

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE MEETING
Kiawah Island Municipal Center
Council Chambers
September 16, 2014, 2014 3:00 PM

Agenda

- I. **Call to Order:** *Mr. Labriola called the meeting to order at 3:00 pm.*
- II. **FOIA:** Notice of this meeting has been published, and posted in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act and the requirements of the Town of Kiawah Island.

III. **Roll Call:**

Present: John D. Labriola, Chairman
 David Elliott
 William Stewart
 Marilyn Olson
 Liz King, KIGR
 Jack Kotz, KINHC
 Jim Jordan, TOKI
 Aaron Given, TOKI
 Tumiko Rucker, TOKI Administrator

Absent: Jim Chitwood
 John Wright
 Amanda Mole, ARB
 Dave Achey, KICA
 Leila Gable, KICA
 Justin Core, KINHC

IV. **Approval of Minutes:**

- A. Environmental Committee Meeting Minutes of July 7, 2014

Mr. Jordan made a motion to approve the minutes of the July 7, 2014 Environmental Committee meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Given and was unanimously approved.

V. **Old Business**

None

VI. **New Business**

- A. Tallow Tree Year 2 Treatments

Mr. Jordan presented to the Committee the plan for the second year of the Tallow Tree eradication project. He reviewed the first year the Town contracted with Marshfield Forest Services to treat approximately 130 acres at a cost of \$23,000.00. He indicated that this year's proposal would concentrate on the four resort golf courses and include a section between Ocean Course Drive and the Ocean Course that was treated last year but needed to be retreated due to the number of trees.

Mr. Jordan stated that the proposed cost of the second year of treatment would be \$8,000.00. He requested that the Committee make a recommendation for approval of the proposal and fund the amount out of the Environmental Committee's Budget.

Committee Members discussed the proposal with a comparative to the work completed and the cost of the work that was done in the previous year. They discussed which entities contributed to the project and if the golf courses have been reminded of the intended work to be done. Mr. Jordan indicated that the golf courses had not been notified as of now because work had not been scheduled. Ms. Rucker added that all the project phases had been agreed to in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed last year.

Committee Members discussed the project is ongoing. The initial treatment is to take control of the larger trees but retreatment may be necessary. Upkeep of the treatment of smaller trees and new sprouts will be required in future project proposals for maintenance.

Committee Members discussed what should be done with the trees that are dead or dying. Mrs. Olson questioned if it was up to the individual entity to make a decision as to if they would maintain the dead look or dispose of the trees. Mr. Jordan indicated that it is preferred that the trees are left to become part of the environment for the wildlife value unless a safety issue made their disposal necessary.

Ms. King pointed out the potential issue of many big trees that are designated for treatment and when dead will be very visible at some of the golf courses. Mr. Jordan stated that after treatment it would fall on the maintenance department of each golf course to make a determination if the trees needed to be removed. Ms. King indicated that "the trees and who is responsible for what" has come up when trying to make a determination on disposal. She indicated that final decisions have been delayed until the next phase of the project to see what direction the Town wanted to go in disposal.

Ms. Rucker recalled there were some questions in reference to tree removal after the initial treatment. She suggested the Town could develop a written policy to provide guidance or recommendations for tree removal. The policy statement recommendation could be distributed at same time the property owners are updated on the tree eradication project.

Ms. King made a motion to approve the recommendation of Phase II of the Tallow Tree Eradication Project. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Olson and unanimously passed.

B. Bobcat Management Plan

Mr. Jordan stated that the Bobcat Management Plan was created in 2008 and updated 2011 and 2014. He indicated that it was presented to the Committee for their review and to provide feedback of suggestions, comments or changes before distribution. Mr. Jordan stated the updated plan was reviewed by the Habitat Committee of the Conservancy and can be used in the planning of future development of the Island. He added that even though

the plan is site specific it has been used in discussions with other communities that have bobcats.

Mr. Labriola questioned if there was an indication the coyotes have had any impact on the bobcats. Mr. Jordan replied that up to now there had not been any impact noted to the approximately 35 bobcats residing on the Island.

