



Bald Head Association ~ “The voice for BHI property owners”

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BHI Transportation Authority (BHITA) Update — May 2020

Paul J. Cozza, executive director of the NC State Ports Authority, joined the BHI Transportation Authority (BHITA) as the newest member of its Board of Trustees at its May meeting. Cozza was approved in April by the NC General Assembly to fill the unexpired term of Brad Smith. Trustees accepted a fifth grant from the Village of BHI to continue its due diligence. This grant of \$35,000 partially funds a feasibility study for the public financing aspect of the potential purchase of the ferry/tram/parking/barge systems. Treasurer David Jessen reported that Dixon-Hughes has been hired to conduct an audit of the 2019-2020 financials, and the directors & officers insurance coverage and performance bond for the finance officer have been secured for the coming year.

The Board heard details of the impact of COVID-19 on ferry operations from Chad Paul, CEO of BHI Limited. In particular, Paul detailed that on an average year ferry ridership in April is approximately 26,000 passengers. In April 2020, that number was approximately 6,000. Revenue for barge operations was 60% of a typical year, parking was at 55% and ferry operations was at 20% (all percentages are rounded). BHI Transportation’s attorney Gray Styers commented that his observation of the NC Utilities Commission deliberations was consideration of a balance between ferry operations and the Island’s needs with the public’s health and safety.

The next meeting of the Authority is scheduled for Wednesday, June 17, 2020, at 9:15am. As of press time, it is believed the meeting will be held electronically. For more information, contact Michele Windham at mwindham@cityofsouthport.com.