



Environmental Advisory Committee

4:00 p.m., Thursday, February 10, 2022

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. **Approval of previous meeting's minutes** – January 13, 2022
3. **Citizen's Comments** – Citizen's comments shall be limited to 3 minutes.
4. **Old Business**
 - a. Discussion of main priorities to pursue identified by the subcommittees:
 - i. Water Quality
 - ii. Climate Change
 - iii. Wildlife
 - iv. Litter & Pollution
5. **New Business**
6. **Miscellaneous Business**

Next meeting date: 4:00 p.m., Thursday, March 10, 2022
7. **Adjournment**



ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

4:30pm, Thursday, January 13, 2022

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, Grace Jurgela and City Council John Bogosian

Staff Present: Administrator Fragoso

2. Approval of previous meeting's minutes

MOTION: Ms. Plunkett made a motion to approve, and Ms. Brotherton seconded the motion.

Mr. Hatler requested the proper spelling of his last name.

VOTE: The amended minutes passed unanimously.

3. Citizens' Comments -- none

MOTION: Ms. Plunkett made a motion to reorder the agenda to have Dr. Weinberg's presentation ahead of Old Business. Mr. Knoche seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

4. New Business

A. Presentation by Dr. Stewart Weinberg regarding the City of Charleston's Climate Action Plan

Dr. Stewart Weinberg gave a presentation about the City of Charleston's Climate Action Plan. The plan is a 5-year strategic framework to reduce carbon pollution. The entire presentation is available online alongside the agenda for this meeting.

5. Old Business

A. Discussion of main priorities to pursue identified by the subcommittees

Ms. Pringle suggested that each group bring 1-2 priorities to the next meeting. The list will be compiled and group priorities will be voted on. Administrator Fragoso said that staff will guide the Committee as to which priorities would be handled on a staff level and which would need to

go through a standing committee or City Council for implementation. Each subcommittee will send their priorities to Ms. Pringle and Administrator Fragoso by February 1, and the list will be distributed to the group prior to the next meeting.

B. Review and consideration of Vision Statement

Ms. Pringle read the vision statement as crafted by Ms. Plunkett: “The Environmental Advisory Committee of the City of the Isle of Palms, South Carolina seeks to make the city a coastal leader in environmental best practices by focusing on four ecological issues: reduction and elimination of litter, review and maintenance of high quality of water, protection of the city’s habitat and wildlife advocacy, and leadership in climate action to build a sustainable environment.”

MOTION: Ms. Brotherton made a motion to approve and adopt the statement as presented. Ms. Faires seconded the motion.

Committee members discussed some wording changes to two of the issues: reduction and management of litter and waste, and maintenance of water quality.

VOTE: The amended vision statement was approved and adopted.

5. New Business – none

B. Discussion of establishing quarterly public education campaign

Ms. Pringle asked Committee members to submit a 2-3 sentence biography to Administrator Fragoso as part of an article about the Committee to be submitted to *The Island Eye*.

Administrator Fragoso explained, “We want to establish a quarterly public education campaign, and we’ll start off with an introduction from you to all of the community. Then what our recommendation is that this committee help us draft or identify an educational topic that we can promote through the island, maybe the three or four big themes that you all have already identified.”

Along with the introduction to the Committee members, the first article will include education on litter and pollution.

7. Miscellaneous Business

The next meeting of the Environmental Advisory Committee will be Thursday, February 10, 2022 at 4:00pm.

8. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 5:47pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Nicole DeNeane
City Clerk

Environmental Advisory Committee

Goals and Strategies for Protecting City Wildlife and Habitat

Mary Pringle, Debbie Faires, Grace Jurgela

IMMEDIATE:

1. Increase police enforcement of the existing lighting ordinance during sea turtle nesting season (May 1-October 31). Any light visible from the beach is prohibited by city law.
2. We are working on a “rack card” with information about birds and sea turtles for tourists to be placed at the desks of hotels and motels on the IOP to be picked up by guests who check in and hope that ATAX money can fund its printing.
3. Be aware of Dominion Energy’s proposed offer to change to bright white LED streetlights and consider alternative options for lights on beachfront roads which include shielded models and/or amber colored lights that they offer if these changes are made. Amber lights do not attract emerging hatchlings or discourage adult loggerheads from nesting as bright white light does. And consult with the IOP Turtle Team who are affiliated with SCDNR before making this decision.
4. Consider the possibility of an ordinance against metal shovels on the beach to stop the ongoing common problem of people digging and leaving large deep holes that are a danger to sea turtles as well as people. This is working well on Kiawah and Hilton Head.

