

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE MEETING
Kiawah Island Municipal Center
Council Chambers
April 28, 2014; 3:00 PM

MINUTES

I. Call to Order:

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
 Jim Chitwood
 Marilyn Olson
 Norm Shea, KICA
 Liz King, KIGR
 Justin Core, KINHC
 Jim Jordan, TOKI
 Aaron Given, TOKI

Absent: John Wright
 William Stewart
 Amanda Mole
 Dave Achey, KICA
 Leila Gable, KICA
 Jack Kotz, KINHC
 Tumiko Rucker, TOKI Administrator

IV. Approval of Minutes:

A. Environmental Committee Meeting Minutes of March 3, 2014

Mr. Jordan made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 3, 2014 Environmental Committee meetings. The motion was seconded by Mr. Elliott and was unanimously approved.

V. Old Business

None

VI. New Business

A. Coyote Monitoring Update

Mr. Jordan reported that coyote trapping had begun on March 12th and been ongoing when there is staff was available to monitor the traps daily. He indicated that the services of a local professional trapper was being used to weekly set foothold traps which inflict

the least amount of injury. Mr. Jordan stated that an adult female that weighted 28 lbs. 10 oz. was trapped and on April 1st near the Ocean Course. He indicated that the coyote was collared to monitor her movements and is roaming the Island. Mr. Jordan stated that the coyote is spending much time in undeveloped areas from Little Bear Island to the Sanctuary.

Mrs. Olson questioned if the tracking would be able to determine if this coyote was predated turtle nests. Mr. Jordan responded by stating that as long as the coyote locations were being logged it was possible. He noted that locations are logged every three hours but could be increased during the nesting season if indications are that the coyote is spending time close to the nesting areas. Mr. Jordan stated that he had another GPS collar and that trapping would continue for a short time in hopes that an additional coyote could be caught and collared.

Committee members discussed the options available in the event that that coyotes were caught and not released. Members also discussed if any other information had been gathered from the coyotes themselves during the trapping/tracking process or if any determination could be made to the number of number of coyotes on the Island.

Mr. Elliott commented that at the last meeting members indicated that efforts should be made to find other ways of protecting turtle nest on the beach and asked if there was any new information. Mr. Jordan stated that he received little feedback from his inquiries to the State Turtle Coordinator for additional protection methods with the exception of the removal of all the coyotes.

Mr. Jordan stated that he suggested to the State Turtle Coordinator and Kiawah Turtle Patrol members the implementation of a data form, which in the event of a turtle nest predation, would give more specific predator information. He stated that both State and Island members were resistant to the concept, citing that the DNR required information currently being obtained was sufficient. Mr. Jordan presented his data sheet to the Committee for their review and feedback. He requested the Committee members indorse the data sheet and make a recommendation that it be used by the Turtle Patrol. Committee Members discussed the great work done by the volunteer members of the Turtle Patrol. They agreed that dispelling misinformation and focusing on the advantages of good data collection would overcome the resistance of the Turtle Patrol members. Committee Members also agreed that a better understanding was essential for creating a positive impact.

Mr. Chitwood made a motion that with the Committee endorsement of the Sea Turtle depredation form and makes it a requirement that members of the Turtle Patrol complete the form in the pursuit of the long-term protection of turtle nests on Kiawah. The motion was seconded by Ms. King and was unanimously passed.

B. Tallow Tree Update

Mr. Jordan stated that he and Mr. Given will be completing the spring survey of the Tallow Trees to make a determination on what percentage of the trees have been destroyed. He stated that a preliminary survey of the Island have shown very positive results that the trees that have been treated are dead. Committee members discussed if there are any safety potential safety concerns associated with the dying trees. Mr. Jordan stated that dying trees had the potential of becoming an issue. He stated he had been contacted by some of the Island entities with concerns over the removal and disposal of dying trees. Mr. Jordan indicated he felt the issue was addressed at the beginning of the project and that the Town did not make a commitment at that time for the removal of the dead trees. Mr. Jordan stated that the Town made the commitment for the treatment of the trees but it was his understanding that it was up to the individual entity or the landowner to handle any esthetic or safety issues. Committee members discussed the ongoing project and the need for the retreatment with new trees expected to replace the ones destroyed.

C. Dune Walkovers – ARB Meeting

Mr. Labriola stated that he, Mrs. Olson, Ms. Mole and Ms. Rucker met at the ARB offices to discuss concerns over the Dune Walkovers. He indicated the discussion dealt with concerns with the guidelines, interpretations and approvals of the walkovers.

