

**ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE MEETING
JUNE 6, 2011 3:00 P.M.
KIAWAH ISLAND MUNICIPAL CENTER**

MINUTES

- I. Call to Order: Dr. VanDerwerker called the meeting to order at 3:00pm.**
- II. FOIA:** Notice of this meeting has been published and posed in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act and the requirements of the Town of Kiawah Island.
- III. Roll Call:**
- Present:** **Greg VanDerwerker, Chair**
 David Elliott
 Norm Shea, KICA Lakes
 Dave Achey, KICA Lands
 Liz King, KIGR
 Jim Jordan, TOKI
 Aaron Given, TOKI
- Absent:** **Jim Chitwood**
 Dale Anderson
 Lois Bryant, ARB
 Charles Davis
- IV. Minutes:**
- A. Environmental Committee Meeting Minutes of May 2, 2011**
 Mr. Jordan motioned to approve the minutes of May 2, 2011. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously as amended.
- V. Special Presentation:**
- Important Bird Areas – Ann Shahid**
Ms. Shahid, of the National Audubon Society, presented information to the Committee regarding the Important Bird Area (IBA) designation. She highlighted the benefits of becoming an IBA and noted existing IBA's in SC. Ms. Shahid contacted Mr. Given regarding the designation after visiting the Island several times and reading the bird banding data. She noted that there are no legalities involved in the process, as the designation is honorary. Ms. Shahid stated that if there is ever any threat to the IBA, the Audubon Society will offer support in protecting the birds and the habitat. Audubon believes that if the habitat is protected for birds, it is also protected for other wildlife, including humans. Ms. Shahid stated that the Kiawah Island beach would qualify for 4 out of the 5 IBA criteria categories, which is unusual for an area of its size. Audubon SC has approved 49 IBA's which total over one million acres of land, and their goal is to approve at least 53 IBA's by 2012. Of the 49

SC IBA's, 18 have qualified for as global recognition. She noted that the Kiawah Island beach would meet the criteria in several ways to become a globally recognized IBA. She stated that some areas behind the dunes could also be designated as an IBA with the approval of the property owners. Ms. Shahid commented on the benefits of becoming an IBA which include: signage in the area noting that Kiawah is an IBA, recognition on the National Audubon Society's website and recognition as a global IBA by BirdLife International.

Mr. Elliott requested to know if the salt marsh area could be included for the woodstocks. Ms. Shahid stated that this area can be included with the property owner's approval. Mr. Given estimated a total of 30 woodstocks on the island.

Ms. Shahid commented that she would like to see the entire island become designated as an IBA; however, she suggests that the beaches be designated first. Dr. VanDerwerker requested to know what could prevent the entire island from becoming an IBA. Ms. Shahid stated that nothing can prevent this from happening. She stated that Kiawah Island can be identified as an IBA but would not be recognized as one publically.

The Committee discussed the value of the IBA designation to all Town entities and tourism.

Mrs. King requested to know if golf courses meet the criteria for certification by the National Audubon Society. Ms. Shahid responded that they do not certify golf courses.

Dr. VanDerwerker requested to know how extensive the application process is for the National Audubon Society designation. Ms. Shahid responded that it is not difficult, and it is just a matter of having the available data to complete the application and providing a map.

The Committee discussed the criteria for island-wide designation. Dr. VanDerwerker requested to know if each entity would have to approve the request for designation. Ms. Shahid commented on a Town that received island-wide approval through the Property Owner's Association and not by individual entities.

Ms. Shahid stated that once the application process is complete, a technical committee will review the nomination and vote to designate the area as an IBA. She stated that a public recognition ceremony can be held once the nomination is approved.

VI. Old Business:

A. Update on Nuisance Alligator Training

Dr. VanDerwerker reported that the nuisance alligator training was held last month.

B. Update on Charleston County's Yard Waste Plastic Bag Ban

Dr. VanDerwerker stated that County Council has delayed the enforcement of their ordinance to ban the use of plastic bags for yard waste until October 1st. The Town will hold its approved ordinance in abeyance pending the County's approval to move forward.

