



INDIAN RIVER COUNTY, FLORIDA
AGENDA ITEM
Assistant County Administrator /
Department of General Services
Parks and Recreation

Date: January 6, 2021

To: The Honorable Board of County Commissioners

Through: Jason E. Brown, County Administrator
Michael C. Zito, Assistant County Administrator
Kristin Daniels, Director, Office of Management and Budget

From: Kevin M. Kirwin, Director, Parks and Recreation

Subject: License Agreement for Florida Institute of Technology install an HF Radar at Treasure Shores Beach Park along a use an area of 900 feet by 30 feet for the radar array along with an unused lifeguard tower for transmission and receiving equipment

BACKGROUND

Florida Institute of Technology (FIT) researchers approached the County to enter into an agreement to install a High Frequency Radar (HFR) site at Treasure Shores Beach Park (11300 Florida A1A, Vero Beach, FL 32963). This site would become a part of the United States National High Frequency Radar (HFR) network led by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Integrated Ocean Observing System (IOOS). The IOOS partners with eleven regional associations which work with academic and private sector partners to install HFR sites for surface current and wave measurement and mapping. The regional association that covers Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, and North Carolina, is the Southeast Coastal Ocean Observing Regional Association (SECOORA). High Frequency Radar systems are located along most the coast of the eastern United States, except the East Central Florida/Vero Beach which created a lack of critical surface current mapping in this area of East Coast. In order to fill this gap, the Florida Institute of Technology (FIT) has been funded through a multiyear commitment by SECOORA to install, maintain, and operate two HFR systems in east central Florida.

The HFR location at Treasure Shores Park will provide optimal coverage offshore, maximizing data reliability and availability to all coastal interests, including local emergency and coastal management agencies. The data will be uploaded real-time and FIT will work with Indian River County to ensure our access to the data. Examples of how the data from the HFR System can be utilized are by the U.S. Coast Guard for search and rescue support, discovering boating hazards, identifying fisheries and environmental hazards (such as oil spills, red tide). The sea surface area mapped by the HFR sites will be shared with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission and local sea turtle monitoring programs. Additionally, the data can be shared with coastal engineers to assist the County's beach nourishment projects.

The HFR antennas will be permitted and placed within the dune line without disturbing existing vegetation and dune conditions. An unused lifeguard tower will safeguard the receiving and transmission equipment. The Florida Institute of Technology will cover future electric bills for Treasure Shores Park once the HFR installation is complete (the FY 19-20 Electric Bill was \$512).

FIT's staff reviewed the HFR installation with the Indian River County Public Works Department, Coastal Division; Community Development, Environmental Planning and Code Enforcement Division; and received positive feedback. Additionally, FIT staff presented the HFR installation to the Indian River County Beach and Shore Preservation Advisory Committee and received positive feedback.

FUNDING:

There is no fiscal impact to Indian River County by entering into this license agreement.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff respectfully recommends the Indian River County Board of County Commissioners accept the license agreement with the Florida Institute of Technology and authorize the chair to execute same.

ATTACHMENT:

License Agreement – Florida Institute of Technology and Indian River County HF Radar

DISTRIBUTION:

Florida Institute of Technology
Kevin M. Kirwin, Director –Parks and Recreation

APPROVED AGENDA ITEM FOR January 19, 2021