Mrs. Olson explained that her concern, since the meeting, is that the Town's position is that it does not regulate a fixed height on the terminus of the beach, only that it must not exceed the 10 foot allowed by Town Ordinance. She indicated that it is her opinion that DEHC guidelines clearly state that private boardwalks are to be shore perpendicular unless a handicap variance is approved. Mrs. Olson stated that the Town has approved twenty-six ramped boardwalks in the last year that do not follow this shore perpendicular guideline. She stated the ARB was in agreement with the interpretation of the DHEC guideline and has not been giving approval to ramped boardwalks. Mrs. Olson stated it was her concern that property not under the ARB purview have been allowed to have ramped boardwalks in recent weeks and that she feels are not only intrusive but also have hand rails attached.

Mr. Elliott proposed to have a boardwalk ordinance that matched the ARB requirements. Mrs. Olson responded by stating that the Beach Walkover Ordinance that was passed recommended by the Environmental Committee and passed by Town Council last year was to mirror the DHEC requirements. She stated that the issue seemed to be with the Town's interpretation and implementation of the ordinance.

Mr. Labriola suggested that he, Mrs. Olson, Mr. Lameo, Ms. Rucker and ARB staff visit the boardwalks in questions to see if there is a way for all involved can come to a resolution of the interpretation of the ramp issue.

Mr. Lameo explained in the Town's interpretation of the DHEC ordinance it does not state that a boardwalk cannot turn and ramp down, just that it cannot extend over the length

requirement. He explained that the “shore perpendicular” was referring to “running out to the beach”, and was in the Town’s Beach Management Act, not a DHEC requirement. Mr. Lameo noted that this requirement was to keep boardwalks as straight as possible over to the dunes to the beach.

Mrs. Olson also questioned what the Town’s position was on the rubber matting that extends from the boardwalk at the County Park. She expressed her concern that the matting is being extended on a yearly basis and now extends onto the active beach. Mrs. Olson stated that is not only looks bad but cannot be environmentally friendly. Mr. Lameo responded by stating that research would have to be done to see if is a boardwalk that is grandfathered by the Town’s Ordinance or if the Town request that it be brought into compliance.

VII. Reports:

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

Mr. Jordan updated the Committee on four improvements that were going to be implemented during the next bobcat trapping project. The modifications are in response to resident concerns for the treatment of the roosters that are used during trapping.

1. Continue to experiment with the new cage trap protocol in hopes of increasing bobcat capture success.
2. Add additional vegetation or other materials to the top of the rooster compartment to increase the protection of the rooster to the elements.
3. Place a wooden roost in each compartment for the rooster to perch on at night.
4. Flush water dishes daily to keep water as clean as possible.

Mr. Jordan reviewed his monthly report with the Committee;

2014 Predator GPS Project

- Bobcat trapping for 2014 was conducted February 3 - February 28, March 12 – April 10
- 6 bobcat collars deployed (3 adult females, 1 juvenile female, 1 adult male, 1 juvenile male)
 - ✓ Bobcat 350 – Adult Female – Town Hall (2012 – Bobcat 800, 2013 – Bobcat 700)
 - ✓ Bobcat 600 – Juvenile Male – Captain Sam’s Spit (offspring of 2013 Bobcat 450)
 - ✓ Bobcat 250 – Adult Female – The Preserve (2012 – Bobcat 200)
 - ✓ Bobcat 800 – Adult Male – The Preserve (2004 – VHF collar as a juvenile, 2008 – Bobcat 360, 2009 – Bobcat 110)
 - ✓ Bobcat 400 – Adult Female – Beach Club (2011 – Bobcat 800, 2012 - Bobcat 250)
 - ✓ Bobcat 200 – Juvenile Female – Captain Sam’s Spit (offspring of 2014 Bobcat 350)

Mr. Chitwood asked Mr. Jordan, at the next meeting, to give the Committee an update on any information retrieved from the analysis of bobcat trapping data. He made the recommendation that the Bobcat Management Plan be updated every two years. Mr. Chitwood stated that the update would confirm information previously gathered or include additional new information.

- Coyote Trapping began March 12 and is ongoing
- 1 coyote collar deployed (Adult Female)

- ✓ Coyote 300 – Adult Female – Ocean Course (range extends from Little Bear Island west to The Sanctuary)

Aerial Photography

- Was flown by Kucera International February 14, 2014
- Draft photography received on March 26
- Corrections needed, final aerials should be delivered by early May

Mr. Jordan clarified for Mr. Labriola that the aerial photography would be done every three years.

