

Town of Kiawah Island
ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE MEETING
Virtual Meeting via Zoom
September 8, 2020; 2:00 PM

MINUTES

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

PRESENT: Jim Jordan, Chairman
Jim Chitwood
John Leffler
Lynne Sager
Jane Ellis
Pam Wilson
Scott Nelson
Jim Sullivan
David Pumphrey
Jack Kotz
KINHC: Lee Bundrick
KICA: Matt Hill
ARB: Sara Senst
KIGR: Liz King

ABSENT: Doug Walter
TOKI: Aaron Given

II. Approval of Minutes:

A. Minutes of the July 14, 2020 Environmental Committee Meeting

Mr. Nelson made a motion to approve the minutes of the July 14, 2020 Environmental Committee meeting. The motion was seconded by Ms. Sager and was unanimously approved.

III. New Business

A. None

IV. Old Business

A. Kiawah Landscaping Workgroup (Grow Native)

No report.

B. Shorebird Stewardship Program

No report.

C. Flood Mitigation and Sea Level Rise

Mr. Leffler stated the KICA (Kiawah Island Community Association) taskforce held two focus group sessions to discuss flooding, climate change, and sea-level rise concerns. The group put those concerns into a survey distributed to property owners to assess community opinions on these issues. He stated that meetings with the Mayor, Partners, Resort, and Conservancy resulted in a survey distributed to realtors, rental companies and property managers to obtain their views and those expressed by their clients. All the information gathered will be compiled into a report expected to be completed in November.

Mr. Chitwood added that he felt good progress was being made to institutionalize the adaptive management process within KICA and the Town. The process would first define thresholds and then make recommendations that are expected to be accepted initiating the development of a formal adaptive management plan. The next step would include designing trigger points to indicate approaching a threshold and the adaptive management plan to keep from reaching the threshold.

Mr. Pumphrey added for everyone to watch for and complete the survey to be released in the coming weeks.

D. Grow Native/Parkway Landscaping

Mr. Jordan stated the Parkway project's paving had been completed with the project entering the Landscaping phase. While there have been delays, site preparations will start later this month, with plants going in the ground in October and completing the project in late November or early December.

E. Rodenticides/Wildlife

Mr. Jordan indicates much of his work in the past two months has been on the rodenticide issue, as seen by the numerous articles in the news and Town eBlast. He reviewed the impact on the island's bobcat population and that the Town cannot legally pass an ordinance regulating the use of any pesticides. He also stated the request for a temporary ban from the Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) was denied maintaining that voluntary efforts by the pest control industry along with individual property owners are reducing the amount of SGA's (second generation anticoagulants) and any type of regulation was not necessary at this time.

Mr. Jordan discussed the efforts being taken to voluntarily reduce SGA use and all anticoagulant rodenticides. He reviewed the statistics from the Town's Bobcat Guardian program breaking down the percentage of the pest control companies, regimes, rental/property management companies, and island entities that have pledged to discontinue using anticoagulant rodenticides. He suggested the creation of a subcommittee to assist with contacting pest control companies, regimes, property management companies and other businesses that have not signed the Bobcat Guardian pledge. .

Mr. Jordan explained that efforts are being made to work with the pest control industry and DPR to gather more accurate data on SGA historical and current usage by individual companies doing business on the island. He noted that if the amount of SGA's on Kiawah and the negative impacts on wildlife show no improvement, DPR would potentially consider putting a ban or prohibition in place. He indicated that conversations have taken place on developing a pilot research project and outlined the challenges involved with the study's design.

F. Deer Management

Mr. Jordan stated that the Town is planning to harvest one hundred deer this fall and winter. The project is likely to start in November or December. He indicated that the fall deer survey is taking place in October, providing more current numbers but noted that with the record number of fawns observed on the island, the numbers are expected to be higher than last year.

G. Kiawah Conservancy Project Update

Mr. Bundrick gave an update on the groundwater project by stating that at the last meeting, there were about 15 wells installed and they were working on the set up of additional wells. Since that time six additional wells have been installed; four on Community Association property and two on residential properties for a total of 21 wells. Most of the wells have been equipped with level loggers that are gathering data, which will be downloaded seasonally and

reported over time. Discussions are still taking place for other potential sites for the installation of additional wells.

Mr. Bundrick stated that he is monitoring the progression of the marsh project closely with the College of Charleston. He noted that they shared a web layer in the past few weeks, which would allow committee members to look at the shorelines and compare them to lines in between 1994 and 2019 to see the physical changes over time. He indicated that the phase 1 projects are very close to completion and are expected to be finished up by the end of 2020.

V. **New Business**

A. **Rodenticide Subcommittee Discussion**

Mr. Jordan asked members for their input on establishing a Rodenticide Subcommittee to help with better ideas or ways to approach pest control companies and the rodenticide issue and if members would like to participate on the Subcommittee.

Ms. Ellis indicated that she was in favor of a subcommittee and would be willing to participate. She noted that the Ad-Hoc Group of the Conservancy's Environmental Science Committee had already done a great deal of research work on the rodenticide issue. Some of the members may be willing to participate in the Rodenticide Subcommittee. Mr. Jordan agreed that the Rodenticide Subcommittee should partner with the Conservancy's Subcommittee to split the workload, especially working closely on strategizing alternative ways to communicate this issue's importance.