OTHER CONCERNS:

- Work with Audubon SC in their program to protect migratory sea birds, perhaps by putting up educational signs near Breach Inlet where these birds stop to rest and feed. Audubon has been training volunteers on IOP to be Shorebird Stewards on the beach to educate people about the effect of letting dogs and children chase and disturb them.
- Continue to work with SCDNR in posting and roping off areas in Wild Dunes where endangered least terns and plovers have nested for the last two years.
- Continue and expand coyote management that the City has been doing. Also begin to educate the residents about the danger of second generation anticoagulant rodenticides that cause the deaths of beneficial predators such as hawks, eagles, bobcats and owls that may eat poisoned rats and mice. Consider using Nextdoor neighborhood social media or the Island Eye newspaper to educate residents about coyotes and rat poison issues.
- Promote the use of native plants and trees on the Isle of Palms through education of residents and by the use of them in any public green spaces that now exist or are created in the future. Study the use of plastic artificial turf and its effect on wildlife habitat and feeding, including small wildlife such as insects and songbirds.

Environmental Advisory Committee
Isle of Palms, SC
Litter Suggestions for Meeting on January 13, 2022
Sandy Brotherton, Molly Marino, Linda Plunkett

Revised for EAC meeting 02/10/2022

Suggestions for immediate action:

- 1) Become an affiliate of Palmetto Pride's "Keep SC Beautiful." There are opportunities for awards, PR, and funding. (<https://www.palmettopride.org/>).

Suggestions from Sarah Lyles, Exec Dir for Palmetto Pride:

Identify litter hot spots at the beach and on the roads. Palmetto Pride can help with this assessment using a Litter Index. This allows us to focus our messaging at the best locations.

Place trash cans at transition points and use signage about litter prevention and enforcement. Palmetto Pride has cameras that can be used for enforcement, and they are free.

Implement community cleanups biannually to encourage the full-time residents to clean up their neighborhoods.

Recognize businesses that maintain clean property with a monthly Clean Business Award.

- 2) Partner with Surfrider Foundation to provide signage and receptacles related to no smoking.

Surfrider Foundation has a "hold on to your butt" campaign with signage and receptacles. Each cannister is \$99 and holds 600 butts. You can choose from 3 stickers to place on the cannister. Cannisters are made in Maine by a company called the Sidewalk Butler. Mounting sign board for the cannister is \$100 and can be ordered through Brooks Sign.

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1FkJBdR_7DrTXD6sgo41sD7yeWDHCB_KPEiJsoNL3wRo/edit?sort=13&direction=a.

- 3) Continue and encourage beach sweep efforts.
- 4) Solicit neighborhood litter volunteers to assist with cleanup or education regarding proper disposal of waste

Long term solutions:

Plastic water bottles, cups, and straws; food containers/wrappers, and more litter our beach and streets and diminish the beauty and ecology of the IOP. Plastic containers are not biodegradable, and polyethylene terephthalate (PETs), polypropylene, polystyrene, and other polymers slowly decompose into microplastics, which end up in the water supply and are consumed by wildlife and people. The production of plastic bottles also requires non-renewable fossil fuels (oils) and energy to transport, store and dispose of these water bottles (76 million barrels according to <https://get-green-now.com/environmental-impact-plastic-bottled-water/>). Plastic containers are the 5th most common item in coastline cleanups. Lastly, release of toxic

chemicals may occur from plastic water bottles sitting in direct sunlight, which led to the manufacture of reusable water bottles from different materials.

