

Operating Guidelines Committee  
June 5, 2007 Meeting Notes  
Lockwood-Greene Offices

Attendees: Will Berson(Chair), Lucille Collins-Rahn, Judy Jennings, Larry Keegan, Hope Moorer, Morgan Rees, Tom Wright.

The Beach Nourishment Committee submitted a report to the SEG which, in part, asked the SEG to endorse the report's recommendation that beneficial beach renourishment of Tybee beaches be a part of the harbor deepening project. Discussion of the Beach Nourishment Committee's report was referred to the Operating Guidelines Committee for recommendation to the full SEG.

The Committee's discussion focused on the role of SEG and its various committees in the project impact evaluation process. At a minimum, the Beach Committee's recommendation poses a "precedent" question inasmuch as a variety of reports have been submitted without SEG formally approving them or endorsing their findings.

Question: Is it SEG's role, as a body, to approve/reject the conclusions of the various reports it has instigated?

Strictly reading the SEG's mission by the founding statutory language, the SEG is tasked with identifying issues related to harbor deepening that ought to be studied. In practice, this oversight has extended to how these studies should be conducted, as well as receiving progress updates and reports on studies' conclusions.

The Operating Guidelines Committee members in attendance felt that these responsibilities also extend to a determination that SEG-requested studies (regardless of their conclusions) had indeed been adequate in scope and content, reflecting the concerns of the SEG regarding study issues. In short, committee members felt it is appropriate for SEG to recognize that the assignment has been completed as assigned, without actually endorsing its particulars, recommendations or conclusions.

This interpretation leaves every member of the SEG free to evaluate the importance of the information to the overall assessment of the project and/or its impacts, as well as to disagree with conclusions or interpretations.

In line with this reasoning, the Operation Guidelines did not feel it was appropriate to endorse a particular element, in this case beach renourishment, as part of the project.

Should the SEG disagree with this conclusion, Operating Guidelines members want to remind members that it may have to revisit other studies and act accordingly.