

News and Quarterly Meeting Minutes

Q2 Board Meeting Held 01/03/2026

Dog Island Conservation District

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<http://dogislandconservationdistrict.org>



DOG ISLAND
CONSERVATION DISTRICT



All photos in this issue (except pp. 5-7) are by Terri Cannon.

Important Alerts and Notices

- Q3 Board meeting to be held Saturday April 4, 2026 at 10:30 AM at the Yacht Club, weather permitting.
- Additional 2026 quarterly Board meetings on July 4th and September 5th.



From the Chair

Sometimes a man hits upon a place to which he mysteriously feels that he belongs. — W. Somerset Maugham

The places where water comes together with other water. Those places stand out in my mind like holy places. — Raymond Carver

The only way forward, if we are going to improve the quality of the environment, is to get everybody involved. — Richard Rogers

IT IS PERSONAL TO ME

Our Dog Island is to my mind seeing the Milky Way on a warm dark clear night, a marsh hawk soaring and swooping low over the interior wetlands, confusing fall warblers flitting in and out of the yaupon and wax myrtles, dinner and laughter and stories told of the past at a dear friend's island home, and that nearly always present background sound of the ocean.



I want to share my abundant affection and regard for Dog Island, my neighbors here and our community (both the human and natural world varieties) and express my desire that we islanders all commit to conserving and preserving this unique environment and our simple Florida lifeway.

For nearly 40 years I have been blessed to experience this barrier island's beauty. I met the most important person in my life out here one stellar New Year's Eve and, along with her mother and daughter, shared an ever-growing, abiding interest and study of all things Dog Island, which further informed our love for this small funny slice of paradise. I will miss it so. Similar places are rapidly vanishing to development and recreational pressures in north Florida. --You never know the worth of water till your well runs dry.-- I share my history here to ask you to reflect upon what we have and to more fully inform yourself about how we together might better preserve and protect, to hold dear and value, Dog Island's environmental and simple social character.

- We can learn about and appreciate our freshwater lens, a finite resource, and use best practices to keep it viable as we move forward.
- We can protect the remaining sand dunes and native vegetation which defend and hold our sandy soil in place through wind and storms. There is a sort of symbiotic miracle in these self-selected

native plants out here in that they all bloom and seed twice annually in time to feed the migrating bird species for that last meal as they set out to the Caribbean and Central America in the fall and welcome them back as the first landfall banquet upon their return. Our trees, the pines and oaks, may seem thin and frail, but remember what might look like a 20-year-old pine of a 12-inch diameter back in Georgia or Tennessee out here is 100-150 plus years old. The clumps of palmetto go back hundreds of years! (Please leave nonnative species of plants ashore, as they out-compete natives and disturb the food web.)

- We can study and learn to be a help in the perpetuation of several sea and shorebird threatened species who use our open beaches to nest. By giving them room, leashing and controlling our dogs, avoiding the demarcated string areas and informing others why these actions are essential, we can play a part in the preservation of plovers, oystercatchers and my favorite, black skimmers. Our beaches are recognized as globally important in the survival of these and other similar species. You and your family's actions can help perpetuate the survival of these wonders of the air and shore, rather than accelerating their extinction.
- The nesting sea turtle mothers returning to Dog Island are so easy to appreciate and learn about and consideration for their success can become a part of your summer plans as you visit or reside here. Just turn out your lights at dusk when not actually needed, remove all obstacles from the beach as you depart in the afternoon (they can trap or impede momma turtle), give them some distance and respect, and of course never shine flashlights in their direction. You can readily contribute to their health and survival and to your joy and appreciation of the natural world at your very doorstep.
- We as a group can do so much better preserving aesthetic values by removing unsightly unnecessary vehicles from near the dock. If you want that junker that you never use or move, take it home or let us remove it from the island. I humbly suggest one running vehicle per family at the dock. It is difficult for me to see a place that I care so deeply for become a dead car, cart, boat, equipment, and trailer dumping ground. I believe together we can and should do so much better.

