



Environmental Advisory Committee

4:00 p.m., Thursday, November 18, 2021

Council Chambers

1207 Palm Boulevard, Isle of Palms, SC 29451

Agenda

1. **Call to order** and acknowledgment that the press and the public have been duly notified of the meeting in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.
2. **Election of Chair and Vice Chair**
3. **Approval of previous meeting's minutes** – October 18, 2021
4. **Citizen's Comments** – Citizen's comments shall be limited to 3 minutes.
5. **Old Business** – Discussion of priorities and projects for the committee to address.
6. **New Business**
7. **Miscellaneous Business**
Next meeting date: 4:00 p.m., Thursday, January _____, 2022
8. **Adjournment**



ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

4:00pm, Thursday, October 14, 2021

1207 Palm Boulevard, Isle of Palms, SC

and broadcasted live on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/user/cityofisleofpalms>

MINUTES

1. Call to order

Present: Sandra Brotherton, Deb Faires, Doug Hatler, Jonathan Knoche, Molly Marino, Belvin Olasov, Linda Plunkett, Mary Pringle, and City Council Liaison Susan Smith

Absent: Grace Jurgela

Staff Present: Administrator Fragoso, Director Kerr

2. Approval of previous meeting's minutes -- none

3. Citizens' Comments -- none

4. Old Business -- none

6. New Business

A. Introduction of Committee members, City Council liaison and City staff

Administrator Fragoso thanked Council Member Smith for her leadership in the creation of this committee. Members introduced themselves, and Administrator Fragoso said a Chair and Co-Chair at next meeting. Several Committee members indicated they did not want to be considered for leadership positions.

B. Review of Freedom of Information Act

Administrator Fragoso discussed the Freedom of Information Act and how it applies to Committee members. She said City email addresses will be provided to Committee members on which they are to conduct any City and Committee-related business. She also explained the parameters of Executive Session.

C. Tips for conducting effective meetings

Administrator Fragoso reviewed some tips for having effective meetings.

D. Review of purpose and goals of the Environmental Advisory Committee

Administrator Fragoso reviewed the goals and purpose of the Environmental Advisory Committee as set forth by the City Council:

Purpose: City Council formed the Environmental Advisory Committee to advise City Council on matters of environmental impact, protections, conservation, and sustainability by exploring innovations, best practices, and data around changes. The Environmental Advisory Committee may address matters as requested by City Council and its committees, and on its own accord take up issues and initiatives that fit within its mission, with regular reporting to the Council.

Goals: Protect the environment, endangered species, and natural resources; reduce litter and pollution; pursue energy conservation; develop environmental messaging and branding to promote best practices; support Isle of Palms as a strong environmental leader in South Carolina and model for other coastal communities; and develop and support partnerships with related community groups and stakeholders.

E. Open discussion of action items to meet goals of the Committee

Council Member Smith reviewed a list of environmental issues and concerns the Committee could use to create its first areas of action: energy use and how the City can reduce its carbon footprint while encouraging citizens to do the same; leadership on climate change and promoting change on state and local levels; litter, trash, and waste messaging; recycling; composting; protecting island ecosystems, nature and wildlife; migrating birds and sanctuaries; landscaping that promotes native plants and trees; artificial turf; water quality and air quality.

Committee members will consider the list and present 3-5 priorities to Administrator Fragoso who will compile them for discussion at the next meeting.

7. Miscellaneous Business

The next meeting of the Environmental Advisory Committee will be Thursday, November 18, 2021 at 4:00pm.

8. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 5:20pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Nicole DeNeane
City Clerk

**City of Isle of Palms, South Carolina
Environmental Advisory Committee**

List of Priorities/Projects for the Committee to Consider:

Doug Hatler:

1. Water quality - holistic watershed protection
2. Habitat protection & open space preservation
3. Alignment with Charleston Climate Action Plan
4. Traffic - GHG hotspot reduction

Molly Marino:

1. Enforcement of pre-existing environmental legislation: cigarettes on beaches, lights-out for sea turtles
2. Single-use plastics/litter, specifically looking into micro-plastic mitigation
3. Energy Usage: Retrofitting city property (buildings, cars) for increased energy efficiency
4. Review standing water quality testing for (emergent) pollutants

Linda Plunkett:

1. Protection of the island's wildlife, especially turtles and shore birds.
2. Reduction of litter on the beaches and streets.
3. Monitoring the water quality on and around the IOP.

