

**ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE MEETING**  
Kiawah Island Municipal Center  
Council Chambers  
November 8, 2016; 3:00 PM

**Minutes**

- I. **Call to Order:** *Mrs. Johnson 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:** Mary Johnson, Chairman  
David Elliott  
Jim Chitwood  
Marilyn Olson  
Lynne Sager  
Jim Sullivan  
Jane Ellis  
Lynette Schroeder  
John Leffler  
Sandra Williams

ARB: Amanda Mole  
KIGR: Liz King  
KINHC: Jack Kotz  
Justin Core  
TOKI: Jim Jordan  
Aaron Given

**Absent:** Robert Simmons  
KICA: Dave Achey  
KICA: Matt Hill

IV. **Approval of Minutes:**

A. Environmental Committee Meeting Minutes of September 13, 2016

*Mr. Jordan made a motion to approve the minutes of the September 13, 2016 Environmental Committee meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Elliott and was unanimously approved as amended.*

V. **Old Business**

A. Bobcat GPS Study Update

Mr. Jordan reported there was not a lot of activity to report. He stated of the five collars deployed two collars are still working. The order for new collars have been placed with trapping to begin in January to deploy 6 collars.

B. Alligator Research Project Update

Mr. Jordan reported on the Alligator Research Project which is a joint effort between Town, KICA, and the Conservancy along with Clemson University. He indicated the Town's SCDNR permit had been received with captures beginning on November 2<sup>nd</sup> with the next capture day on November 9<sup>th</sup>. The alligators caught so far are:

- B01 – 7 foot, 2 inch male caught at the Osprey Point Clubhouse and has been located at three different ponds.
- B02 – 11 foot, 1 inch male caught in the pond 25 between Sea Marsh and Parkway

Mr. Jordan stated blue tags are males, yellow are females, and asked that residents report any sightings of tagged alligators. He indicated “How to” information will be sent out in the Town's E-blast along with information the how to use the app.

### C. Fall Migration Bird Banding Project Update

Mr. Given reported on the Fall Migration Banding with the last banding taking place on November 15<sup>th</sup>. He stated they were two banding stations working this year at Little Bear Island and at Captain Sam's Spit.

- Captain Sam's
    - 3,483 new birds banded
    - 841 recaptures
    - 81 species
  - Little Bear Island
    - 3,148 new birds banded
    - 927 recaptures
    - 72 species
- ✓ 93 total species for both stations combined
- ✓ Highlights – Yellow-green Vireo (a species native to Mexico), Bell's Vireo, Warbling Vireo, Mourning Warbler

### D. School Group Program Update

Mr. Jordan gave an update on the School Group Program. He indicated he was still working with Engaging Creative Minds (ECM), a local non-profit, to develop curriculum and activities for local schools.

- ✓ Elementary School Program - Planning to begin in spring at Angel Oak and Mt. Zion working with one (1) second grade teacher from each school.
- ✓ High School Programs – Working with Juliana Smith from Kiawah Island Golf Resort on the details of a potential environmental program with St. Johns High School.

Mr. Jordan gave an update on nuisance alligators by stating the number of calls have still been declining. There were 42 calls that required a response with thirteen alligators removed. He indicated the usual amount removed is two to four alligators per year. Signage is still a work-in-progress; the Kiawah Island Community Association (KICA) is working on the third draft of a new alligator sign layout.

Mr. Jordan stated the training presentation was completed and ready to educate Community Association security personnel and individuals from other Island entities who may take or respond to nuisance alligators calls. He indicated the presentation will include discussion of how to handle calls and how to record the data using a new automated system.

Mr. Jordan reported on the Tallow Tree Control Program; he stated that treatments were completed in October. The Town treated 110 acres at \$9,900.00 and the Kiawah Conservancy treated 45 additional acres at \$4,050.00. The Town asked the KICA, Kiawah Partners, and the Resort for a \$2,000.00 contribution toward this year's treatment program. KICA was the only entity to contribute the \$2,000.00.