My final ask: the District needs some significant funds in the very necessary rebuild of the ferry dock and its bulkhead; funding is being raised to improve the airfield maintenance and machinery; monies are raised annually to hire off-duty sheriffs to patrol on busy holiday weekends in the support and protection of the marked bird nesting areas and to keep the bay, narrows and east end safe for islanders and guests; and we continue to solicit funds for our FEMA match/hurricane response account for storm preparedness. These donations are all tax deductible. Pick your preferred cause(s) and generously support our endeavors to make this great, unique, valuable place better, more prepared and stronger, and to become a place for our grandchildren to enjoy and for them to pick up the baton of informed preservation.



Thank you, Be Well

'Tis the Season of Nesting Shorebirds

Zach Matchinski, Audubon Florida

It may not feel like summer outside to us, but the birds are already gearing up for nesting season. Many assume that breeding season for birds takes place through the spring summer months, around April-August, but here in Florida we have birds nesting nearly year-round.

In fact, our shorebird nesting season on Dog Island starts as early as February 15. It's usually not very long after that when we have our first Snowy Plover nests on the island, hopefully within the posted areas that we just put up recently. Dog Island frequently has the earliest nest in the entire state! This is why you will see our shorebird postings going up across the island this time of year. Posting these areas helps give nesting shorebirds the space they need, while still allowing room for everyone to enjoy the island. Putting up all the signs is usually a long day, but it makes it a lot easier, and more fun, with your help, so thank you to our volunteers!



Even with the signs up, you should still watch for the birds when you go down to the beach. We put up the signs around areas that we think the birds are most likely to nest in, generally areas of historic use, but every year some birds decide that they like the looks of some other spot and nest outside the posted areas. Unlike a lot of bird species, shorebirds typically lay their eggs right on the ground, and on Dog Island, they nest right on the beaches.

The adults also need to feed outside of the postings, so you will often see them running in the wet sand at the water's edge. Most importantly though, starting in about April, there is a possibility of flightless chicks running around for the rest of the summer. Snowy Plover and Wilson's Plover chicks are notoriously hard to see, as they are small, fast, and well camouflaged. This makes it that much more important to be aware and watch out for them down at the beach this summer.

Note: We include close-up photos of nests and chicks in this article, but we do so only to help you recognize them. Please stay far from vulnerable nests and chicks to keep them safe.

Want to help these beach-bird families?

- **Share the shore** - When you see birds out on the beach, give them space. They see people as big, scary predators, and if they have to fly away from you, they are burning precious energy that they need for nesting.
- **Respect the posted areas** - The posted areas are home to birds and their nests. Even if you can't see them, they are still in there, just camouflaged with the ground.
- **Keep pets away and on a leash** - Even dogs that are well trained can potentially pose a threat to nesting birds (plus they look like big predators if you are a small shorebird). Keep all pets leashed and away from roped off areas.



- **Avoid feeding wildlife and keep beaches clean** - Feeding any wildlife will attract predators down to the beach, which then poses a threat to the birds nesting there. At the end of your beach day, take all trash with you. Wildlife gets tangled up in garbage all the time, and garbage can also attract more predators to the beach.



Share the Shore 

Florida AirLife Flies to Dog Island When Medical Emergencies Strike



When residents or visitors to Dog Island have a medical emergency, Crawfordville-based Florida AirLife 1 can help. The air medical service provider brings highly skilled and experienced flight nurses and paramedics in a helicopter equipped as a flying ICU to get patients from the island to higher level or specialty medical care. They transport people of all ages, including pediatric and high-risk obstetrics patients, experiencing trauma from accidents, cardiac or stroke events, respiratory distress, and more.

In an emergency, please call 911. Emergency professionals will determine if air medical transport is needed and will dispatch the helicopter. Florida AirLife 1 is part of Air Methods, the nation's leading emergency air medical service.

