

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

Kiawah Island Municipal Center

Council Chambers

August 3, 2021; 2:00 PM

AGENDA

I. **Call to Order:** *Mayor Labriola called the meeting to order at 2:00 pm.*

II. **Pledge of Allegiance**

III. **Roll Call:**

Present at meeting: John D. Labriola, *Mayor*
Dan Prickett, *Mayor Pro Tem*
Maryanne Connelly, *Councilmember*
John Moffitt, *Councilmember*

Absent: Dr. Scott Parker, *Councilmember*
Joe Wilson, *Town Attorney*

Also Present: Stephanie Tillerson, *Town Administrator*
Petra Reynolds, *Town Clerk*
Stephanie Braswell, *Communications Manager*
Brian Gottshalk, *Public Works Manager*
Jim Jordan, *Town Biologist*
Daniel Brock, *CARTA Regional Strategist*
Lee Bundrick, *Kiawah Island Conservancy*

Clemson University:

Greg Yarrow, *Professor of Wildlife Ecology, Certified Wildlife Biologist* ® TWS
Department of Forestry and Environmental Conservation (FEC)
David S. Jachowski, *Associate Professor of Wildlife Ecology*
Department of Forestry and Environmental Conservation
Thomas R. Rainwater, *Research Scientist*
Forestry and Conservation Department
Baruch Institute of Coastal Ecology and Forest Science
Meghan Keating, *Ph.D. Student*

IV. **Approval of Minutes:**

A. Minutes of the Town Council Meeting of July 6, 2021

Mayor Pro Tem Prickett made a motion to approve the minutes of the July 6, 2021 Town Council Meeting. Councilmember Moffitt seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

V. **Mayor's Update:**

Mayor Labriola explained the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) is a large sum of money from the federal government that the states will redistribute to their local communities. While the program is underway, the State of South Carolina has not submitted the application to receive the funds but has published information on funding distribution and calculation. Once the process is sorted out, the Town expects to receive in the range of \$880,000.00. The funds, primarily based on population, must be allocated to a specific use within the criteria by 2024 and spent by 2026.

VI. Citizens' Comments (Agenda Items Only):

None

VII. Presentation:

A. Clemson Bobcat Research Study

Mr. Jordan acknowledged the research team from Clemson University who will be involved in the Bobcat project, noting that it was their first visit to the island. Each member of the group introduced themselves, providing background

Mr. Rainwater gave an overview of the Bobcat Study, indicating that Kiawah has a special relationship with its bobcats and that the decline of the bobcat population was a definite cause for concern. In the past year, at least seven bobcat deaths have been attributed to second-generation anticoagulant rodenticide (SGA) poisoning.

Mr. Jachowski reviewed the objective of the study:

1. *Monitor SGA concentrations in bobcats and assess patterns in bobcat behavior and survival over the next three years.*
2. *Assess historical patterns in bobcat behavior and demography on the island over time using historical datasets.*
3. *Assess patterns in bobcat diet to determine which prey species are most likely to contribute to SGA poisoning*
4. *Continue monitoring of SGA concentrations in small carnivores other than bobcats over the next three years.*
5. *Assess rodent species abundance, distribution, and SGA concentrations across the island.*

Mr. Jachowski also reviewed the expected outcome and benefits of the study, along with the \$960,000.00 cost of the four-year project. He also reviewed the key organizations that have partnered in dedicating funding to begin the project. He indicated the project began with the hiring of the Ph.D. Student, Ms. Keating.

Mr. Yarrow reviewed some of the next steps, including securing the additional funding and community project updates through the website.

Mayor Labriola stated the environment is of extreme importance to the island and an appropriate time to be doing this study in conjunction with the concerns with (SGA) poisoning.

VIII. Old Business:

- A. To Consider Approval of **Ordinance 2021-09** - An Ordinance to Rescind the Previous Ordinance 2020-13 Setting Salaries for the Mayor And Council Members of the Town of Kiawah Island – **Second and Final Reading****

Councilmember Connelly made a motion to approve the second and final reading of Ordinance 2021-09 to rescind the previous Ordinance 2020-13, setting salaries for the Mayor and Council Members of the Town of Kiawah Island. Councilmember Moffitt seconded the motion, and it was unanimously passed.

IX. New Business:

- A. To Consider Approval of the CARTA (Charleston Area Regional Transportation Authority) Proposed 2022 Fiscal Year Budget**

Mr. Brock stated that CARTA is required to present the proposed budget to all the municipalities represented on the CARTA Board. He indicated the greatest change in the proposed FY 2022 budget included a new funding source from Charleston County from previously allocated sales tax funding.

