

# HardisonInk.com

---

## Levy County agrees to endorse building an oyster reef in bayou to help counteract erosion next to Airport Road on island

*County opts out of endorsing G Street anti-erosion project*



Regional Specialized Sea Grant Agent Samantha Barry explains her request for the county to provide a letter of support for two grants.

### Story and Photos

By Jeff M. Hardison © July 19, 2018 at 2:08 p.m.

**BRONSON** -- Erosion issues in Daughtry Bayou next to Cedar Key are being addressed, Savannah Barry, Ph.D., of the University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences Extension told the Levy County Board of County Commissioners on Tuesday (July 17).



**County Commission  
Chairman John Meeks**

# HardisonInk.com

---



**County Commission Vice  
Chairman Mike Joyner**



**County Commissioner  
Lilly Rooks**



**County Commissioner  
Matt Brooks**

# HardisonInk.com

---



## **County Commissioner Rock Meeks**

Regional Specialized Sea Grant Agent Barry, who works in Cedar Key at the Nature Coast Nature Coast Biological Station, showed

commissioners aerial photographs of the Airport Road section to the north of the bayou and G Street to the east of the Bayou from 1961, 1974, 1994 and 2016.

A significant amount of beach, oyster reef and marsh areas over the past decades have been lost to erosion in that bayou area, she said. This has caused a loss of recreational value of the shoreline, Dr. Barry added.

The municipal leaders in the City of Cedar Key approached the scientists at the Nature Coast Nature Coast Biological Station in regard to the two county-owned, county-maintained roads – Airport Road and G Street, she said.

A plan in 1007 and 2008 to improve the shore next to G Street did not progress, Barry said, due to opposition from homeowners at the time.

Since 2007, erosion has continued, she said. That has resulted in damage to city infrastructure such as water pipes that are buried under the roads, as well as damage to the roads themselves.

Airport Road was significantly compromised during Hurricane Hermine, the fourth hurricane of the 2016 Atlantic hurricane season, she said.

There have been five meetings since 2016, she said, to address the issues related to erosion in that bayou.

Dr. Barry has previously presented the Daughtry Bayou Coastal Erosion Wrap-Up Workshop on March 29 at Cedar Key Community Center as one of those meetings. Stakeholders from a broad range of public and private groups, including residential and business property owners, met.

After a review of possible methods to address erosion there, including hardening of seawalls, rip-rap boulders and beach re-nourishment, she said, the group determined the best method would be to use over the five meetings.

The scientists are seeking the County Commission to issue a letter of support for grant funding to help the city obtain revenue to implement the two projects.

Both projects will be giant tidal reef balls, like those used over the past two decades at least, Barry said. They have proved to be successful in helping building oyster reefs. Going inshore from those reefs, salt marsh and beach dunes would build as the reefs

# HardisonInk.com

---

became established, Barry said.

County Commissioner Lilly Rooks said that if this project succeeds in building the oyster reefs and subsequent marsh and beach, then the county would be spending less money than in decades past as it has repaired Airport Road following storm events.

One grant application is for \$384,000 and the other grant request is for \$60,000, to start both the Airport Road and the G Street projects respectively, Barry said. Dr. Barry mentioned the Airport Road project is more expensive.

If these grants are awarded, Barry said, there is zero required match from the city or county, although the University of Florida would need to provide a little bit of money.

County Commissioner Rooks made a motion for the county to issue a letter supporting the grant application for the Airport Road project, but not for the G Street project, because she did not think there was complete endorsement of that project from the G Street residents.

County Commissioner Matt Brooks seconded the motion, which met with a 5-0 vote of approval.

In answering a question from County Commission Vice Chairman Mike Joyner, Barry said that if funding is awarded, this project could begin as early as September of 2019.