Emergency air medical transport is covered as in-network, no matter which program flies or which hospital receives you. Under the federal No Surprises Act, insured patients cannot be charged more than the co-pay, deductible, or maximum out-of-pocket amount outlined in their policy. Patients are encouraged to contact their insurance provider to understand how much they could pay in a medical emergency. Emergency air medical transport is fully covered under Medicaid, and many Medicare Part B and Medicare supplement plans also provide coverage.



Uninsured patients and those who have insurance but are unable to afford their co-pay or deductible are encouraged to contact the Air Methods Patient Advocacy department if they are ever flown by the program. Their advocates work with patients individually, based on their own unique situation, to ensure affordability so patients can focus on recovery rather than their bill. Air medical membership is never needed to be transported by any provider.

For more information, visit <https://www.airmethods.com/air-medical/program/airlife-fl/>.

Minutes of the Q2 Board Meeting, January 3rd, 2026

Call to Order:

10:32 a.m. Board Members present: Mr. Stone, Ms. Kellett, Mr. Brady, Mr. Atwell and Mr. Will.

Approval of Agenda:

Mr. Brady motions approval, Mr. Will seconds, approved unanimously.

Approval of previous minutes:

Motion to approve Mr. Brady, second Mr. Atwell, approved unanimously.

Chair Report:

The Chair (Mr. Stone) began his report by reviewing where the District stands regarding the FEMA/FDEM Helene reimbursement funding for the rebuild of the LCM finger dock, the repair of the limestone revetment and the replacement of the shop front roll door. While the reimbursement has been approved, the funds are being withheld by the Federal government (DHS and FEMA), citing the “Defend the Spend” policy of not disbursing approved and allocated funds. The District via Mr. Jones continues to pursue this funding, but we have little leverage and are at the mercy of current federal policy. The



Chair then cited two examples from a list he had of islanders being less than community minded and thoughtful in their actions, as community-minded actions and civility are something he feels we need to cultivate and encourage. First, he spoke of a family using the parking lot in Carrabelle for long-term storage of their large truck. That lot and limited parking there is to allow residents and property owners access when on the island. Second, the owner of a derelict vehicle on the island, after being notified that it was a candidate for removal since it had not moved in several years, chose to just push it to a different spot rather than let that happen. The Chair would like for property owners to act with integrity and the spirit of cooperation and consideration, rather than the District making rules that are difficult to impossible to enforce. He made clear these random examples illustrate the need of islanders to act in the spirited good of our community and island.

Treasurer’s Report:

Mr. Brady distributed to the Board and those in attendance the November financial statements, noting the balances in the general checking account and others. He explained that he had been on the island over the holidays, and so the December numbers were not included in these presented statements. The

District is currently receiving our ad valorem tax revenue distributions from Franklin County as well as their annual stipend to the District. He noted that he was in the process of establishing another interest-bearing SBA account to hold the ferry dock rebuild contributions until that project comes to fruition. Mr. Brady stated that he believed things are moving along in the '25-'26 fiscal year as expected with hopefully few large unanticipated expenses. (Last year hefty sums were spent on the extensive work done to the LCM and a new trash/construction debris container was purchased.). Mr. Brady explained how tax-deductible donations to the District are tracked by specific donation category such that every donation received is clearly directed toward a particular project (ferry dock, hurricane preparedness, airstrip improvement, Sheriff's patrols). Islanders can also donate to a general fund. Motion to approve the Treasurer's report by Mr. Will, second Ms. Kellett, approved unanimously.

Island Manager Report:

Mr. Buckley remarked that the hook truck and LCM are currently running well, but there will be expenses associated with their continued operation. He noted that Dockside still had some work to perform where the shaft runs through the hull on the LCM and that the port side engine was beginning to burn oil. The hook truck's running gear is in remarkably good shape, but the exterior components have a great deal of deterioration due to rust. He said that we are waiting for the preferred welder to come to the island to work on the holes in the metal body of the garbage compactor, which he hopes will happen soon. One junked car was removed this month. The Chair thanked him for his ongoing efforts for us.