Committee members discussed the effectiveness of personal outreach to the companies and residents, research done on integrated pest management, and protection methods without using pesticides. Ms. Ellis, Mr. Sullivan, Ms. Sager, and Ms. Wilson volunteered to participate in the Subcommittee. Mr. Bundrick suggested expanding the focus and scope to include other pesticide issues on the island, volunteering to chair the Kiawah Rodenticide Subcommittee.

B. **Kiawah Conservancy Funding Proposals (FY 20-21)**

Mr. Bundrick indicated that the proposals for the Groundwater Table Study and the Marsh Vulnerability Study were presented last year with the potential of them continuing to a second phase. In the FY 20-21 Conservancy funding proposal for Phase II of Groundwater Table and Marsh Vulnerability Study, he gave a detailed review of the studies. Included in the presentation were overviews of each of the studies, summaries of the first phases, approaches, and methodologies. Also included were education and outreach, outcomes, reasoning, objectives, and the requirements and approximate costs associated or needed to accomplish each project.

Committee members engaged in an in-depth discussion of each of the studies, which included information provided in the proposal for each of the studies, an anticipated timeline for future reporting, long-term plans for continuous monitoring, and dissemination of the information gathered.

VI. **Reports:**

A. **Town of Kiawah Island**

Mr. Jordan reviewed his monthly report:

📌 **Alligator Research**

- Collaborative research project with Clemson/Nemours
 - October: Final behavior surveys and end of fieldwork
 - The graduate student will analyze all data for her dissertation, which will include recommendations and conclusions
 - The final report anticipated in one year

Bobcat GPS Study

- Three out of four 2020 bobcats have died
 - Bobcat 550 – 2/16- Adult Male, Parkside, 17lbs 10oz.
 - Anticoagulant poisoning - May 19, 2020
 - Bobcat 600 – 2/17 – Adult Female, Preserve, 17lbs 6oz.
 - Anticoagulant poisoning – June 10, 2020
 - Bobcat 500 – 3/10 – Adult Female, Willet Island, 13lbs 0oz. New cat.
 - Bobcat 250- 3/10 – Adult Female, Preserve, 15lbs 10z.
 - Hit by car on 8/11/20. Sent to the lab
- Will have six collars to deploy in 2021
 - Will take blood samples again to test for anticoagulants

Painted Buntings

- Nano tags are being placed on birds this month
- 18 out of 34 have been placed on birds to date. It should finish this week.
- New tower at The Timbers
- Geolocator work complete for the year

Fall Migration Banding

- Began August 15
- Six banding assistants employed
- Will continue daily weather-permitting through Nov 30.

2020 Fall Cumulative Banding Stats	Captain Sam's	Little Bear	TOTAL
# Birds Banded	607	344	951
# of Recaptures	208	49	257
# of Species	33	32	42
Effort (net-hours)	2750.11	1322.85	4072.96
Capture Rate (birds/100 net-hours)	29.6	29.7	29.65
# of Days	23	15	-

B. Kiawah Island Community Association Land & Lakes Management

No Report

C. Kiawah Island Golf Resort

No Report

D. Kiawah Island Architectural Review Board

No Report

E. Kiawah Conservancy

Ms. Ellis reported that the Conservancy spent a lot of time discussing the rodenticides issue and voting on the position statement.

Mr. Bundrick questioned if the Committee needed to vote on the proposals' recommendation so that the Council could approve them. Mr. Jordan clarified that Committee approval was not required. The consensus of the Committee is that the projects continue to benefit the island and that will be conveyed to the Council.

F. Turtle Patrol

Ms. Sager reported that the nesting season ended August 15th with the last naturally laid nest and several wild nests. She indicated there were 345 nests this year but in reality, only 342. Two

wild nests were just eggshells brought from previously inventoried nests, and a wild nest in the bird sanctuary was quickly probed and GPS, but the nest was never found. She also reported two live hatchlings that ended up in a crab hole they had fallen into. After a considerable time trying to locate a nest failed, it was recorded as a nest but without a specimen. A third hatchling was also found, and all three were taken out to the ocean.

Ms. Sager commented on the new nesting season practices that were put into effect due to COVID 19. The addition of an experienced walking patroller probing within each zone was a huge success and requested to be continued.

Ms. Sager indicated that hatching season is nearly complete, with less than one-quarter of the nests remaining. She indicated that the nests' quality had not been as good as in previous years, with low-quality nests having zero hatches. She hoped that genetic testing might provide an answer.

VII. Citizen Comments:

None

VIII. Chairman's Comments:

None


IX. Committee Member Comments:

Mr. Kotz asked about the armadillo issue on the island. Mr. Jordan confirmed that the island has a population of armadillos that has increased from the previous year. He stated from his personal experience other than digging in the grass or flower gardens to eat grubs; he saw no other damages. He did say that armadillos can burrow under foundations or forage on golf courses, causing problems, but he had not received any complaints about any damages. The few people who have had them burrowing near their homes or steps have expressed concerns, but this does not seem to be a significant issue.

X. Adjournment:

Ms. Sager motioned to adjourn the meeting at 3:27 pm. The motion was seconded by Mr. Hill and carried unanimously.

Submitted by,



Petra S. Reynolds, Town Clerk

Approved by,



Jim Jordan, Chairman

11-12-20
Date