

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE MEETING

Virtual Meeting via Zoom

March 10, 2021; 2:00 PM

AGENDA

I. **Call to Order: Mr. Jordan called the meeting to order at 2:00 pm.**

Present: Jim Jordan, Chairman
Jim Chitwood
Jim Sullivan
Jane Ellis
David Pumphrey
Scott Nelson
John Leffler
Jack Kotz

KINHC: Lee Bundrick
KICA: Lucas Hernandez
KICA: Matt Hill
KIGR: Liz King

Absent: Lynne Sager
Pam Wilson
ARB: Sara Senst
TOKI: Aaron Given

Also Attending: Dr. Scott Parker, *Council Liaison*
Collie Farah, *Kiawah Conservancy*

II. **Approval of Minutes:**

A. Minutes of the January 2021 Environmental Committee Meeting

Mr. Nelson made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 13, 2021 Environmental Committee meeting. The motion was seconded by Ms. Ellis and was unanimously approved.

III. **Old Business**

A. Kiawah Landscaping Workgroup (Grow Native)

- No update

B. Shorebird Stewardship Program

- Stewardship training conducted on March 9th with 20 to 25 attendees
- Video of the training is available for those interested but unable to attend
- A restart of the program scheduled for March 2021
 - Red Knots on the beach now and will be the focus in March and April
 - Hoping to get birds nesting on both east and west ends this year.

C. Flood Mitigation and Sea Level Rise

- Adaptive Management Plan update

Mr. Hernandez stated work was continuing with the off-island engagements, 25 contacts were made to this point. With the information gathered from those conversations, work has begun on breaking down each of the threshold areas into systems, giving a better idea of how to pick out exact threshold values.

D. Grow Native/Parkway Landscaping

Mr. Jordan stated that there continues to be some minor issues with the project, but a firm timeline has been established for completion:

- Work on the irrigation system to be completed this week
- Trees and shrubs going in next week, followed by the installation of grasses and perennials
- Substantial completion by March 31st
- Full completion by mid-April giving time for the perennials to flush out and look good before the PGA Tournament.

E. Rodenticides/Wildlife

- Ten additional animals tested since the January meeting, with 14 animals sent to the lab awaiting results
 - Spreadsheet presented to review details of the test results data gathered since the issue was discovered, along with the samples collected by DNR.
 - Dead or dying bobcats, raccoons, possums, and birds of prey were tested
 - Bobcats tested had high levels of multiple anticoagulants
 - Levels were high until late 2020, with a decrease in exposure noted in 2021
 - Exposure levels to one active ingredient have begun to increase in the last few months
- SCDNR sampling – Potential second visit by DNR staff to collect raccoons, possums, and rodents in January did not happen with no plans to return.
- Clemson Research Project –
 - Funding for at least a minimum proposal has been secured with work continuing to obtain funding for a full-scale project.
 - A full-scale version of the project to cost close to \$1 million
 - The medium version of the project to cost around \$600,000
 - The minimum version of the project to cost around \$450,000
 - A graduate student has been selected and is will start in May
 - Work on the project likely to being mid-year

Mr. Jordan discussed that funding was coming from Clemson PSA and Clemson DPR. Additional funds are being sought from the Pest Control Industry, the South Carolina Pest Control Association, and others. The Town will discuss a request to commit \$50,000 a year for the next four years during the budget process.

F. Deer Management

- Harvest of 100 deer was completed in February
- 3400 pounds of ground venison was donated to One80 Place for distribution in their outreach feeding programs.
- No issues, complaints, or calls to security

G. Kiawah Conservancy Projects

Mr. Bundrick stated that phase two of the groundwater proposal for this fiscal year was intended to make the groundwater project a long-term monitoring project that would continue past the funding. He indicated the data pulled from the groundwater wells in February, along with tidal and rainfall information, is being compiled to see how it all relates together. The next steps are to look into equipment to measure salinity and what causes salinity changes within the groundwater in some areas.

Mr. Bundrick gave an update of the marsh project by stating he had been working with the College of Charleston to help with mapping where the marsh vegetation ends, and the creek begins and how

sediments move within the marsh to help with the development of appropriate types of restoration projects.

IV. New Business

A. Discussion of Funding for FY 21-22 Environmental Projects

Mr. Jordan explained the funding available for the 2021-2022 Fiscal Year. The Environmental Programs budget supports non-Conservancy projects such as the dolphin and shorebird stewardship programs, the bluebird box program, and other projects. Of the \$20,000.00 available, \$10,000.00 has not been earmarked for a project. He asked the Committee for feedback on potential projects or areas of interest that should be focused on.

Committee members engaged in an in-depth discussion of a potential study of water quality in the ponds and outfalls from wash-off of road surfaces and fertilizer. Mr. Jordan indicated that the study could be considered a potential Conservancy project for the upcoming funding cycle.