Ms. Rucker reported she met with Mr. Blizzard from the Naturalist Group. The group, along with Mr. Given, is working on updating the bird boxes in their Bird Box Program. Mr. Given's assessment has identified one hundred boxes that require replacement. Mr. Blizzard requested help in acquiring the boxes and assorted accessories required for installation. Ms. Rucker suggested the request for funding be presented to the Environmental Committee for consideration and discussion. She presented a quote for the boxes and materials in the amount of \$2,900.00.

Mr. Given gave a brief explanation of the program in which volunteers check each of the 200 boxes once a week and record the number of eggs and or chicks. He noted that a number of the boxes are in disrepair and need to be replaced. Mr. Elliott and Mr. Jordan explained that historically the boxes were built on the Island with leftover scrap lumber which is no longer allowed.

Members discussed that the program is part of the Naturalist Group and not a Town program and questioned the Town funding the purchase of the boxes. They also discussed the Naturalist Group proposed option of working with the group in providing funding for the acquisition of the boxes with the funding being returned as the boxes are sold. Members agreed that accounting involved in the proposal was too cumbersome and if the group required funding to submit a funding request to the Town. Ms. Rucker indicated she brought the funding request to the Environmental Committee as a contribution to the Naturalist Group.

Mr. Jordan made the suggestion that the if the Committee determines that the program has value, have the Town purchase the boxes and take over the managing of the volunteers and the data, therefore eliminating the complications. Ms. Rucker agreed that there was a need to set some kind of structure or charter around that segment of the Town's Environmental Program. Committee Members discussed additional source options available to acquire the boxes.

Committee Members agreed to Mr. Jordan's proposal for the Committee to fund and manage the bird box program.

Mrs. Olson made a motion to approve \$2,900.00 to purchase 100 bird boxes. The motion was seconded by Mr. Kotz and unanimously approved.

VII. Reports:

A. Town of Kiawah Island Wildlife Department – Jim Jordan/Aaron Given

Mr. Jordan presented to the Committee the most current update on turtle nest depredation;

2014 Kiawah Sea Turtle Nesting Summary

- ❖ 125 Turtle Nests (total to date)
 - 26 depredated by coyotes (22 first night) – 21% of nests
 - 4 nests totally depredated
 - 22 nests partially depredated, relocated, and screened
 - 912 eggs depredated – average of 43 eggs depredated per nest

 - 1372 total eggs depredated by coyotes
 - 10 % of total estimated number of eggs

2014 Egg Depredation Rates in South Carolina (54 Nesting Beaches)

- Kiawah Island
 - Coyotes – 10%
 - Raccoons – 0%

- Other Coyote Depredation in SC
 - Botany Bay Island – 10 %
 - Botany Bay Plantation – 2 %
 - Hobcaw Beach – 8 %
 - Sand Island (TYWC) – 54 %
 - Seabrook Island – 1%
 - South Island (TYWC) – 50 %
 - North Island (TYWC) – 47 %

Committee members questioned if there are any statistics on the survival rate of depredated eggs that are relocated into new nests. Mr. Jordan indicated that the information is not available at this time but may be at a later date. He explained that he has very limited access to the state's data. Ms. Rucker stated that she had been in contact with Ms. Pate requesting that the Town's Biologist full access to information be reinstated. Access would help support Mr. Jordan's findings and validate reports given to the Town. Ms. Rucker indicated the request was to be granted but has not been fulfilled thus far. She also stated that it was agreed to share at the end of the year a reconciliation of lessons learned and deterrents creating a *white paper* of recommendations for the next year.

Mr. Labriola expressed his distress at the lack of cooperation of the DNR. He indicated that he was disturbed that the community supports its staff, biologists and residents who volunteer their time and effort to store data with no assistance from DNR. He indicated that it looks like a competition and does not bode well with a community that just wants to do the right thing. Mr. Jordan noted the DNR's Turtle Program lobbied extensively for the eradication of coyotes from the Island. They gave a presentation to Environmental Committee and disseminated a great deal of negative information to the members of the Town's Turtle Patrol and the public that made for a very difficult season.

Ms. Rucker suggested formalizing with DNR the Town program, with the Town being the permit holder. This would avoid future difficulties with the Town's Biologist trying to obtain information as a non-permit holder. Committee members discussed the history of the history of the Town's volunteer group.