East End Beach Erosion

- Met with SCDNR, USFWS, DHEC-OCRM, and CSE on March 26 to discuss erosion issue and possible solutions
- Coastal Science and Engineering is preparing a permit application for a small-scale inlet relocation project if needed

Mr. Elliott suggested Mr. Jordan may want to contact the individual that had great success managing beaches in Florida and now resides on Wadmalaw. He stated that she many have experiences that may be helpful could be shared with Kiawah.

Mr. Given reviewed his monthly report with the Committee;

Marsh Sparrow Banding

- ↓ 14 sessions
- ↓ 157 new birds (140 recaptures)

Winter Songbird Banding

- ↓ 5 sessions
- ↓ 340 new birds (141 recaptures)

Summer Breeding Bird Survey (Point-counts)

- ↓ May 21-30

Painted Bunting Banding

- ↓ Beginning in May

Black Rail Survey (SCDNR)

- ↓ Will be conducted 1 evening in May, June, and July

2012 Fall Migration Banding Report complete and will be on the website soon.

Committee members engaged in an in-depth discussion of the publication of information gained in the studies that are conducted on the Island. Members also discussed the importance to archive all research studies and reports for future reference. Mr. Labriola asked Mr. Jordan to review the websites for Wildlife and Town and report on what information is archived on those sights.

B. Kiawah Island Community Association Land & Lakes Management – Norm Shea

Mr. Shea stated that his department had been quiet. He reported on the report of a nuisance alligator in the Preserve. He noted that the alligator had apparently had been roped in the past by the roped that was imbedded in its skin and had to be removed. Mr. Shea suggested better tracking of the wildlife companies that are called to the Island. Mr. Jordan stated that no company is permitted to remove an alligator within the Town of Kiawah Island boundaries without applying for a permit and he currently hold all the DNR issued tags.

C. Kiawah Island Golf Resort – Liz King

Ms. King reported that the Nature Center had two new alligator hatchlings but is not using them for any educational displays at the moment.

Ms. King also noted that the Leatherback that washed up on Seabrook was tagged came from Trinidad. She indicated that the photograph received an enormous amount likes and shares generated from the Nature Centers Facebook page.

D. Kiawah Island Architectural Review Board – Amanda Mole

No report.

E. Environmental Science Committee – Jack Kotz

Mr. Core reported that the summary of the report had been finalized at the last Environmental Science Committee meeting. He stated that the summary went to the Executive Committee and the Board of Trustees for their approval. Mr. Core noted that the Environmental Science Committee is now looking at several suggestions for future research projects.

VIII. Correspondence:

None

IX. Citizen Comments:

Ms. Paula Feldman stated that she was pleased with the proposed improvements that Mr. Jordan had outlined for future bobcat trapping protocols. She requested consideration of the addition that the water for the roosters be checked more than once per day during the trapping season.

X. Committee Member Comments:

Mrs. Olson stated that she had an environmental concern about the excessive proliferation of wood on the beach in building shore parallel ramps on boardwalks. She stated that the terminus of a private boardwalk should not be based on homeowners' needs and wants.

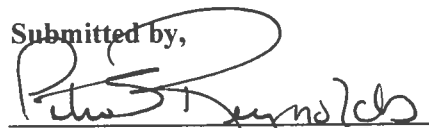
Mrs. Olson noted that some of the garbage boxes along the beach were now in the primary dunes and should be moved further seaward.

Mrs. Olson stated that there are concerns about the Town's leniency in enforcing leash laws in the West Beach area. She indicated with the recent popularity of Beachwalker Park, there is now a very small distance between the beach goers and where the off leash area starts. Committee members discussed the dog issue and the problems with enforcement. Mrs. Olson made the suggestion to initiate restricted hours when dogs are allowed on the beach. Mr. Jordan agreed that this is an issue that needs to be addressed by the Environmental Committee and along with the Town.

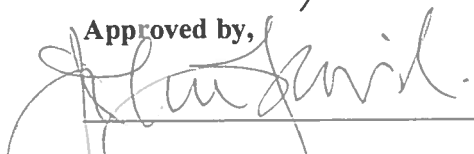
XI. Adjournment:

The meeting adjourned at 5:00 pm.

Submitted by,


Petra S. Reynolds, Town Clerk

Approved by,


John D. Labriola, Chairman

7-18-2014
Date