

KENT COUNTY PUBLIC LANDINGS & FACILITIES

March 31, 2025 Meeting Minutes

I CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Kent County Board of Public Landings & Facilities was called to order by Chairman James Reihl, at 6:00pm on Monday, March 31, 2025. Those in attendance were James Reihl, Marc Castelli, Clay Larrimore, Rick Morlock and Public Works Deputy Director Carrie Klein.

The minutes of December 4, 2024 were approved as submitted.

II ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Mr. James Reihl will move in the position of Chairman with Mr. Clay Larrimore moving into the position of Vice-Chairman for the calendar year 2025.

III OLD BUSINESS

Bayside Landing Park – Project

Ms. Klein provided an update on the current construction project at Bayside Landing Park. She advised that the pile driving was 95% complete, the upper whalers have been completed and the lower whalers are scheduled to be started this week. She continued that the bulkhead sheeting would begin later this week. The Contractor has committed to running extended hours and working on Saturdays through completion. She stated that the anticipated final completion date is April 25, 2025, though it is expected that the majority of slip holders will be able to use their slips by April 18, 2025. Ms. Klein advised that part of delay of the project was the Vibratory Hammer, required for the test pilings, was held up at the Canadian/US border.

A Board member asked if there would be a ribbon cutting for the grand re-opening of Bayside Landing Park – marina area. Ms. Klein stated that a ribbon cutting could be scheduled when the project is completed!

Betterton – Engineering Study

Ms. Klein advised that the County has been coordinating with the engineering design firm Davis Bowen & Friedel, Inc. to finalize the proposal for this project. Due to the substantial public interest in the project various means of outreach is being considered including website postings, email surveys and social media posts. The scope of the project is to prepare a Preliminary Engineering Study (PES) including a site evaluation, stakeholder outreach, wave/wind analysis, sea level rise/frequency of flooding and construction cost estimates that will assist with providing recommended option for replacement, modification or rehabilitation of the existing structures at Betterton Public Landing. After the PES is complete, the County will seek funding for full design and permitting services. Once the final design is complete, funding for construction will be pursued during Fiscal Year 2026.

Rock Hall Harbor Channel Dredging

Ms. Klein stated that currently the project cannot be completed all at once due to insufficient funding, therefore, it is being delayed until full funding can be secured. Both the County and the Army Corp of Engineers are making appeals for additional funding. It should also be noted that the existing spoils site can only accommodate the spoils from the entrance to the channel (approximately 39,000 cubic yards). Therefore, other land within Kent County, to use as a spoils site, will need to be found to accommodate the spoils from the entire project. Until both funding and spoils site are found, the project will be paused. Currently the funding for the project is short One Million Dollars.

Long Cove – No Wake Buoy

Ms. Klein informed the Board that she had discussed with staff at the Department of Natural Resources, Fishing and Boating Services office the possibility of installing another no wake buoy near Long Cove public landing. She stated that the following supply was received - “We cannot install a no wake buoy because, from an enforcement standpoint there is no real difference between a minimum wake zone and a 6-knot speed zone – some boats actually produce larger wakes at lower speeds than when cruising on plane. Additionally, requests for speed zone changes based solely on erosion concerns are rarely approved. Studies show that wind-driven waves cause significantly more shoreline erosion than boat wakes, as they impact the shore year-round, whereas boating activity is limited to April 15 – October 15. Given these factors, installing a no wake buoy would not provide an effective or enforceable solution.”

The Board asked, if possible, can the existing buoy be moved out 300 feet? Ms. Klein advised that she would inquire about that possibility.

Landings violations – warning/citations

Ms. Klein stated that a staff member would be back issuing warnings for public landing violations in 2025. She also stated that the possibility of having that staff member deputized to be able to issue citations is also being investigated, which would be more effective on several levels.

IV ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 6:20 PM. The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for Monday, June 23, 2025.

Respectfully submitted,

Tina Fletcher