

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE MEETING
Kiawah Island Municipal Center
Council Chambers
May 14, 2019; 2:00 PM

Minutes

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

II. **Roll Call:**

PRESENT: Jim Jordan, Chairman
Jim Sullivan
Lynne Sager
Jane Ellis
Pam Wilson
David Pumphrey
Jack Kotz
KINHC: Lee Bundrick
KICA: James Wilson
ARB: Sara Senst
Daphne Wertz
KIGR: Liz King
TOKI: Aaron Given

ABSENT: Jim Chitwood
Scott Nelson

III. **Approval of Minutes:**

A. Environmental Committee Meeting Minutes of March 12, 2019

Approval of the March 12th minutes was deferred to the next Environmental Committee meeting.

IV. **Reports:**

A. Town of Kiawah Island

Mr. Jordan reviewed his Environmental Department Update for May:

📌 **Alligator Research**

- Collaborative research project with Clemson/Nemours
 - Six tags deployed in 2018
 - Two tags lost, replaced in 2019 (one male, one female)
 - Flight distance surveys ongoing

📌 **Bobcat GPS Study**

- Six adult bobcats captured
- Three males and three females fitted with GPS collars
- Female 250 died in late February
- Male 400 died in late March – collar ended up in a pond. Neither have been recovered but still under investigation.
- Male 450 died April 22nd on the Parkway near Cassique - Presumed to have been hit by a car.
- Female 350 – den found April 25 in Preserve. 2 kittens (1 male, 1 female)

📌 **Marsh Sparrow Banding**

Mr. Given reported that the last Marsh Sparrow banding was completed in April. The weather did not cooperate for this year, so only thirteen sites were visited for seventeen banding sessions. He banded 261 new birds and had 167 recaptures from the previous year. Most of the birds captured there were from the three targeted species with a total of:

- 158 Seaside Sparrows, 103 recaptures;
- 30 Nelson Sparrows, 38 recaptures;
- 45 Saltmarsh Sparrows, 18 recaptures.

✦ **Painted Bunting Smithsonian Study**

- Deployed 25 geolocators in 2017. Recovered 8 of those in 2018, with one that has not been caught.
- Deployed 17 geolocators in 2018. Recovery efforts ongoing, recovered two so far this year.
- Plan for this year is to deploy 20 more geolocators, ten on females and ten on adult males

Mr. Given reported that the Smithsonian is going to be conducting a study using a chip tag embedded in a plastic leg band. A specially designed bird feeder, which will have an antenna in the perch, will record the data from individual birds as they stop and feed. He indicated that a bird feeder would be installed at Town Hall to experiment on how it works and next year, see if residents would like to participate in establishing one in their yard.

B. Kiawah Island Community Association Land & Lakes Management

Mr. Wilson reported that Tarpon research was now ongoing. The graduate student from Coastal Carolina comes weekly to take samples from the ponds, until September, looking at larval recruitment, variations at different times of the year and growth rates.

Mr. Wilson reported on the extensive pond pruning project going on around the Surfwatch and Eugenia area with three out of the four ponds expected to be completed by Memorial Day. They plan to spray to control the for Phragmites again this year with encouraging signs that there has not been much regrowth. The monitoring of mosquito counts, and spraying has been going on for the past three weeks and there have also been a number of complaints about alligators in the roads, some of which have been tagged and relocated.

Mr. Given reported on the discovery of Cogongrass on the island. He noted that it is one of the top ten invasive plants in the world, is spread by seeds, incredibly difficult to kill and illegal to possess. He stated that Clemson University has a task force that comes to take samples for genetic testing, and a containment plan is being developed.

C. Kiawah Island Golf Resort

Ms. King reported that Dr. Gibbons, who conducted the first reptile inventory on the island in the '70s and '80s, will be coming during Memorial Day weekend to research the diminishing population of Diamondback Terrapin which lives in the salt marsh between Kiawah and Seabrook. Terrapins will be caught and marked in order to monitor survival rates. It is the longest continuous study of Diamondback Terrapins in the world.