2014 Predator GPS Project

✚ Bobcats

- Bobcat 350 – Collar dropped off and recovered
- Bobcat 600 – Juvenile Male - Roaming Johns Island (Briar Creek to Mullet Hall)
- Bobcat 250 – Adult Female – No denning yet
- Bobcat 800 – Adult Male – Collar low battery, needs to be dropped off
- Bobcat 400 – Adult Female – Collar malfunction, could not drop off
- Bobcat 200 – Juvenile Female – Collar malfunction, could not drop off

✚ Coyotes

- Coyote 300 – Adult Female – Ocean Course

Collar stopped working on August 18, unable to recover

Bobcat Articles and Video

- National Wildlife Magazine (NWF) - July
- SC Wildlife Magazine – Sept/Oct Issue
- National Geographic “Urban Jungle” – “Suburbia” episode

East End Beach Erosion

- Permit application submitted on May 30
- Biological Assessment submitted on June 10
- Comments received July 23
- Responded to comments on August 14
- Additional comments received from NMFS on September 2
- Responded on September 3

Painted Bunting Backyard Banding

- Completed for 2014
- 110 new birds
- 75 recaptures

Fall Bird Banding

- Daily Banding began at Captain Sam's on August 15
 - 927 new birds
 - 201 recaptures
 - 37 species

Cassique Mitigation Site

- 6th and final Vegetation Survey completed on September 11, 2014
 - 73 % vegetation coverage

B. Kiawah Island Community Association Land & Lakes Management
No report

C. Kiawah Island Golf Resort – Liz King

Ms. King reported that the Triathlon would be held this weekend with many participants and spectators expected on the Island.

D. Kiawah Island Architectural Review Board – Amanda Mole
No report

E. Environmental Science Committee – Jack Kotz

Mr. Kotz reported there will be a symposium on November 6, 2014. The Conservancy has completed its review of the 1974 Kiawah Environmental Study. In conjunction with the 40th anniversary of the modern Kiawah Island the author of the study, John Mark Dean, along with Mark Permar will be speaking on their rolls in the development of Kiawah.

VIII. Correspondence:

None

IX. Citizen Comments:

Marilyn Blizard –

Mrs. Blizard stated that Mr. Arendt with SCDNR has reported to her that there is a proposal to help the Diamondback Terrapin from drowning in crab pots by the evaluation and development of a better Bycatch Reduction Device (BRD). He is requesting volunteers from Kiawah to help with the project and has come to the Committee to see if it is willing to work with DNR and the Town Biologists.

Mr. Labriola made the suggestion that Mr. Jordan contact Mr. Arendt to assess what would be required as far as time and resources and then follow-up.

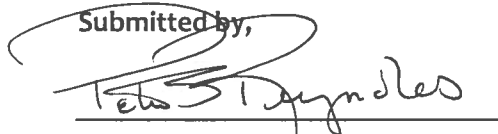
X. Committee Member Comments:

Mr. Elliott reported that ATAX funding was used to support a symposium on the first naturalists that came to Kiawah. The symposium had now evolved into a significant book that will be published on April 1st and Charles Nelson, one of the authors and researchers of the book will be coming from England to speak on Kaiwah.

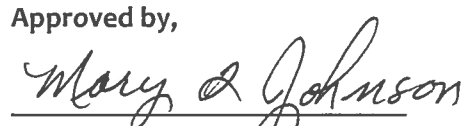
Mrs. Olson presented a “before and after” picture of a residential boardwalk that a followed the new guidelines of the Town and ARB. Going forward, with the exception of the portion of Eugenia that does not fall under its purview, the ARB will only be approving shore perpendicular ramps that fall within the Town ten foot limit, and straight, flat, horizontal or step solution.

Mrs. Olson called attention to the trash boxes on the beach which is the next concern on the beach that will have to be addressed in the interest of dune preservation.

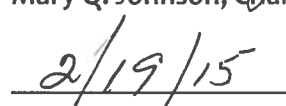
XI. **Adjournment:**
The meeting adjourned at 4:58 pm.

Submitted by,


Petra S. Reynolds, Town Clerk

Approved by,


Mary Q. Johnson, Chairman



Date