

**Environmental Committee Meeting
March 2, 2009; 3:00 PM
Kiawah Island Municipal Center
Upstairs Conference Room**

MINUTES

- I. Call to Order:** Mr. McHugh called the meeting to order at 3:00PM.
- 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: Harry McHugh, Chair
Jim Jordan, TOKI
Aaron Given, TOKI
Dave Achey, KICA
Liz King, KIGR
Jim Chitwood

Also Present: Carrie Manson, KICA Lakes (for Norm Shea)

Absent: Dale Anderson
David Elliott
Lois Bryant, ARB
Norm Shea, KICA
Catherine Wilson, Town Clerk
Tumiko Rucker, Town Administrator

- IV. Minutes:**
A. Environmental Committee Meeting Minutes of February 2, 2009
Mr. Jordan motioned to approve the minutes of January 5, 2009. Mr. Chitwood seconded the motion. Mr. Jordan and Ms. Manson made changes to the minutes. With those changes, the motion carried unanimously.

VI. Old Business

A. Green Initiatives

Liz King, KIGR

Mrs. King stated that the Resort has been working on the Earth Day “Greenival” and Re-Run. Mrs. King explained that there are booths available for island entity representatives to share their green initiatives. She asked that booths be reserved by April 1. This event will focus on educating guests on current habitat and green initiatives on the island. Over 6,000 pairs of shoes were donated during the Resort’s Marathon. Those shoes were then

donated to local charity organizations or sent to the Nike used shoe program. Mrs. King stated that the Resort hopes to host events that will bring more guests to the island and help increase accommodations tax revenues.

Harry McHugh

Mr. McHugh stated that the Town hosted a public meeting that focused on expanding the Town's recycling to all Villas and Regimes. Mr. McHugh stated that the meeting went well and there is a good level of cooperation. The Town is moving forward with this initiative.

V. New Business:

None

VIII. Committee Member Comments:

Jim Chitwood

Mr. Chitwood stated that the Conservancy is working with the new Cyprus Point Development project and the developer is hoping to do a green development. Mr. Chitwood explained that the developer would like to keep all common property in a natural or enhanced natural state. Mr. Chitwood stated that he is "cautiously optimistic."

Jim Jordan

Mr. Jordan stated that he agrees with Mr. Chitwood's feelings on the Cyprus Point Development. Mr. Jordan stated that the developer has been very open to suggestions on understory development and landscaping. Mr. Jordan stated that there is piece of land in the development that will be owned by the developer and the Resort and that they are willing to convert the land to a natural habitat area that will be a bobcat daytime cover area. Mr. Jordan stated that this would be around an acre of densely vegetated land with possible wetland area in the center.

Mr. Jordan stated that on 2-17-09 he responded to a concern of a large basking alligator in the yard of 33 Painted Bunting. On 3-2-09 a property owner on Sea Marsh Drive called to express concerns over use of roosters for bobcat trapping bait. The Marsh Hawk trap was relocated. Four Piping Plover surveys were completed during January and February averaging 10.5 birds on the East End of the Island. Surveys will increase to once every 10 days beginning March 1. Bobcat trapping began February 4 and will continue until all 13 bobcats are captured. To date, 9 different bobcats have been captured and 7 fitted with collars. Mr. Jordan attended a Southeast Deer Study Group Meeting February 22-24 in Roanoke, Virginia. Relevant talks included: deer fawn predation rates, coyote impacts on deer, and deer habitat impacts. Mr. Jordan stated that coyotes will soon be on the Kiawah, if they are not already. Mr. Jordan stated that this is an area that is suitable for a medium size predator and that coyotes are very adaptable. Mr. Jordan explained that he have to wait to see the impact coyotes will have on the island's deer population. Mr. Jordan stated that there have been no confirmed sightings of mountain lions or cougars on the island.

Coastal Science and Engineering completed the 2008 beach report with a focus on the East End Project Area. Coastal Science and Engineering also completed sand compaction readings on the East End Project area as part of a mitigation plan to insure that the area is suitable for loggerhead turtle nesting during the coming season. If the sand is too compacted, the beach may have to be tilled.

Mr. Jordan stated that OCRM is reviewing the current regulations for the Beach Management Act. Dr. Tim Kana submitted comments to OCRM concerning the Beach Management Act review and the Town supports those comments. Mr. Jordan stated that he would circulate Dr. Kana's comments to the Committee.

Mr. Jordan stated that he had a student from James Island High School job shadow with him on February 19. The student is a senior who is interested in going into a wildlife career.

