



The Outer Banks Chamber of Commerce

www.outerbankschamber.com

P.O. Box 1757 Kill Devil Hills, NC 27948

(252)441-8144, Voice

(252)441-0338, Fax

e-mail: chamber@outer-banks.com

On Monday, May 3, the Dare County Board of Commissioners will be voting on two important beach renourishment issues. One is to appropriate a significant portion of the available funds to the proposed Town of Nags Head project and the other is to ask the legislature for the one percent occupancy tax needed to fund part of the project.

We, as the Board of Directors of the Outer Banks Chamber of Commerce, would like to thank all of the communities and the County for working together to create a viable solution to a difficult problem. Where we have been critical of a “me first attitude, we are now appreciative of the “community first” attitude that has prevailed. The work completed within the framework of the Dare County Shoreline Management Commission allowed the many collaborative interests to find the common footing to make sure a project could move forward.

As we have stated before, our beaches are an extremely important asset that needs to be maintained for our current economy to remain strong. Tourism provides \$774 million in direct financial benefit to the community supporting 11,250 jobs. One study suggested that just a 10% reduction in tourism would result in 587 fewer jobs, 65 fewer businesses, and \$490 million in business assessed value. As 89% of our visitors report that it is our beaches that they come here for, the connection between our beaches and our economy becomes readily apparent. The actions of the towns and the County reflect their understanding of the beach’s importance.

The Chamber recognizes that should the County Commissioners support both of the initiatives on Monday, there is still some work to be done. The funding plan leaves a gap in the Town of Nags Head project that will need to be made up and we look forward to the Town of Nags Head’s solution to this problem. The legislature will be appropriately reticent to support a tax increase at this time and they will need continued reminders of how important our beaches are to our economy. Finally, the Town of Nags Head is not the only place that will need focus in the future. Our community still needs a comprehensive plan that insures sustainability of all our beaches.

Again, we as a board would like to thank our towns and the County for their work towards solutions that will help address our erosion problems both now and in the future. We look forward to the decision of the County Commissioners on Monday and to the work to be done ahead.

Sincerely,

The Outer Banks Chamber of Commerce
Board of Directors