

**ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE MEETING**  
Kiawah Island Municipal Center  
Council Chambers  
March 13, 2018; 2:00 PM

**Minutes**

I. Call to Order: Mr. Jordan called the meeting to order at 2:00 pm.

II. Roll Call:

PRESENT: Jim Jordan, Chairman  
Jim Chitwood  
Jim Sullivan  
Lynne Sager  
Jane Ellis  
Lynette Schroeder  
Michael Guniczak  
Scott Nelson  
Jack Kotz  
ARB: Sara Senst  
KICA: Matt Hill  
Andrew Kreminski  
KIGR: Liz King  
TOKI: Aaron Given

ABSENT: John Leffler  
Pam Wilson  
Beverly Gholson  
KINHC: Justin Core

ALSO PRESENT: Diana Mezzanotte, Council Liaison

III. Approval of Minutes:

A. Environmental Committee Meeting Minutes of February 13, 2018

*Mr. Sullivan made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 13, 2018 Environmental Committee meeting. The motion was seconded and was unanimously approved as amended.*

IV. Reports:

A. Town of Kiawah Island

Mr. Jordan reviewed his report for March 2018

- ✦ Wild About Video Series
  - February Video – Marsh Sparrows

Mr. Jordan presented the first in the new series of short, three to four minute, videos on various wildlife related topics and research done by the Wildlife Department.

- March Video – Bobcats

- ✦ Alligator Research

- Two of the five tags deployed last July are still working and giving very interesting data.
- Collaborative research project with Clemson/Nemours
  - Projected to start May/June
  - 20 alligators are anticipated to be caught, fitting six with GPS

✚ Bobcat GPS Study

- 2018 trapping (February 12-16) Began with six collars, four failed to work.
- Three bobcats captured (2 GPS)
  - Bobcat 250 – 2/14 – Adult Female – 17 lbs. 5 oz. – Ocean Park – New
  - Bobcat 150 – 2/15 – Juvenile Male – 15 lbs. 10 oz. – County Park – New
  - Bobcat 3 – 2/16 – Juvenile Female – 12 lbs. – The Preserve – New – No GPS

Mr. Given reviewed his bird banding report for March 2018

✚ Marsh Sparrow Banding

	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018 (as of 3/7/18)	TOTAL
Seaside Sparrow	106	245 (107)	109 (118)	99 (111)	204 (100)	159 (202)	166 (188)	1,088 (826)
Nelson's Sparrow	115	39 (13)	10 (5)	50 (21)	56 (15)	103 (28)	84 (43)	457 (125)
Saltmarsh Sparrow	64 (1)	24 (28)	28 (10)	46 (30)	39 (27)	55 (35)	36 (26)	292 (157)
Other Species	23	15 (1)	9 (1)	24 (1)	25	42 (6)	35 (5)	173 (14)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>308 (1)</b>	<b>323 (149)</b>	<b>156 (134)</b>	<b>219 (163)</b>	<b>324 (142)</b>	<b>359 (271)</b>	<b>321 (262)</b>	<b>2,010 (1,122)</b>
# of Sessions	21	23	16	24	40	44	31	199

✚ School Groups (Engaging Creative Minds)

- Four fieldstrips scheduled - Three schools so far, two classes from Mt. Zion, one class from Angel Oak, and a class from Frierson will be coming in April

✚ Conservation Matters – March 28<sup>th</sup> at 3 pm in the Municipal Center Council Chambers (Alligators/Marsh Sparrows)

**B. Kiawah Island Community Association Land & Lakes Management**

Mr. Hill reported the fish kill from the cold weather last month had been taken care of. He noted that during the cold there were five banded pelicans found dead. He indicated that the data received showed four of the five were from North Carolina and four of the five were juveniles that suffered frostbite and infection. The non-juvenile choked on a fish. Mr. Kreminski added that only 20% of juvenile pelicans make it through their first year.

Mr. Hill reported the Community Association was contacted by a group that wants to use one of the ponds to test new technology to deal with harmful algae blooms. He explained the treatment process has had success in testing a pond downtown but had reservations on if there would be harmful backend effects or repercussions of the treatment.

**C. Kiawah Island Golf Resort**

Ms. King reported on a meeting with the Lowcountry Marine Mammal Network. She stated the propose of the meeting was to discuss two items; making sure that tour operators and others are operating in a manner that is sensitive to the dolphins. The Resort is planning to

host a workshop in late April to understand appropriate dolphin edict. Ms. King stated the second item was to incorporate more *citizen science*, or more involvement and understanding, in the dolphin counter tour trips.

Ms. King reported that she learned from the Lowcountry Marine Mammal Network and other studies there are approximately three hundred bottle nose dolphins within the Charleston Area. There are twenty-five to thirty individual dolphins in the Kiawah River and of those only eleven regularly strand feed at Captain Sam's Spit, noting that strand feeding is a learned behavior that is passed down from mother to calves. One of the eleven that feed on Captain Sam's has been found to be twenty-seven years old and strand feed with her sixteen-year-old calf. It is thought that Kiawah produces a greater number of calves due to the low number of motor boats in the area and is a more sheltered and protected inlet. Ms. King also discussed the thought that eventually, without funding and support, the strand feeding program may be dropped, along with other opportunities to continue obtaining important research data.