Mrs. Sager stated last night's Turtle Patrol dinner signifies the official end of the season. She stated it was a very successful season with 393 nests, the second highest year on record, and no depredation by coyotes.

## VI. New Business

### A. Kiawah Conservancy Funding Requests

Mrs. Johnson stated the Town has financially supported a variety of Kiawah Conservancy programs and activities in recent years. For the current fiscal year (2016-17), Town Council created a Kiawah Island Conservancy line item in the Environmental Department budget which contains \$58,000 to support Kiawah Conservancy programs and activities. Mrs. Johnson stated the Conservancy's program funding requests are reviewed and discussed by the Environmental Committee and then forwarded to Town Council for approval.

Ms. Donna Windham, Executive Director of the Kiawah Conservancy, stated she was pleased with the outcome of the **Naturally Kiawah Demonstration Garden** in Night Heron Park. The garden is supported by the Town, the Community, and the Resort. She stated the garden is visited by many, especially in the fall when the butterflies are out. To help with the ongoing upkeep of the garden, the Conservancy would be requesting \$5,000.00 in funding to update and enhance the garden.

Ms. Windham stated the development of the app and brochures for the **Naturally Kiawah Pathways** is receiving a great deal of praise from residents and visitors. Mr. Core explained the *Pathways* program as biking and/or walking self-guided tours across the Island. Downloading an App to a mobile device will activate an audio narration and photographs about points of interest identified as you approach each of the locations along the tour. He noted there are seven tours that are currently active for different areas on the Island. Ms. Windham stated the Conservancy would be requesting \$5,000.00 in funding to reprint the brochures that accompany app.

Ms. Windham stated one of the projects would be on alligator safety and awareness. She gave the details on the **Alligator Symposium** taking place in October. All the Island's science professionals will be taking part in the day's program along with Dr. Thomas Rainwater as speaker, and the premiere of the new video. Ms. Windham stated the Conservancy would be submitting a \$7,000.00 funding request to support those activities.

Ms. Windham stated the Conservancy has easement areas on Marsh Island Park and Rhett's

Bluff which require **New Trail Signage**. Signage would be more informative and would be reviewed by KICA and the other required entities. She indicated the Conservancy would be requesting **\$10,000.00** in funding for the signage updates.

Ms. Windham also stated the Conservancy was looking into publishing a special **20th Anniversary Kiawah Conservancy Book**. The commemorative double issue of Naturally Kiawah would celebrate its twenty-year anniversary. She indicated the Conservancy would be requesting **\$10,000.00** in funding for the Anniversary Book.

Ms. Windham stated that filming of the **Shore Bird Documentary** on Red-knots and other shore birds has begun and will continue during the Spring Migration. The Town's ornithologist, Mr. Given, provided a list of most popular birds on the Island and will help provide the best speakers to educate the public on the unique qualities of the birds on Kiawah. She stated the Conservancy would be requesting **\$11,000.00** in funding to support the filming.

Ms. Windham stated the Spring Issue of **Naturally Kiawah Magazine** will include information from writers, photographers, town biologists, resort naturalists, and other experts in their field on how the Island changes and what creatures and wonders happen Morning, Noon, and Night here on Kiawah Island. She stated the Conservancy would be requesting **\$10,000.00** in funding to support the production, printing, and mailing of this spring issue.

**Mrs. Johnson made a motion to recommend the proposed funding requests in the amount of \$58,000.00 (titles and cost listed below) to Town Council for funding approval. The motion was seconded by Mr. Jordan. Members of the Conservancy recused themselves from voting. The motion was unanimously passed**

Funding Proposal titles and costs:

1) Naturally Kiawah Demonstration Garden Update	\$5,000
2) Naturally Kiawah Pathways App Brochures	\$5,000
3) 2016 Alligator Research Symposium	\$7,000
4) New Trail Signage for Rhett's Bluff, Falcon Point, and Marsh Island	\$10,000
5) 20th Anniversary Kiawah Conservancy Book	\$10,000
6) Documentary Film on Shorebirds	\$11,000
7) Naturally Kiawah Magazine, Spring Edition	\$10,000
TOTAL -	\$58,000

Members discussed the funding application and recommendation process and the suggestion that the Town and the Conservancy discuss and identify joint project before the Town's budget process begins for the next fiscal year.