Ms. King reported that they are busy educating guests and residents with tours and classroom programs. The Discovery series, beginning in mid-June, brings in different guest speakers and is held weekly in the evenings at Night Heron Park.

D. Kiawah Island Architectural Review Board

Ms. Senst reported that the Architectural Review Board is busy monitoring the construction of new homes on the island, lot coverage, and landscape installation.

E. Kiawah Conservancy

Mr. Bundrick reported on an insect survey on the beach, which is nearly completed. He also reported on their programs being held at their Demonstration Garden, focusing on native plants.

F. Turtle Patrol

Ms. Sager report that, as of today, there are 22 nests. She noted that only seven nests had to be relocated, which is significantly lower than in previous years. She additionally stated that Kiawah had the first nest of the season for the state and it was also the earliest recorded nest in South Carolina.

V. Old Business

A. Kiawah Landscaping Workgroup (Grow Native)

- Native Plant database completed and available online on the Town webpage directly or to by searching grownativekiawah.com
- Next meeting of the Kiawah Landscaping workgroup will be Monday, May 20th at 1 pm.

B. Shorebird Stewardship Program

- Additional training sessions have been conducted for volunteers.
- Shorebird nesting area on east end closed until September with signs installed

C. Flood Mitigation and Sea Level Rise

Planning Commission working incorporating Sea Level Rise (SLR) recommendations into Town's Comprehensive Plan

- May 8th was the 3rd meeting of SLR task force. The group finished going through all sections of the Comprehensive Plan. Next meeting in late May-June. Timeline pushed back slightly for completion and presentation to Town Council.

Mr. Lucas Hernandez indicated he completed the sea level rise, storm surge, and rainfall mapping he has been working on. He gave a presentation of the mapping, reviewing in detail different levels of flood or sea level inundation. He stated the refined interactive map would be available to residents on the Town's website.

D. Plastics Workgroup

- Town Council held a Plastics Workshop on April 24th where a presentation was given, and future action was discussed.
- An Ordinance was created and sent to Council. The ordinance passed first reading on May 7th.

E. Kiawah Nest Box Program

The bird boxes have been installed and are being utilized.

F. Grow Native Interpretive Trail

- Town Council approved \$6,000.00 of funding for Phase 1 on May 7th.
- Trail location flagged today

- Was informed that trail was required to be ADA compliant, which may slow down project implementation.

VI. New Business

A. Single-use Plastics Ordinance

Mr. Jordan presented and discussed the Single-use Plastics Ordinance 2019-03. He indicated this Ordinance bans the distribution of single-use plastic bags, plastic straws, and polystyrene/plastic foam products. It also forbids the possession of those products with the addition of balloons on the beach. He reviewed the changes and exemptions that were requested by Council and will be proposed in the ordinance for second reading.

B. Project Ideas/Priorities Discussion

Mr. Jordan asked Committee Members for suggestions, ideas, or topics the Committee should focus on in the future. The question was posed if the Environmental Committee would be involved in the implementation of Sea Level Rise once incorporated in the Town's Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Jordan indicated he felt confident that the Committee would be delegated responsibility for certain aspects of Sea Level Rise implementation adaptation. He asked members to email him any other suggestions.

VII. Citizen Comments:

None

VIII. Chairman's Comments:

None

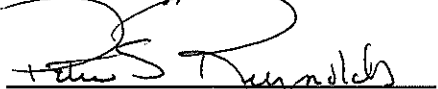
IX. Committee Member Comments:

None

X. Adjournment:

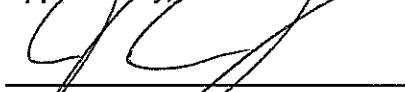
The meeting was adjourned at 2:45 pm.

Submitted by,



Petra S. Reynolds, Town Clerk

Approved by,



Jim Jordan, Chairman

7-10-19

Date