Ms. King reported that there will be the request from the Nature Conservancy for volunteers to participate in an oyster bed restoration on Seabrook.

D. Kiawah Island Architectural Review Board

None

E. Kiawah Conservancy

None

F. Turtle Patrol

Mrs. Sager reported that preparations are being made for the beginning of the new season.

V. **Old Business**

A. Captain Maynard's Conservation Easement

Mr. Jordan stated that at the last meeting there was a great deal of discussion on the public access component of the potential Captain Maynard's Conservation Easement. He reported that the issue was resolved with access given only to himself and Mr. Given along with their guests.

Mr. Jordan stated the presented document was a sample of a letter of support for the conservation easement the North American Land Trust was requesting from the Town. Mr. Jordan indicated that if the Committee supported the easement he would ask for a recommendation and leave it up to Town Council to approve a resolution or to send a formal letter.

Members discussed if the easement request would be beneficial as a research site or as an opportunity to potentially to influence what would be done in the restoration of the site.

***Mrs. Sager made a motion to express the Committee's support of the conservation easement. The motion was seconded and unanimously passed.***

B. Sea Level Rise

Mrs. Mezzanotte reported the next Sea Level Rise meeting would be on Friday, March 16<sup>th</sup> and will include a discussion of landscaping options, salt tolerant plants and residential flood

adaptations. She noted that at the February 28<sup>th</sup> meeting, representatives of Weston & Sampson, (an environmental engineering consulting company specializing in planning for the management of nuisance, surge, and precipitation caused flooding) discussed an analysis of how to prevent flooding or to improve flood resilience and about how to develop a flood management plan for Kiawah. Mrs. Mezzanotte stated that a meeting with Berkeley Electric will be scheduled in March. Mr. Chitwood added that there will be discussion of impact on the beachfront at the April 11<sup>th</sup> meeting and discussion of impact on the marsh front will be at the April 26<sup>th</sup>.

#### C. Plastics Initiative

Mr. Jordan stated the Plastics Initiative discussed by the committee was forwarded to the Conservancy who will be forming an AdHoc Committee of their Environmental Science Committee and have had a number of individuals express an interest in participating.

#### D. Landscape Revitalization Initiative

Mr. Jordan reported that progress is being made on the formation of a landscaping subcommittee and introduced Ms. Denise Graybill-Donohoe, a landscape designer, who is interested in participating on the subcommittee

### VI. New Business

#### A. Shorebird Stewardship Program

Mr. Given stated that last year the Town started a pilot program of an education campaign to protect nesting birds on the east end of the island. The program, which started late in the season, began with a short training session before working on the beach and resulted in a fairly successful shorebird nesting season last year. This year work has started earlier and is better organized with two training sessions having already taken place and a field training session scheduled. The focus at this time of the year will be on stewarding Red Knots at the west end of the island and in April, at the start of nesting season, another group will be stewarding beach goers at the west end. Mr. Given indicated that Ms. Gholson would be heading up the program

#### B. FY 2018-19 Budget

Mr. Jordan stated the Town is working on its FY 2018-19 Budget that includes two line items to which the Environmental Committee makes funding recommendations.

He indicated the first, is funding of Conservancy projects. Last year, there were \$77,000.00 in projects funded, and this year's budget shows \$70,000.00 which will be funded from Accommodations Tax funds. Those projects will have to be tourism related. The Conservancy will bring projects to be reviewed by the Committee making recommendations to Town Council.

He indicated the second, is funding of Environmental Programs. Last year's funding amount was \$35,000.00, funding Engaging Creative Minds, Dolphin Stewardship, and the OWLS (Outdoor Wildlife Lessons in Science) program still leaving an excess of \$14,000.00. Mr. Jordan asked if there were any ideas for potential projects for these funds. He suggested funding one of the transmitters for the alligator PHD project. Mr. Jordan stated this year's budget is \$25,000.00. He discussed the streamlined selection process that would allow the Committee to select the projects or areas it would like to sponsor. Mr. Jordan proposed the potential funding of the OWLS program, Dolphin Stewardship, Sea Level Rise, and project coming out of the Landscaping Subcommittee.

VII. **Citizen Comments:**  
None

VIII. **Chairman's Comments:**  
None

IX. **Committee Member Comments:**

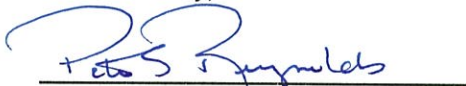
Ms. King gave an update on the OWLS program by reported that in working the St. John's High school and through the program the Nature Center has hired two high school juniors to do an internship this spring with the hope of hiring them full time naturalists in the summer. She also thanked Mr. Jordan and Mr. Given for their help in the combined effort to protect the juvenile bald eagle.

Mrs. Mezzanotte stated that at their last meeting Council agreed to in any potential SCEL (South Carolina Environmental Law Project) law suit.

X. **Adjournment:**

*The meeting was adjourned at 3:15 pm.*

Submitted by,



Petra S. Reynolds, Town Clerk

Approved by,



Jim Jordan, Chairman

5-11-18

Date