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DATE: September 9, 2025

TO: Board of County Commissioners

FROM: Heidi Petito, County Administrator

SUBJECT: Dedicated Funding Beach Management

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As a follow-up to the recent Board meeting, staff are requested to provide clarification regarding the concept of a dedicated funding source. Specifically, the Board seeks a clear explanation of what constitutes a dedicated funding source and how such a mechanism would be applied to support ongoing beach management efforts, including monitoring, maintenance, and periodic nourishment. The following information is provided with input from administration, legal, engineering and finance.

**What is a Dedicated, Ongoing Funding Source?**

A “dedicated funding source” is a specific and reliable revenue stream designated by law for a particular program or purpose. The funds are not subject to the normal annual appropriations process, making them more stable and predictable than general revenue funding. This funding mechanism ensures that a specific service or program, such as beach renourishment or maintenance, has the financial resources it needs, even if economic conditions or legislative priorities shift.

A Dedicated Funding Source could come from a portion of Tourist Development Tax revenues, a special assessment (MSBU/MSTU), or another identified source (Ad Valorem/General Revenue). Those funds would be placed in a dedicated fund for disbursement to its dedicated purpose.

Unlike one-time appropriations, this approach ensures we have:

- Stability – reliable money every year to plan projects.
- Capacity – ability to meet grant matching requirements.
- Leverage – stronger applications for state and federal funding.

**How It’s Applied to Beach Management**

Dedicated funds would be budgeted each year to cover:

1. Monitoring and environmental compliance.
2. Routine maintenance and dune stabilization.
3. Local match requirements for state and federal grants.
4. Storm recovery efforts.
5. Periodic nourishment cycles.

### **Governance & Oversight**

As mentioned in previous discussions, to ensure accountability and coordination, a Beach Management Committee would be created to provide oversight and guidance.

- Composition: Representatives from the county and participating municipalities, along with technical staff support.
- Role: Review annual monitoring reports, recommend budget allocations, evaluate grant opportunities, and prioritize projects.
- Advisory Function: Make recommendations to the County Commission, which retains final budget authority.

This structure ensures all stakeholders have a voice in decision-making and builds community collaboration.

### **Grant Advantage**

Most state and federal shoreline programs require a local cost share, often 35–50% of project costs, and storm recovery efforts around 12.5% of project costs. A dedicated local funding source signals that our county is a committed and reliable partner, which increases our competitiveness for outside dollars.

### **Future Board Authority**

Even if codified in an ordinance or interlocal agreement, future Boards retain the power to amend, repeal, or redirect the funding. One Board cannot legally bind another to a permanent spending decision.

However, codification creates policy stability, it sets a clear expectation for how beach management is funded and makes it more difficult (politically and procedurally) for future Boards to dismantle without deliberate action.

### **Summary**

Codifying a dedicated, ongoing funding source with oversight from a Beach Management Committee does not remove flexibility from future Boards, but it does create a stable, credible system that:

- Protects our shoreline.
- Strengthens our grant applications.
- Spreads the cost of nourishment and monitoring more evenly over time.
- Ensures transparency and collaboration through shared governance.

This approach balances fiscal responsibility with coastal resilience, ensuring our beaches remain an asset for generations to come. Please reach out should you have any additional questions or need further guidance.