The early release of the funding and matching federal funds allowed the purchase of twenty-four electric busses to complete a total replacement of the fleet.

Councilmember Connelly made a motion to approve the Charleston Area Regional Transportation Authority proposed 2022 Fiscal Year Budget. Mayor Pro Tem Prickett seconded the motion, and it was unanimously passed.

B. To Consider Approval of the Board of Arts and Cultural Events Council Appointment

Councilmember Connelly made a motion to approve the appointment of Kristin Thompson to the Arts and Cultural Events Council. Mayor Pro Tem Prickett seconded the motion.

Councilmember Connelly stated that with Ms. Thompson's extensive background in fundraising, work with large organizations, and being a director of communications, she would be an asset to the Arts and Cultural Events Council.

Following the discussion, the motion was unanimously passed.

C. To Consider Approval of the Kiawah Conservancy Integrated Watershed Study Funding

Mr. Bundrick provided an overview of the Conservancy's Integrated Watershed Study project:

Integrated Watershed Study – There have been previous efforts within the community to investigate the resilience of Kiawah Island and understand its water resources. This began with the Sea Level Rise and Flood Mitigation report produced by a subcommittee of the Town's Environmental Committee, the watershed mapping by Lucas Hernandez, the establishment of a tide station on the Kiawah River Bridge, and the establishment of a long-term groundwater monitoring effort by the Conservancy. Integrating the data from these efforts and pursuing additional monitoring efforts will provide the means necessary to comprehensively understand the net flow of water resources on Kiawah Island. Marshes were mentioned as an important aspect of this project. They are an important asset to the resilience of the human and wildlife communities on Kiawah Island and are located at the terminus of each watershed. Much of the recommendations for pursuing the proposed project come from conversations with the Town's Environmental Committee members.

The Conservancy is proposing an integrated watershed study to obtain equipment and monitoring efforts necessary to develop water budgets for Kiawah Island. In addition, it would also focus on understanding water quality within the estuarine tidal creeks surrounding Kiawah Island near major outfalls. Funding would be used to obtain two YSI EXO sondes to monitor water quality in estuarine tidal creeks, two weather stations to gather data on weather and climate on Kiawah Island, and additional funding for supporting an intern or contracting water quality testing. Similar equipment is being used by the Town of Kiawah Island, Kiawah Island Community Association, and the ACE Basin NERRS to monitor weather conditions and water quality. The resulting water budgets from the project will be created using methods deployed by SCDNR in the ACE Basin, developed by Kassabian, Callahan, and Upchurch in 2016. The project will involve collaboration with the Town and KICA to obtain, monitor, and analyze data in accordance with project objectives.

Councilmember Connelly made a motion to approve the funding of the Kiawah Conservancy Integrated Watershed Study. Councilmember Moffitt seconded the motion, and it was unanimously passed.

D. To Consider Approval of the Dolphin Stewardship Program Funding

Mr. Jordan stated the Town had supported funding the Dolphin Stewardship Program for four years. The program provides trained educators at Captain Sam's Spit to educate visitors and

beachgoers on dolphin behavior. It ensures that they abide by federal guidelines, including not getting too close and interrupting strand feeding. The program also provides professional observation to document the individual strandfeeding dolphins and record the information into a database.

Mr. Jordan stated the request for approximately \$9000.00 would provide funding for the program for this fiscal year.

Councilmember Connelly made a motion to approve the funding of the Dolphin Stewardship Program. Councilmember Moffitt seconded the motion.

Following further discussion, the motion was unanimously passed.

E. Update on New Communication Asset

Ms. Braswell reported that the new Kaiwah IOS app presented at the June Town Council meeting would go live the next day. She presented a demo of the app.

Ms. Braswell noted that the app is currently only available in the IOS format. The android format will require additional work and funding. Discussion included Councilmember suggestions, the app's communication to the community and public, and the inclusion of direct contact to Ms. Braswell for the user to provide feedback on the app.

X. Town Administrator's Report:

Mr. Gottshalk provided an update on the current Public Works projects:

Beachwalker Drive – a compromise in the integrity of the roadway has been noted. A leak in a pipe led to sinkholes. The repair has been expedited and included resleeving of the damaged pipe and backfilling and patching the sinkholes. The repairs are scheduled to be completed by Thursday.