Volunteer Fire Department Committee Report:

The Fire Chief, Mr. Cannon, reported that the DIVFD has received a Starlink wi-fi system from Franklin County primarily for emergency situations, and that he and Mr. Gronholm were looking into obtaining a backup power source for it. Referring to Duke Energy's project, he, along with Mr. Perlis, believed Duke would be taking down their old storage building soon and then building their proposed equipment storage and vehicle use building behind the existing Fire House. Mr. Cannon said that the County is considering an increase to the MSBU annual fee that we all pay, due mostly to the ever-increasing cost of insurance, and that he would keep us informed. He again mentioned that he would make himself available after this meeting to meet anyone interested at the Fire House and instruct them in the use of our equipment and explain the DIVFD operations and procedures.

Airport Committee Report:

Mr. Gronholm, acting co-Chair for this committee, spoke about his initiatives to raise funding by pursuing more annual memberships, donations for general airport expenses, and dedicated donations towards acquiring a large zero-turn mower to better maintain the runway. Mr. Brady started a discussion regarding wet spots on the runway after talking with Mr. Hinshaw regarding the old ditches along the southern and western sides of the runway and their potential for helping to drain the airstrip. Mr. Buckley said there were three major areas that remained wet most of the time. The Chair commented that it was his understanding that since the airstrip was created 70 years ago, subsidence and the rise in the water table had rendered the ditches ineffective, but everyone agreed to apply further study and thought to this long-standing problem. Mr. Cannon noted that tree roots had intruded on the ditches and the airstrip and said that a better solution might be to raise the height of the low wet spots. Mr. Gronholm referred to the on-island dredged sand and its potential use for such a purpose. Mr. Brady and the full Board asked the Committee to move forward with a study of this issue and hopefully bring back potential viable solutions.

Old Business

A. Emergency Communication System: The Chair said that the idea was to have an island-wide notification system in place for emergencies and that Mr. Grape had been tasked with researching the topic for the Board. As he was unable to attend, the Chair, with no objection, held this topic open for future consideration.

B. Ferry Dock Update: The Chair reported that the District has renderings in hand, obtained permits that are good for five years and raised about \$75,000. The Board received an initial cost estimate of \$135,000, but he reminded everyone that due to State of Florida procurement policies the rebuild would need to be let for proposal. The pilings and girders will remain in place, as well as the ramp and floating dock on the current facility. However,



the joists, the decking and railings will be replaced, and the bulkhead will be completely redone, as the existing one is very badly deteriorated. The Chair encouraged everyone to please donate (all donations are tax deductible), so that this important structure can be reworked to the benefit of the island. Mr. Buckley reminded those in attendance that he as the island manager can take donations via the District credit card reader and then number code the transaction to specifically direct those donated funds to the ferry dock rebuild.

C. Current DICD contracts: The Chair noted that several District contracts are near or at their end date. The Island Manager contract is at the head of that list. Our Policy and Procedures manual suggests that a subcommittee be utilized in a bid process of this fiscal magnitude, and the Chair had asked Mr. Teaf, a former DICD Chairman, and Mr. Jones, a consulting engineer familiar with contract processes, to serve. Mr. Teaf, in attendance, reported that an RFP had been developed for this independent contractual position; the RFP had been reviewed by an attorney and widely advertised through the three local papers of record, placed on several internet platforms and posted in more than 25 locations; and the RFP had then been sent to all interested parties. Mr. Teaf reported that only one proposal was submitted, by the current contractor, and that the submittal was responsive and that the monthly and other costs were somewhat higher than the previous contract. The committee recommended the acceptance of the Dog Island Group LLC proposal. Mr. Will moved acceptance of this recommendation, Mr. Atwell seconded, and the vote was unanimous to award the contract to the recommended vendor applicant. The Chair and Mr. Buckley pointed out that the District needs to continue to search for a long-term contractor for the Island Manager position, as Mr. Buckley, while currently assuring us continuity of service, does not want to continue over the long haul. The District