Whichever actions we undertake, I believe that we should conduct a strong PR campaign to illustrate that our city in the sea strives for best environmental practices for coastal communities.

Mary Pringle:

Litter/Trash/Waste

- Public compliance with current litter related ordinances including no smoking
 - Follow-through/enforcement of rules that apply to beach & businesses
- Beach litter/trash - what could be done better? Should the city invest additional resources, do more to involve volunteers, look for a better trash can? Work with IOP Cleanup Crew & city's current beach trash collector on solutions

Protecting Ecosystems, Native Species & Endangered Wildlife

- Renewed enforcement/messaging on protections for turtles – including guidance on Lights Out, holes on the beach – work with Island Turtle Team, SC Aquarium
- Consider creating a protected area for migrating birds at Breach Inlet – work with DNR, Audubon Society
- Encouraging landscaping that supports native plants, offers smart strategies for tree placement (away from power lines), rain gardens to help with drainage
- Investigating and informing public on short & long-term impact of artificial turf - aka Fake Grass – and mosquito mitigation

Trash, Waste

Yard debris and household waste (furniture, etc)

Problem: Although garbage collection is efficient and reliable, yard debris and household waste may sit at roadside for weeks before pick-up. Esthetically, it is an eyesore. Over time, the leaves from the branches drop off and flow into the drainage system during a storm, which makes it more difficult to manage water flow and increases the risk of localized street flooding. Leaf bags fall over on the side or rip open after weeks in the weather further contributing to the problem. When the debris is removed, grass and topsoil are often lost in the process, which adds to erosion and washing of soil into the street drains.

Ideas to address: Establish a designated day each week for pick-up of yard debris and household waste. If there is a specific day, individuals who are interested in salvaging a roadside treasure can cruise the area and remove items of interest resulting in less for public works to pick up. A specific day for debris may result in residents putting out limbs and leaves the day before. We could investigate the possibility of obtaining bids for debris pick up and clean-up to relieve some of the workload on our public works department.

Microplastics

Problem: Plastic water bottles are not biodegradable but degrade into microplastics. Production requires the use on non-renewable fossil fuels; most are made of polyethylene terephthalate (PET), which is produced using oil. Energy also used to transport, store and dispose of these water bottles (76 million barrels according to <https://get-green-now.com/environmental-impact-plastic-bottled-water/>). It is the 5th most common item in coastline cleanups. Potential for the release of toxic chemicals with water bottles sitting in direct sunlight.

Ideas to address: Eliminate sales of cases of water at local businesses (HT and Target); provide opportunity to purchase reusable water bottles instead. Discourage use of water bottles in rental properties. Establish a bring your water bottle campaign in partnership with rental companies, etc.

Recycling

Problem: Recycling containers filled with inappropriate items, particularly plastic bags.

Ideas to address: Partner with recycling center to help residents and visitors understand that you can't recycle plastic bags. Step up education about the problem of recycling inappropriately. Invite Phil D Bin to community events.

Energy/Pollution/Traffic

Problem: Traffic.

Ideas to address: Electric bus service to island. How many people have ridden a Carta bus to get anywhere? How many have looked at their website and tried to figure out their schedules? No one knows where to get on the bus, when to get on the bus, how much does it cost without

effort. Publish schedules everywhere: website, hotels, rental agency, Island eye news. Partner with connector hotels to encourage use of buses. If we could get the middle lane back, is there potential to use that for buses as well as emergency vehicles.

Move cars on and off the island more efficiently. Investigate the use of parking apps. Encourage visitors to use traffic apps. Better traffic management. Could we implement a traffic flow plan whereby cars exit the island via SI if they are south of the connector and via the connector if north of the connector.

I know that Douglas said we should not address drainage with our group, but that is like ignoring the elephant in the room especially after recent flooding. Should the island be seeking infrastructure monies for continued upgrades to our drainage system? Are open ditches the best method to get rid of water and mitigate flooding? Would a closed system with backflow valves improve our situation? Are there pumps that can help with water removal considering we don't have much of a slope to the water? Perhaps we can invite someone from public works to educate the group.