- 1) Partner with local businesses to evaluate alternatives to providing cases of water bottles for purchase with consideration given to selling reusable water bottles (possible souvenirs) and installing filling stations/attachments at municipal water fountains with the goal of eliminating the sale of cases of water and plastic straws.
- 2) Partner with rental companies and rental house owners to provide information regarding rules pertaining to litter and waste and eliminate use of single use water bottles in rental properties.
- 3) Educate the public about the rationale for reducing litter and engage residents and citizens to take responsibility for litter prevention using IOP web site, *Island Eye News* and *Moultrie News*, social media
- 4) Partner with schools, summer camps, SC Aquarium on projects aimed at keeping our beaches and streets clean
- 5) Appoint an Environmental Enforcement Officer (seasonal, part-time)

Important suggestion for immediate action but need to refer:

Although weekly 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, leaves drop from branches, bags break down, and leaves flow into the drainage system during a storm, clogging drains and increasing localized street flooding. When debris is removed, grass and topsoil are often lost in the process, which increases erosion and washing of soil into the street drains. A **specific day for waste removal** may result in residents putting out yard debris the day before pick-up and allow individuals interested in salvaging roadside treasures the opportunity to remove items of interest, resulting in less for public works to remove.

- 1) Charge the IOP Public Works department, working in collaboration with the City Council, to investigate the feasibility of providing waste removal on a specific day(s) each week and report back to the Environmental Advisory Committee in 2 mos. with a report to include needed resources or quotes for outsourcing to another provider.

Immediate water quality goals

- Conduct a water quality audit of surface and well water, as well as intracoastal waterways.
- Understand IOP drainage infrastructure and seek ways to improve green infrastructure efforts.
- Seeks ways to improve water conservation, quality, resiliency, sustainable infrastructure and practices in IOP ordinances and policies.
- Investigate migration zones for marshland to anticipate and account for damage from rising sea levels

Overarching water quality priorities – at Isle of Palms we strive to:

- Supply and maintain a safely managed drinking water service that is located on premises, and available when needed and free from contamination.
- Maintain the quality of water by reducing pollution, eliminating dumping, and minimizing release of hazardous chemicals and materials
- Encourage the efficient use of water including sustainable withdrawals and supply of freshwater to prevent water scarcity and substantially reduce the excessive use of drinking water for non-drinking purposes (e.g., car washing, lawn irrigation).
- Maintain, protect, and restore as needed, water-related ecosystems, including our beaches, estuaries, marshes, inlets, the intercoastal waterway, ocean, wetlands, streams, drainageways, and ground-water aquifers.
- Support, promote, and strengthen the participation of our residents, surrounding communities, and tourists in maintaining and improving water usage and management.
- Prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds from land-based and water-based activities, including marine debris and nutrient pollution.
- Sustainably manage and protect marine and coastal ecosystems to avoid significant adverse impacts, including by strengthening their resilience, and act for their restoration to maintain healthy and productive water bodies.
- Advocate the prevention of harvesting and overfishing, illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing, and destructive fishing practices.
- Conserve coastal and marine areas, consistent with local, state, and national law and based on the best available scientific information.

- Balance the economic costs and benefits from the use of our water resources for recreation and tourism with the need to preserve, protect, maintain, and conserve the Island's water resources.
- Contribute to the improvement of water quality by protecting natural habitats and enhancing biological biodiversity
- Enhance the protection, conservation, and sustainable use of our water resources by incorporating best water management practices into our policies, ordinances, codes, and standards.

Suggestions for immediate action:

- 1) Initiate a greenhouse gas audit, using a program like ICLEI's, to gain a basic sense of where the City's emissions are and enable a future metric-based climate action approach.
- 2) Collaborate with partners on climate education events and material that informs IOP residents on climate impacts.
- 3) Consider the passage of a Climate Action Resolution or a Recognition of Climate Emergency to show a commitment to taking action on climate pollution.

Long term solutions to pursue:

- 1) Encourage planting of native trees, especially where they'll provide shade for homes. Develop regulations for maintenance of natural areas between homes on the front beach and shore. Implement requirements for replanting trees when removal of a tree is sought for construction of a home or because a tree dies of disease in areas where there are few trees.
- 2) Work with CARTA and local hotels on routes to IOP for beachgoers. Use electric buses for the trip to avoid idling. Provide route info to locals and tourists that is easy to follow. Could use an app to download information on bus location to avoid long wait times.
- 3) Implement comprehensive energy conservation measures in city owned buildings and require energy conservation practices by city employees, which include the following: replace lighting fixtures with high-efficiency LEDs, install solar panels where applicable, implement climate control practices in buildings and offices that are unoccupied in the evenings or on weekends, and prohibit the use of gasoline powered leaf blowers by city employees.