has two pre-event contracts in place in preparation for storm events. These contracts are proactive, allowing us to be ready to react expeditiously to such an event. The current debris removal contract with Aftermath Disaster Recovery out of Texas ends in April. An RFP has been developed, and a subcommittee has been appointed to conduct the process for this pre-event contract letting. The Chair asked for a motion to move forward with this process and to allow him to sign

the winning pre-event contract upon the recommendation of the subcommittee, but only after every Board member has reviewed their recommendation and unanimously concurs with it. This would prevent a lapse in having a debris removal contractor under contract and ready, as well as negating the need for an advertised special meeting of the Board. With that clear stipulation a motion was made by Mr. Brady and seconded by Ms. Kellett, which carried unanimously. In this same vein but falling beneath the fiscal threshold that requires the RFP extensive bid process is our other pre-storm preparedness contract with Rhumblin Consulting, who act as our liaison with FEMA, FDEM and Franklin County Emergency Management and have done so through multiple previous hurricanes. The Chair asked for a motion to extend Rhumblin's pre-event contract for two years, and Mr. Brady made such a motion, seconded by Mr. Will, which passed unanimously. The last contractual issue remaining is that of the passenger ferry. This contract again falls below the fiscal threshold requiring the bid process. The Chair asked for a motion to extend the current operator's contract for six months while the operator acquires the necessary certification for his vessel. As it would be an extension, not a renewal, the fees paid to the operator and by passengers on the scheduled ferry runs would remain the same. Mr. Will moved that six-month extension to begin February 1st, second by Ms. Kellett, passed unanimously. The Chair returned to the Island Manager's contract and asked for a motion to have its start date be

January 1st of 2026, so that there is bookkeeping clarity. Mr. Brady moved and Mr. Will seconded that proposal, which passed unanimously.

D. Fee Schedule Consideration: The Treasurer reminded everyone that the revised Road Use Fee schedule (District Resolution #9118) would become effective on January 5th (mostly an additional \$50 road use fee per vehicle category). The changes to Resolution #04-44 dealing with delivered containers had become effective back in October (the \$2 per cubic foot charge remained unchanged for non-household garbage material, C&D and white goods brought to the shop and placed as directed by the island manager into the open containers there). Mr. Brady then turned to an additional proposed amendment of his to Resolution #9118 that had been raised at the last two meetings of the Board and had been tabled at the last. This proposed change would only affect the road use fee for machinery and vehicles transported to the island on a vessel other than the LCM for a single property’s usage, and the charge would be a monthly or annual fee. (All wheeled or track vehicles brought to the District and placed on District property or our roads pay a road use fee regardless of method of transport.) Mr. Brady addressed the how and why and need for this change, the administration of such an arrangement, the length of time a transport vessel would be allowed to block the launch ramp on the island, our current policy and road use Resolution, our Resolution #6718 regarding the use of the Dock and ramp facilities on the island and ashore, as well as the economic impact that such a change might cause to District revenues. A wide-ranging discussion ensued with Mr. Brady making the motion to adopt the changes as presented. The motion died for lack of a second.



E. Helicopter Services Pad: Mr. Perlis addressed this issue for us, as Mr. Gore was unable to attend. The recent evacuation of an injured islander by the helicopter service out of Carrabelle/Panacea demonstrated that a hard pad was not required. The flight personnel stated that an adequately maintained grass strip/area was all that was required, and in some ways preferred, as it allowed for a much larger target landing area. Their only requirement was that the grass be cut such that it did not exceed the height of their rear rotor. Mr. Brady made a motion to table this topic indefinitely, which was seconded by Mr. Will, passed unanimously.

New Business

A. On-going or Board subjects:

The Chair reminded those in attendance that the next Board meeting will be held on April 4th at 10:30 AM at the DIYC. He also took a moment to speak to the Florida Sunshine laws under which we operate and how they preclude Board members from discussing topics which may appear before them with each other outside of a public meeting, which can then cause meetings to appear contentious. This is

the nature of open government. It can be cumbersome and time-consuming to agenda an item, give public notice of its discussion, allow everyone an opportunity to comment, and then have the Board consider it as a group. (Thank you to those who serve on the Board, serve on committees, study our issues, attend meetings when possible, volunteer, donate, and who voice an informed, thoughtful opinion.)

