

City of Atlantic Beach
Mayor Glasser Informational Summaries
March 2021 Bridgeport Barge Incident

APRIL 6, 2021

Jax Beach Mayor Hoffman and I had the opportunity to visit the Barge Bridgeport up close today, courtesy of US Coast Guard Sector Jacksonville. Thank you and what an impressive bunch our Coasties are!

Of course, we take this seriously and the City has heard from many ABers. In regular contact with the USCG and others, I am confident there is not an environmental threat at this time. The barge has been grounded in soft sand 1 mile off the coast of Hanna Park for the last two weeks, after hitting the jetties and coming to rest in its current location. The vessel hull was damaged, and there was water intrusion but NOT to the cargo compartment. The cargo is contained like "a box inside a box." Recent weather conditions have not caused shifting. The vessel is cordoned off, tugs are there 24-7, and it is stable. Salvage and removal are being coordinated by the barge owner with heavy equipment to be placed out there in the next few days, and with close monitoring and cooperation of many governmental agencies, to include USCG, ACE, COJ, FDEP, OSHA, and NOAA.

Again, no discharge or threat to the environment (air, water, beaches, or marine life) from app. 3000 tons of Agremax cargo or the vessel's diesel tanks has been reported. Agremax is heavy stuff, used as an ingredient for road sub-base, landfill cover, roofing material, and concrete. The City will soon be posting an official update on our monitoring of this issue, the safe removal of cargo, and the "floating" of the barge to move it for repairs. If the situation changes, we will report on it. We will also learn more as the cargo is removed. All lines of communication are open. Of course, we all want the barge and its cargo moved, as quickly and safely as possible. But, FYI, this is probably going to take weeks, not days.

I am satisfied that, with so many eyes on this situation and close coordination, we are getting the best information available. I can be reached at eglasser@coab.us.

MAY 27, 2021

This post is an update to report an adverse development concerning the Bridgeport Barge salvage operation. As you may know, this barge ran aground in sand some distance off the shore of Hanna Park Beach and Atlantic Beach in late March, after being damaged when it hit the jetties. The cargo onboard was Agremax, a material used for road and construction projects, among other applications. The responsible party is Dann Ocean Towing, Inc. with

response efforts being handled by Global Diving and Salvage, Inc., a MER company. All efforts are being closely monitored on a daily basis by many government stakeholders.

Unfortunately, weather conditions have made the complex salvage operation for transferring the Agremax off the barge particularly challenging. Following shifts in the barge's position, hatches covering the cargo fell off earlier this month, with much of the remaining cargo released into the ocean. None of the diesel aboard was discharged from the vessel. For information, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regards the disposal of Agremax as solid waste. It is not regulated as hazardous waste. Any unauthorized discharge could be addressed as solid waste, and its impacts could be addressed at the appropriate time by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP), who has primary oversight re: the Agremax. I am not an expert on solid or hazardous waste so will not engage in discussion of these topics.

Health, safety, and the public's welfare are of utmost concern to all parties. Government oversight is being coordinated under a unified response team that includes the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG), FDEP, State Emergency Response group, and Florida Fish and Wildlife (FWC). All updates and the response of Dann Ocean are being coordinated through this team and other stakeholders. The City of Atlantic has no response, oversight, regulatory, or enforcement role, but we have good communication with all parties so we can be responsive to the public's concerns.

In their coordination with Dann Ocean, FDEP is assuring they take all necessary steps to protect the coastline and provide a status on the ocean floor. As of May 26th, there have been no signs that any cargo has washed ashore, as verified by FDEP, and there has been no basis to trigger any advisories or cautions. As FDEP conducts its full assessment, a necessary baseline will be established to determine any potential impacts at the site.

This is the website with daily updates about the Bridgeport response:

www.bargebridgeportresponse.com/

Residents or media persons with questions are encouraged to contact Jim Lawrence directly at (203) 550-2621 or by email at JLawrence@mtinetworkusa.com.

JUNE 6, 2021

Greetings -

The Bridgeport Barge that is visibly grounded off the coast was in the news after it ran aground back in March. I have posted on it a few times, and most recently I posted on May 27 about an adverse development where an unknown amount of the cargo - Agremax - was discharged into the ocean.

We (the City) are absolutely monitoring for any updates or advisories, but do not have an oversight, regulatory, or enforcement role, and we are not a primary source for information. FDEP does not consider it hazardous waste and has issued no advisory at this time. There may be an enforcement action later, based on the discharge of the cargo as solid waste and its impacts. These are not our calls in Atlantic Beach.

WJCT recently reported on the discharge, and I am glad that at least one news source has done so because it is definitely of public interest. Yes, there is debate on the material, but that is not under the City's purview. For more info, the below website provides regular updates. Many governmental agencies are closely coordinating or have an oversight role, including FDEP, USCG, and FWC. We are not contributors to this site but I WILL ask that this link be posted on the City website.

www.bargebridgeportresponse.com