C. Oyster Recovery Program

Dr. VanDerwerker commented on last month's presentation of the Oyster Recovery Program and stated that approval has been received from the ARB to hang oyster bags from docks. He requested that Mr. Shea and the Resort begin to look at ways to introduce the program. Mrs. King stated that the Resort has received permission to introduce the program during the community-wide festival at Night Heron Park. She also commented that the Resort is willing to help KICA with any events they may host to introduce the program. The Committee discussed ways that each entity can coordinate educational events and advertise the program.

VII. New Business:

A. Proposal for Native Plant Demonstration Garden

Mr. Achey provided an update on the Native Plant Demonstration Garden. He stated that 18 hours of labor has been completed so far and the total budget for the project is \$2,600. Mr. Achey motioned to recommend the approval of \$2,600 for the Native Plant Demonstration Garden. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously. Mr. Achey requested to be contacted by email if anyone is interested in volunteering to help with the project.

B. Wildlife Booklet

Mr. Jordan provided a draft copy of the proposed wildlife booklet. He stated that it will be a 4 ½ x 7 booklet with a total of 72 pages. The quoted price is \$5,600 for 5,000 copies, a cost of \$1.12 per book. Mr. Jordan stated that the information from the wildlife brochures was condensed into the book; and, additional information on several bird species was added. Dr. VanDerwerker asked about the option of selling the wildlife booklets. Mr. Jordan recommended that the books be provided at no charge, because the goal is to have people read the valuable information provided within the book.

VIII. Correspondences

None

IX. Citizen Comments

None

X. Committee Member Comments

Wildlife Report-TOKI

Mr. Jordan provided an update of the bobcat GPS research, and stated that there are currently 7 bobcats being tracked, 4 females and 3 males. He also reported that 2 bobcat dens were located, and there are still 2 female bobcats that have not denned.

Mr. Jordan reported that bird banding was completed in May with four sessions. There were 55 new birds captured and 52 recaptured.

Mr. Jordan reported on the beach nesting birds. He stated that the birds on the eastern end of the beach abandoned the area during Memorial weekend due to people and dogs on the beach; however, some birds have returned to the area. He also stated that 2 American Oystercatchers initiated nests on the east end of the beach.

Mr. Jordan stated that the College of Charleston's Reptile/Amphibian Study is being conducted 4 days a week.

Mr. Jordan reported that there were 4,834 visits to the wildlife website in May.

Mr. Jordan reported on recent deer-vehicle collisions on the island. He stated that a deer was killed on the Kiawah Parkway just past the main gate, and an injured deer was located and had to be euthanized.

Dr. VanDerwerker reported that funding for the Invasive Plant Vegetation Survey is in the Town's Budget, and proposals have been advertised. The final date to submit proposals is July 5th.

Mr. Elliott commented on the issue of noise pollution. The Committee discussed possible options for addressing the issue.

The Committee discussed a recent incident on the Island in which a dog was eaten by an alligator.

KIGR

Mrs. King requested to know if tallow tree sightings should be reported and if KICA will be charging property owners to remove them. Mr. Achey stated that KICA has not developed a plan to remove tallow trees as of yet, and they are not insured to enter private properties to cut down trees. He explained the method he currently uses to treat tallow trees instead of cutting them down. Mrs. King stated that several tallow trees are located in the wetlands across from the Sanctuary. Mr. Achey stated that he has been working to address

some of the areas; however, the Invasive Plant Study will help to develop a plan to attack the issue.

KICA Land

Mr. Achey reported on current KICA Land Department projects. He stated that landscape renovations will be completed along Ocean Course Drive, and the project will begin during the last week of June.

XI. Adjournment:

The meeting adjourned at 4:25 p.m.

Submitted by,

Lakesha Y. Shannon, Town Clerk

Approved by,

Greg A. VanDerwerker, Chairman

Date