrial development in the future. He noted that a second to a motion to add an item to the County Commissioners meeting agenda is now required, and he advised the audience to stay focused and not to give up.
- Before announcing the next award, Neil Gilbert reported there were tee shirts for sale at a discounted price. Neil next recognized Randy Sturgill who was the winner of last year's Distinguished Service Award. He then gave a brief history of BEAT and introduced Dr. Richard Hilderman who served as BEAT's first president and has been working for many years to prevent ecosystem damage from dredging. In accepting BEAT's 2019 Distinguished Service Award, Dr. Hilderman noted that "the planet and all creatures great and small need all the help we can provide".
- Dwight Willis presented the 2019 "Friend of the Environment Award to Marilyn Priddy for her advocacy against a methyl bromide treatment facility in a neighboring county, and offshore drilling and seismic blasting along our coast. Dwight also noted that Marilyn ran for the County Commission to give voters a choice to protect our coast. Marilyn expressed surprise for the award noting that "nevertheless, we will persist".



3. Guest Speaker

- Pete Key introduced the guest speaker, Derb S. Carter Jr., Director of the NC offices of the Southern Environmental Law Center.
- Mr. Carter's PowerPoint presentation was entitled "Preventing Exploration and Drilling off the South Atlantic Coast. He noted that Maryland and Massachusetts were the only states that opposed offshore drilling and seismic testing in 2015 and that now all the states along the Atlantic seaboard as well as 200 local governments are opposed to these practices.
- Mr. Carter provided a brief history of the policy changes that occurred during the Obama and current administrations. He noted that there is no coordination between the five companies that have been granted permits and that will result in nearly continuous blasting. Mr. Carter included information about the damage to marine life and that there are only about 400 North Atlantic right whales left. He said none were reported to have calves last year, but seven births had been reported this year.
- Mr. Carter presented a status report of the litigation and noted how offshore drilling and seismic testing will violate several federal laws including the Marine Mammal Protection Act, the Endangered Species Act and the National Environmental Policy Act. He reported that the final permit to allow blasting to start had not yet been issued and that no hearings were scheduled by the judge assigned to the case.
- There was a question and answer period following Mr. Carter's presentation. Topics included alternatives to seismic blasting, munitions on the ocean floor and damage to zooplankton, and whether other Brunswick County towns could sign the amicus brief (with Mr. Carter noting that deadline had passed).
- Martha Johnson, Chair of the Southport Indivisibles Stepping Forward announced rally to oppose offshore drilling and seismic blasting will be held at 5:30 pm before the May 20th County Commissioners' meeting.

4. Committee Reports

- Spring Harkins presented information from the Plastic / Waste Management Committee for Chair Linda Eastman. Spring described the Skip the Straw campaign, noting plastic straws represented the 5th greatest numbers in waste clean-up. She asked attendees to review the display on single use plastics that was set up in the back of the room and reported some new alternatives to single use plastics.



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- Education Committee Chair Teddy Altreuter reported their committee had been working with the Plastic Waste Management Committee and were making arrangements to show a documentary about straws at county middle school students. She reviewed improvements to current handouts and the need for new ones. Teddy asked for volunteers to help at fairs and festivals for skilled writers. She noted the committee will continue to work to educate BEAT members and parents and teachers and community members..
 - Dan George, Land Use Committee member described progress at the Navassa 150 acre Superfund site where ground and water had been contaminated with creosote. He said Navassa residents would be deciding on future use of the cleaned up area and thought those plans would include a heritage center, but probably not residences. Dan said the next meeting would be held on June 25th (at the Navassa Town Hall).

5. Treasurer's Report

- Treasurer Tom Goodwin provided the Treasurer's report, reviewing last year's grant from The Society of St. Elizabeth and announcing a \$5,000 Grant from OCEANA that was just awarded to BEAT.
- Tom described significant expenditures of printing – straw cards (\$53.41) and offshore drilling brochures (\$658.65), AV equipment (\$426.30), and a bullhorn (\$38.77) and plans that BEAT has for future expenditures.

6. Reorganization Plans Members Comments

- Tom Goodwin reviewed a proposal to reorganize BEAT into three regional groups (East, West, and North) due to the county's large geographical area. He showed charts showing the towns listed in each area and how each regional group could be organized describing this as a matrix.

7. Adjournment

- Before the meeting adjourned, attendees separated into the three regions to discuss how to proceed and when to meet again.