

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE MEETING
Kiawah Island Municipal Center
Council Chambers
March 14, 2017; 3:00 PM

Minutes

I. Call to Order: *Mrs. Mezzanotte called the meeting to order at 3:00pm.*

II. Roll Call:

Present: Diana Mezzanotte, Chairman
David Elliott
Marilyn Olson
Lynne Sager
Jim Sullivan
Robert Simmons
Sandra Williams
John Leffler
KIGR: Liz King
Justin Core
TOKI: Jim Jordan
Aaron Given

Absent: Jim Chitwood
Jane Ellis
Lynette Schroeder

ARB: Amanda Mole

KICA: Matt Hill

KINHC: Jack Kotz

III. Approval of Minutes:

A. Environmental Committee Meeting Minutes of February 16, 2017

Mr. Jordan made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 16, 2017 Environmental Committee meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Sullivan and was unanimously approved as amended.

IV. Reports:

A. Town of Kiawah Island

Mr. Jordan made his report in conjunction with the item listed as “A, B, C, D of Old Business.

B. Kiawah Island Community Association Land & Lakes Management
None

C. Kiawah Island Golf Resort

Ms. King reported on the projects at the Nature Center. She stated that a lot of the displays have been updated; there was a new board from OCRM (Ocean and Coastal Resource Management) on dolphin strand feeding and dolphin etiquette, a new sea turtle display along with work on summer programming.

D. Kiawah Island Architectural Review Board

None

E. Kiawah Conservancy

Mr. Core reported on Mr. Kotz's last meeting as Chairman of the Environmental Science Committee meeting at which past research projects were reviewed and potential new projects were discussed. He reported on the discussion of a stormwater pond project at the meeting with DNR (Department of Natural Resources) and the need to organize all the research done by the different entities into a central database.

Mr. Core also reported that after two years of effort, in February, the Conservancy received its Land Trust Accreditation.

F. Turtle Patrol

Mrs. Sager reported that work was well on its way for the 2017 season with completion of the new mile makers and nest stakes. Two groups will install the mile markers on March 18th and 26th, before the official DNR start date of May 1st.

V. Old Business

A. Bobcat GPS Study Update

Mr. Jordan reported the bobcat GPS work was still ongoing with traps being checked every day. He reviewed the statistics on the captures so far:

- 6 bobcats captured
- 4 collared
 - ❖ 850 – 15 lb. 11 oz. Juvenile Male, caught in Parkside on February 15th was a new cat
 - ❖ 900 – 23 lb. 9 oz. Adult Male caught on Captain's Cams Spit on February 25th was collared 2016 as juvenile
 - ❖ 950 – 17 lb. 4 oz. Adult Female caught in Parkside on February 27th was a new cat
 - ❖ 800 – 19 lb. 6 oz. Adult Male Caught in Ocean Park on March 2nd was collared 2016 as juvenile
- 2 not collared
 - ❖ Both were juvenile males born on Ruddy Duck Court in 2016

Mr. Jordan discussed with members the challenges they have been having with trapping this year which included trapping the same cats multiple times and having trouble finding suitable trapping spots.

B. Alligator Research Project Update

Mr. Jordan reported there was no active research going on at this time. He pointed out the importance of getting sighting reports from residents on the tagged alligators and indicated more outreach would be conducted to make the information available on how to report sightings. He indicated that alligator capture for tagging would begin again in April or May with

5 alligators receiving GPS monitors.

C. Marsh Sparrow Research Update

Mr. Given reported his ongoing projects;

- Marsh Sparrows
 - Seaside Sparrow – 103 birds captured / 153 birds recaptured
 - Nelson’s Sparrow – 75 birds captured / 15 birds recaptured
 - Saltmarsh Sparrow – 48 birds captured / 31 birds recaptured
 - 31 GPS tags out on Seaside Sparrows
 - 10-12 left to put out this winter, 5-6 to put out in summer
 - Putting Nano tags on Saltmarsh Sparrows this spring
- Painted Buntings
 - Collaborative study with Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center
 - Geolocators (tracking device) to be put on 25 Painted Bunting in 2017, the objective is to locate where the bird are wintering.
- Fall Migration
 - Collaborative study with Dr. Sid Gauthreaux, Clemson
 - Migration banding data and weather radar data

D. Beach Monitoring Update

- CSE has completed report and presented to Town Council
- Does not recommend any emergency beach activities
- Monitor changes over summer and fall
- Predicts rapid regrowth of dunes to pre-storm conditions in 2-3 years
- Sand fencing in place at Ocean Course and Beach Club
- Kiawah Partners has submitted application to OCRM
 - Up to 8,000 cubic yards of fill along the dunes adjacent to Captain Sam’s spit
 - Sand fencing along front of new dune, vegetation on back

Members discussed regrowth of the dunes, sand fencing, and if sand fencing will interfere with turtle nesting. Mr. Jordan stated that Kiawah Partners has submitted to OCRM a permit application to allow minor beach renourishment, sand fencing, and dune revegetation on the dunes adjacent to Captain Sam’s Spit. Members engaged in an in-depth discussion of what work is proposed to be done as part of the application if approved by OCRM and the Town, and the Timbers project location.