Members agreed the Committee should meet monthly until May of 2017.

#### **B. Beach Erosion Update (CSE Report)**

Mr. Jordan stated that Kiawah is fortunate to have an expansive healthy dune system that weathered the storm well. He reviewed the Summary of the CSE report which was given to Council at its last meeting.

- Kiawah's beach suffered significant erosion during Hurricane Matthew:
  - Erosion rates averaged 20-75 feet

- Highest rates at Captain Sam’s spit
  - 30 feet at Sanctuary
  - 20 feet at Ocean Course
- Storm surge and heavy surf flattens the beach profile and removes sand from the upper beach and deposits it on the lower beach or in underwater bars
- Beach will naturally heal as sand from these areas migrates back up the profile to the dunes. CSE expects significant recovery in the months ahead with the most recovery taking place after the winter season. Beaches generally erode during fall, and winter (higher tides, NE winds), and accrete during spring/summer (lower tides, S winds).

### Recommendations

- Sand Fencing
- Installation of sand fencing is useful for promoting dune growth in flat dry sand areas,
  - CSE does not believe sand fencing is necessary at this time,
  - If sand fencing is used in certain areas, it would be more beneficial to delay installation until the spring season (prior to 1 May for turtle concerns) to benefit from the natural beach recovery cycle and avoid potential washout of fencing during winter storms,
  - Installation of sand fencing will need to be accomplished under a SCDHEC–OCRM general permit. It will take about 45 days to get permit at an approximate cost of \$3,000.
- Beach Repair
- CSE does not recommend beach scraping or other emergency measures allowable under OCRM emergency orders as the overall health of Kiawah Island will promote natural recovery.
- Monitoring
- CSE is scheduled to complete our annual beach survey in the upcoming weeks. These data will be used to determine overall beach volume changes and local impacts.
  - The Town may should consider another monitoring effort in 3–6 months to document recovery of the dune and monitor potentially threatened areas.
  - Annual report will be delivered in February/March 2017 and will include detailed recommendations on

### C. Beach Walkover Update

Mr. Lameo explained that the Town is working in cooperation with the Community Association and the Architectural Review Board (ARB) to inspect every boardwalk whether it is private, semi-private, or public. Repairs of the boardwalks are being assessed on a case-by-case basis using steps, ramps or a combination of both. In some cases, ramps are being allowed to extend up to fifteen feet onto the beach.

Mr. Lameo reported there are ten boardwalks open at this time, with 18 private boardwalks in which work has begun on approved repairs. He indicated owners of boardwalks which are deemed to be dangerous will be sent a letter notifying they have ten days to make the necessary repairs; all others have one year to make repairs. Any boardwalk extending over 10 foot on the active beach will have to be adjusted.

Mr. Lameo reported that most of the debris has been removed from the beach. The contractor has begun at Captain Sam's removing only up rooted and loose vegetation and will work their way up the beach. Vegetation that is still in the sand will be pushed down to hold the sand as it fills in. He also noted that forty-four new trash containers are in the building process and will be set in place as soon as they are completed. The Town, to date, spent approximately \$380,000.00 of debris removal.

**VII. Reports:**

- A. Town of Kiawah Island
- B. Kiawah Island Community Association Land & Lakes Management
- C. Kiawah Island Golf Resort
- D. Kiawah Island Architectural Review Board
- E. Kiawah Conservancy
- F. Turtle Patrol

**VIII. Correspondence:**

None

**IX. Citizen Comments:**

None

**X. Chairman's Comments:**

None


**XI. Committee Member Comments:**

Signage for alligators, mosquito spaying and water quality in ponds were discussed by Committee Members.

**XII. Adjournment:**

*Mr. Jordan made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 4:45 pm. The motion was seconded and unanimously passed.*

Submitted by,

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Petra S. Reynolds, Town Clerk

Approved by,

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Diana Mezzanotte, Chairman

2.21.2017  
Date