Mr. Jordan indicated that Conservancy projects have a separate line item that has been budgeted in this fiscal year at \$50,000.00. He asked if the members of the Conservancy had any projects in mind. Conservancy members indicated that while there were potential projects, they required more discussion within the Conservancy before bringing forth the Environmental Committee. Mr. Bundrick noted the Conservancy was in the beginning stages of its ecological health initiative, trying to gather information on how to create and what type of assessment system would be necessary to measure the ecological health of Kiawah.

V. Reports:

A. Town of Kiawah Island

Mr. Jordan discussed his report along with reviewing the locations of the collared bobcats :

➤ Bobcat GPS Study

- 3 out of 5 2020 bobcats have died
 - Bobcat 550 – February 16th - Adult Male, Parkside, 17lbs 10oz.
 - Anticoagulant poisoning 5/19/20
 - Bobcat 600 – February 17th – Adult Female, Preserve, 17lbs 6oz.
 - Anticoagulant poisoning 6/10/20
 - Bobcat 500 – March 10th – Adult Female, Willet Island, 13lbs 0oz.
 - New cat.
 - Bobcat 250- March 10th – Adult Female, Preserve, 15lbs 10z.
 - Hit by car 8/11/20.
 - Bobcat 450 – October 18th – Adult Female, Captain Sams, 13lbs 3 oz.
 - Originally captured in April 2008. Blood sample negative for anticoagulants
- 4 weeks of trapping in 2021
 - January 25 to February 4
 - February 22 to March 5
- 5 collars deployed
 - Blood samples were taken from three out of five bobcats. All tested negative for anticoagulants
 - Three new cats and two Recaptures
 - Bobcat 200 – 2-year-old male, 19lbs 15oz, captured near Ocean Course Clubhouse on January 27, 2021
 - Bobcat 250 – juvenile male, 16lbs 8oz, captured in the Preserve on January 28, 2021 – First-time capture
 - Bobcat 767 – female, 13lbs 5oz, captured near Indigo Park on January 28, 2021

- Bobcat 300 – female, 13lbs 12oz, captured on Flyway Drive on January 29, 2021 – First-time capture
- Bobcat 550 – Adult female, 115lbs 10oz, captured on Little Bear on January 29, 2021. Collared last year on March 10, 2020 – weighted 13lbs last year
- Recapture of Bobcat 200 on January 29, 2021. Originally collared on January 27th and again on January 31st – named this cat “Rainwater.”

B. Kiawah Island Community Association Land & Lakes Management

Mr. Hill stated that for the third year, large-scale pruning had been taking place to get rid of overgrown vegetation on the pond edges. He indicated a decrease in the vegetation around the edges, allows more sunlight into the ponds creating a healthier habitat and better water quality. He stated that preparations are being made to stock fish and spray algae blooms since the water temperature is still too cold for the tilapia to start feeding and be effective against the algae blooms. He also stated that landscape maintenance and seasonal planting are taking place in preparation for the PGA Tournament and warmer weather.

Mr. Hill stated that in preparation for “alligator season,” this would be the first spring without a graduate student doing any alligator work. He indicated that working with Mr. Jordan and Mr. Given, the decision was made to continue to capture alligators, tag them with visual and pit tags, take measurements, and continue to obtain data.

Committee members engaged in a discussion of the removal of vegetation on the pond edges.

C. Kiawah Island Golf Resort

Ms. King, as part of the previous discussion of project ideas, stated that with car collisions having a huge impact on the bobcat mortality rate, she would suggest considering placing animal crossing or educational signs in the area between Cassique and Freshfields to let people know that there is a tremendous amount of wildlife that is crossing the road.

Ms. King reported that the major push has been updating the Nature Center with new displays to include an educational piece on Sea Turtles and a display on alligators and the alligator research and getting ready for all the guests arriving.

D. Kiawah Island Architectural Review Board

No report.

E. Kiawah Conservancy

Mr. Bundrick stated that have brought on new staff as part of the new strategic planning process and introduced Mr. Collie Farah as the new land preservation specialist with the Conservancy.

F. Turtle Patrol

Mr. Jordan stated that Ms. Sager is preparing for the start of the new season. With the COVID protocol situation still not clarified, she is working on its effect on scheduling and new volunteers.

VI. Citizen Comments:

None

VII. Chairman's Comments:

Mr. Jordan commented on a new bill just introduced in the South Carolina Senate regarding the ability for local governments to regulate the use of second-generation anticoagulants. He read the law that prohibited the regulation of pesticides by the local government and the changes to sections A and B. He noted the legislation introduced by Senator Campsen has been referred to the Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee and is expected to be an incredibly hard-fought uphill battle to get it passed.

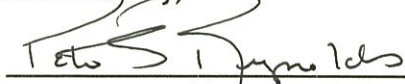
VIII. Committee Member Comments:

None

IX. Adjournment:

Mr. Pumphrey motioned to adjourn the meeting at 3:12 pm. The motion was seconded by Mr. Hernandez and carried unanimously.

Submitted by,



Petra S. Reynolds, Town Clerk

Approved by,



Jim Jordan, Chairman

6-22-21
Date