E. Continued Discussion of Potential Committee Initiatives

Mrs. Mezzanotte discussed the three environmental proposals submission which were supported by the Committee to bring forward were St. John’s High School & KI Nature Program (OWL Program), Dolphin strand feeding, and the Engaging Learning Experiences Program. Members agreed additional information was not required from the OWL Program and Engaging Learning Experience. Mr. Jordan will request an expanded proposal regarding dolphin strand feeding.

Mrs. Mezzanotte presented a spreadsheet of the priority voting tabulations on the proposals submitted by the Conservancy. Members discussed the previous Conservancy funding amounts and agreed to support a funding amount of \$77,000.00.

Mr. Jordan made a motion to recommend to the Ways and Means Committee a budget of \$77,000.00 to fund all the ATAX initiatives. The motion was seconded by Ms. King and was approved by Mr. Given, Mr. Jordan, Ms. King, Ms. Williams, Mrs. Olson, Mrs. Sager, and Mrs. Mezzanotte. Mr. Leffler, Mr. Elliott, Mr. Sullivan, and Mr. Core abstained from voting.

Following discussion Mr. Leffler voted to support the motion.

Low-impact Community

Mr. Leffler presented a potential initiative of Low Impact Development (LID). He explained LID was an integrated, comprehensive approach to land development or redevelopment that works with nature to manage stormwater as close to its source as possible. He suggested the formation of a group to begin discussions on looking into ways to have better control of storm water management to reduce the amount of pollution going into the bodies of water throughout the Island.

Members agreed there was value in the initiative but implementation would ultimately fall on the Community Association and the Resort. Mrs. Mezzanotte indicated she would make inquiries as to who would be interested in serving on a Low Impact Development subcommittee for the initiative. Mr. Sullivan indicated he would take the lead in beginning discussions of the initiative and would ask the Community Association what they know, and if there is someone that can take an active role in the initiative.

Town Environmental Presentations

Mr. Jordan initiated a discussion on Town environmental presentations to the public. After discussion, it was determined that the best strategy was to work the KICA and the Kiawah Conservancy to collaborate as part of the Conservation Matters series.

Plastic bags, helium balloons

Ms. King stated that with Kiawah trying to prepare itself to be an environmentally responsible community, one of the areas where a very simple change would have a great impact would be to really get onboard with reducing the amount of plastics. She noted the use of plastic bags have been banned in many locations but suggested in our community an additional effort to make people aware the environmental danger. She recommended asking the Island stores to not use plastic bags or to use them as a secondary option. Ms. King also suggested limiting or not allowing the use of helium balloons on the Island.

Mrs. Mezzanotte made the suggestion to develop an educational committee to look into options on how to better inform business, residents, and visitors on the hazards of plastic bags and helium balloons and encourage shop owners to be more environmental friendly.

Mr. Leffler gave an update on the Sea Level Rise subcommittee. He stated the members of the subcommittee were Jim Chitwood, David Elliot, Jack Kotz, Matt Hill, Lynette Schroeder, and Bob Chaney. He indicated the subcommittee had met and discussed taking a small responsible approach due to the anxiety which can be associated with this kind of issue. He indicated they were going to meet with Dr. Elizabeth Fly with the Sea Grant Consortium to get information on her research, work with other communities and recommendations.

VI. New Business

A. Audubon Bird Education Program

Mr. Nolan Schillerstrom with Audubon South Carolina gave a presentation on the Shorebird Stewards program. He stated the goal of this program is to reduce human caused disturbances and enhance the beach experience. Audubon Shorebird Stewards are trained beach educators and offer protection for shorebirds by educating beach goers.

In the spring when Red Knots and other migratory peeps stop on our beaches during their epic 20,000-mile migration, it is imperative that we give them space to rest & refuel. Stewards point out the spectacle of shorebird migration and offer a closer look through binoculars and spotting scopes while educating about the threats shorebirds face when they are chased by off-leash dogs and fun loving children.

In the summer when nesting terns, oystercatchers, and plovers need to shade their eggs and feed their chicks, Stewards show off the birds' adorable and interesting behaviors from a distance and teach about why they need their space.

Mr. Schillerstrom stated he was working with Beachwalker County Park to organize a volunteer force available on weekends and holidays. The focus would be on the areas where people come in conflict with birds. He asked Environmental Committee Members if they would be willing to endorse the program to allow volunteers on the beach.

Member asked questions, made suggestions on times and coverage area. Members were generally in support of the program and Town staff will investigate moving forward with training and implementation.

VII. Citizen Comments:

None

VIII. Chairman's Comments:

None

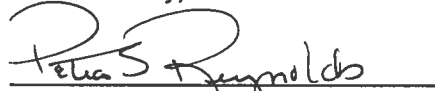
IX. Committee Member Comments:

None

X. Adjournment:

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

Submitted by,




Petra S. Reynolds, Town Clerk

Approved by,



Diana Mezzanotte, Chairman



Date