There was discussion of the removal of the last remaining vessel on the airstrip tie down area. Since the airstrip tie down area is not appropriate for short term islander boat storage, and trailering heavy boats on the roadways causes damage, the Chair asked for a motion for Mr. Will to form a committee and report back to the Board with recommendations as to appropriate parking options. Ms. Kellett so moved, Mr. Brady seconded, passed unanimously.

Mr. Buckley asked for signage to be developed to eliminate the issue of private boats being moored in Tyson Harbor near the LCM finger dock that impede his ability to utilize the sand landing ramp there.

A motion was made to place the topic of access to the floating section of the District's Tyson Harbor dock by island property owners on the April agenda by Mr. Brady, second by Mr. Will, passed unanimously.

Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn by Ms. Kellett, second Mr. Brady, passed by acclamation.



Reminders from Greg Buckley, Island Manager

Please refresh your memory on the island's debris removal policies, especially with regard to the dumpsters:

Island residents are responsible for ALL hazardous materials, including freon and oil from air conditioners, gasoline, motor oil and other petroleum products, acidic liquids, herbicides (RoundUp, etc.), and other toxic or harmful materials.

→ Be sure that you (or your HVAC contractor) remove all freon from old AC equipment before bringing it to the dump. ←

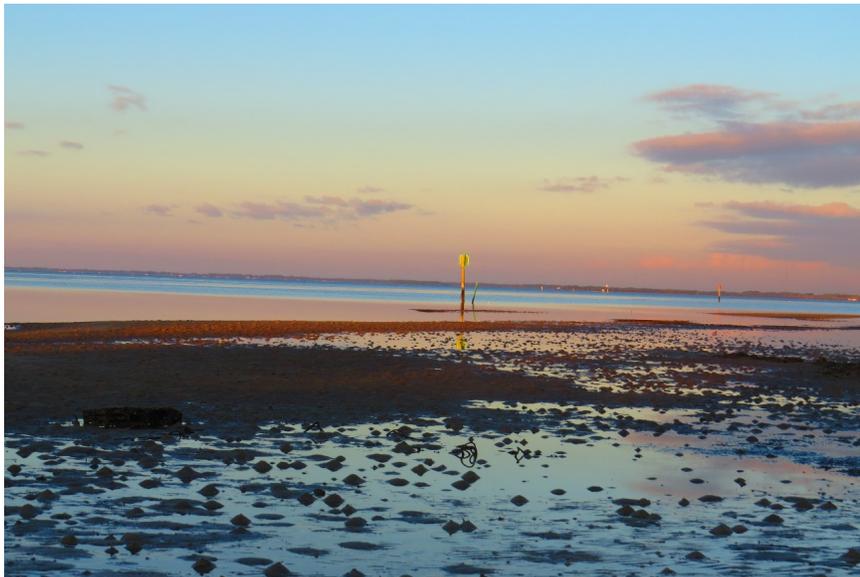
If it's not safe for you or your children to drink or apply to your skin, it should NOT be placed in the dumpsters.



Next Up: Q3 2026 DICD Board Meeting: April 4, 2026 10:30am at DICD Yacht Club

Agenda

1. Call to order
2. Approval of Agenda
3. Approval of Minutes
4. Chairman Report
5. Treasurer's Report
6. Island Manager Report
7. Volunteer Fire Department Report
8. Airport Committee Report
9. Old Business
 - A) Ferry dock update
 - B) Pre-event debris removal contract
 - C) Vessel parking
 - D) Floating dock Tyson Harbor
10. New Business
 - A) Nominating Committee report
11. Adjourn



Handy Reference Information

DICD Website: <http://dogislandconservationdistrict.org>. Includes legal descriptions, financial reports, board member contacts, newsletter archives, and more about the DICD.

Dog Island Conservation District
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REMEMBER!