The lighting of Signs - with little progress being made, a new electrical contractor has been engaged to make the necessary repairs. The contractor, familiar with the areas, is scheduled to look at the areas and is confident he can make the repairs by the end of the week.

New Signs – specifications for the new signs will be sent out to the former bidders and additional local vendors. Bids are expected to be ready for presentation at this month's Ways and Means Committee meeting.

Recycle Center at Kestral Court – the architect has provided a couple of different design layouts, which have been forwarded to Carolina Waste for operational review. He noted that he preferred one design that would have minimal impact on vegetation, increase capacity, and be more ergonomic for movement in and out of the facility. The review from Carolina Waste is expected back this week to move forward with design and presentation to Council.

Mayor Labriola stressed the importance of providing status reports to the community.

XI. Council Member:

- a. Committee Updates
- b. General Comments

Mayor Pro Tem Prickett stated that Mr. Taylor and a variety of others, including former Mayor, Mr. Lipuma are all active in the roads issue and trying to make progress in concert with the neighbors on Seabrook and John's Island. He commended them on their ongoing efforts.

Councilmember Connelly reported for :

- Public Safety Committee - the Fire Station on Kiawah Island Parkway is nearly completed, with an open house expected to be scheduled in the upcoming months.
- Audit Committee – met last month and are preparing for the next meeting on October 7th, at which time the auditors will be presenting the audited financials. Discussion included the unwritten policy for municipalities to send out RFP for audit services every three to five years.
- Dog Leash Ordinance – a workgroup met to reviewed leashed dogs vs. unleashed dogs. The workgroup's recommended additions were presented to the Public Safety Committee and not well received. Since all the Committee Members were not present, she would present the recommendations at the next meeting. The recommendations and a request for more strict enforcement of the current ordinance are an effort to mitigate complaints of a dog jumping on beachgoers and fighting dogs.

Councilmember Moffitt reported that the Public Works Committee would be meeting on Monday with members of Berkeley Electric Cooperative in attendance to give an update and address resident concerns on recent power outages. Also discussed will be how residents and visitors report outages.

Ms. Braswell read Councilmember Parker's report:

The Kiawah Goes Greener ad hoc working group comprised of the major institutional entities on the island met for their second meeting on Wednesday, July 20. Representatives from the Town, Community Association, Resort, Club, and Conservancy were there. Each shared their current status regarding eco-friendly activities and first steps and ideas that each organization believes it can achieve over time.

The underlying philosophy is to have a multi-year, reasonable, achievable plan to reduce the island's carbon footprint as a whole and adopt other eco-friendly initiatives to their daily operations.

As each organization reported on current practices and future areas they are willing to explore, it was clear that many practices already in place were unknown to others.

There was a discussion as the workgroup explored new ideas. The topics discussed were:

- *transitioning utility vehicles to electric from gas,*
- *the use of electric motors on green mowers to raise and lower equipment rather than hydrologic means,*
- *installing water stations on some golf courses and eliminating water bottles to the extent possible,*
- *transitioning lightbulbs to LED,*
- *exploring the use of solar panels (where allowed by the ARB) to power up the increased electric usage,*
- *looking to put more EV charging stations around the island for our guests to use.*

Lucas Hernandez with KICA is working on baseline carbon footprint using an EPA calculator. In addition, we will develop proxy measures of our success such as % reduction in fossil fuel use from baseline years, etc.

KICA will beta test out battery-powered commercial landscaping equipment for a period of time to see if the current market is durable enough and has sufficient battery life to make it a viable alternative to 2 cycle gas powers blowers, edgers, etc.

In September, we are meeting to begin to craft an aspirational “scope of practice” document with more detailed commitments and timelines. After that, we will put together a more comprehensive communication and send it to residents.

XII. Citizens’ Comments:

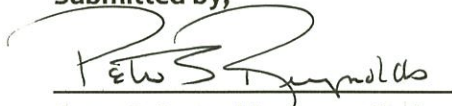
Alex Fernandez – 418 Snowy Egret Lane

Mr. Fernandez applauded the Bobcat Study initiative but noted the absence of the Kiawah Island Community Association (KICA) as one of the partners. He felt that KICA could play a role in being a partner in the study and that residents are a critical piece of the cause of the issue. Ms. Tillerson stated that it was her understanding that the discussion would be presented to the KICA Board.

XIII. Adjournment:


Mayor Pro Tem Prickett made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 3:15 pm. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Connelly and was unanimously passed.

Submitted by,



Petra S. Reynolds, Town Clerk

Approved by,



John D. Labriola, Mayor
9.8.2021
Date