Dave Achey, KICA Landscaping Maintenance

Mr. Achey stated that the plant rescue project has been "hit and miss" so far and that the present inventory is very low. The last plant rescues took place at 181 Bull Thistle and 95 Wax Myrtle Court. Mr. Achey stated that the garden club has shown a strong interest in volunteering for plant rescues. Mr. Achey stated that his department has been charged to convert 5% of the maintained right-of-ways to forest but that KICA staff has been asked to consider cutting funds for the reforestation project due to the economic downturn. Some rescued materials were planted on Ocean Course Drive near the golf course where planting will continue in an effort to establish a wood line closer to the road. Mr. Achey received authorization to purchase a tree spade which he said would be a great aid in both the rescue and reforestation projects. Mr. Achey stated that tallow tree removal took place on Piping Plover and Kill Dee Court. Additional control efforts will be taking place in the Rhett's Bluff nature area. KICA staff is also considering cutting funds for the Tallow tree control. Mr. Achey stated that KICA landscaping Phase 3 A&B will be evaluated for possible line of site problems (safety issues) at the planted intersections. The intersections were originally planted heavily to provide shading that would limit the need for herbicide spraying. Palm Tree pruning is underway all over the island and only takes place along the main roads. Mr. Achey is also working on upgrading the language for the Landscape Guidelines for Association Members.

Carrie Manson, KICA Lakes Department

Ms. Manson stated that during this time of year there is an appearance of filamentous algae along the edges of many of the ponds. In order to respond to the quick growing algae, KICA stock the ponds with several types of aquatic plant-eating fish. Experience has shown that Tilapia will consume the algae as they transition from winter. Ms. Manson stated that due to proximity to an alligator den, KICA relocated a bench from the Kiawah Swamp Garden and planted yuccas in the former site. Several KICA staff members have routinely seen at least 3 bald eagles near the Maintenance site on Kestrel Court. On 2 occasions they have seen them mating. An injured screech owl was found on Flyway Drive and Royal Beach and brought back to the Maintenance site to recover. The owl apparently recovered and flew away. There have been 3 bluebird boxes installed

at the Maintenance site. USGS Bass and Cinder Creek tidal flow reports are available online at <http://pubs.usgs.gov/of/2009/1037/>. Representatives from the EPA and USGS visited the island on Wednesday, February 26 for site inspection of Bass and Cinder Creek. These creeks are on 303d list of impaired waters. They are interested in projects that would mitigate the conditions creating this impairment. The Lakes Department is continuing investigation of a possible Pool Discharge Ordinance, work on KICA view windows, and nature placards. There have been a number of Tilapia fish kills due to low water temperatures. Rainfall rates are well below average for January with just .85 inches. The total for the year is 2.66 inches which is 57% below average for the year.

Liz King, KIGR

Mrs. King stated that the Nature Center has been working with Town staff to update the bird list. There is a Great Horned Owl nesting across the street from Willet Pond that appears to be incubating eggs. Mrs. King stated that the Resorts revenue allows the Nature Center to do outreach on the island such as animal rescue and rehabilitation along with green initiatives. Mrs. King stated that because the Resort lost their franchise contract on the beach, she is having to dramatically cut those outreach programs and that they will no longer be able to assist with bird rescues on the beach. She explained that snake rescue will be top priority. Mrs. King stated that she is still unsure why the entire beach went out for bid while the Resort had an approved contract through 2010 and that it has severely cut their revenue for outreach funding.

Mr. Chitwood asked if the Resort's business was increasing. Mrs. King stated that group revenues are down and they are witnessing groups cancel reservations due to possible negative public perception. Mrs. King stated that hopefully events such as the Earth Day celebration will bring revenues during a normally slow time of year.

Mr. McHugh stated that ATAX revenues have been revised by a 30% reduction for the current fiscal year. Mr. McHugh stated that most funding can be cut out of budgeted deputy funds.

Andy Steele, Cougar Point Golf Course

Mr. Steele stated that they have finished pruning along the course and they are trying to reduce fertilizer runoffs. They are also cutting back mowing along the cart paths and non-play areas.

Mr. McHugh

Mr. McHugh stated that there has been a verbal agreement for the beach access along the Ocean Course 30 space parking lot and licensing will be included in the contract. Mr. Jordan stated that the Town is working on the architectural drawings depicting the location of the 12' wide path. Mr. Jordan stated that the Town will publicize the beach parking lot in Town Notes and on the Town's website. The Resort is in the permitting process of sand fencing along the Ocean Course and Dr. Kana is in favor of the fencing if done appropriately.

Mr. McHugh stated that the Bike Path and Parkway project is moving along nicely and has a proposed completion date by the end of 2009. Mr. McHugh explained that an area of land along Cassique will be used for wetland mitigation. Mrs. King asked if ATAX funds are being used for the project. Mr. McHugh explained that the project's total cost is around 4.5 Million and that he believes there are some ATAX funds involved. Mrs. King asked who on Town Council is responsible for applying for the ATAX funding. Mr. McHugh stated that Mr. Steve Orban is head of the project.

IX. Citizen Comments:

None

X. Adjournment:

Mr. Jordan motioned to adjourn the meeting at 4:17pm. Mr. Chitwood seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Submitted by,

Catherine C. Wilson, Town Clerk

Approved by,

Harry M. McHugh, Chairman

Date