



Environmental Advisory Committee

4:00 p.m., Thursday, April 21, 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** – March 10, 2022
3. **Citizen's Comments**
Citizen's comments shall be limited to 3 minutes.
4. **Old Business**
 - i. Wildlife – consider ordinance prohibiting metal shovels on the beach
 - ii. Water Quality
 - a discuss Waterkeepers meeting
 - b update on drainage masterplan
 - iii. Climate Change
 - a Climate Action Resolution update
 - iv. Litter & Pollution
 - a discuss affiliation with Palmetto Pride
 - b discuss installation of cigarette cannisters
5. **New Business**
6. **Miscellaneous Business**
Next meeting date: 4:00 p.m., Thursday, May 12, 2022
7. **Adjournment**



ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

4:00pm, Thursday, March 10, 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: Deb Faires, Jonathan Knoche, Molly Marino, Belvin Olasov, Linda Plunkett, Mary Pringle, and City Council John Bogosian

Absent: Sandra Brotherton, Doug Hatler, Grace Jurgela

Staff Present: Director Kerr

2. Approval of previous meeting's minutes

MOTION: Dr. Plunkett made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 10, 2022 meeting, and Mr. Olasov seconded the motion. The minutes passed unanimously.

3. Citizens' Comments

Robbie Berg, one of the co-presidents of the IOP Garden Club and President-elect of the Exchange Club, shared some upcoming beautification projects with the Committee including adding a mural to the side of the Public Works building that faces the IOP Connector, fall planting of yews at the Lutheran Retreat Center, and plantings around the City sign. She was told by a member of the ATAX Committee there may be funding available for some of these projects.

4. Old Business

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

i. Wildlife

MOTION: Dr. Plunkett made a motion to adopt a strategy of prohibiting metal shovels on the beach. Ms. Faires seconded the motion.

Ms. Pringle said that Kiawah Island and Hilton Head have already passed such an ordinance. Georgetown County is working towards the same for all its beaches. Mr. Knoche asked about the metal shovels used by people who metal detect.

Director Kerr shared the history of an attempt at such a ban 15 years ago, which led to a news story on CNN ridiculing the City for that effort. At that time, the City opted to be more proactive in filling in the holes left by visitors. Since more communities have passed such laws since that

time, City Council may be more open to the idea. Ms. Faires said this issue is also an opportunity to educate the public about the dangers of the holes to turtle and people.

Director Kerr said the next step would be to present a draft ordinance to the Committee at the next meeting for their consideration.

VOTE: The motion passed unanimously.

MOTION: Mr. Olasov made a motion to seek ATAX monies to fund 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 and a light switch sticker for beach facing lights in front beach rental houses. Dr. Plunkett seconded the motion.

Ms. Pringle passed out a draft layout for the rack card and sticker. She did not think this effort would cost more than a few hundred dollars. Mr. Olasov said had some design ideas for the rack card he felt would make it easier to read. Director Kerr said he would work with Ms. Pringle on generating the formal request to the ATAX Committee.

VOTE: The motion passed unanimously.

ii. **Water Quality**

Director Kerr updated the Committee on the status of the various initiatives voted on by the Committee at the February meeting. He reported that staff has begun discussing water testing options with Charleston Waterkeepers. He said both Charleston Waterkeepers and the State are doing some water testing but not much. He encouraged the Water Quality subcommittee to continue these conversations to encourage more testing. He reported there is \$15,000 in the FY23 budget for possible new testing that may come as a result of this effort.

The Drainage Master Plan is coming along. He said their investigation into the City’s development standards will come at the end of their process. Staff will be sure to keep the Committee integrated in that process.

Director Kerr also reported on legislation regarding neddles has passed the State Senate but is having issues in the House. Mayor Pounds has sent a letter in support of the legislation, and City Council will do all they can do to support the measure.

iii. **Climate Change**

Director Kerr reported that Charleston County is conducting a greenhouse audit, and the City has turned over its energy usage report from Dominion Energy to them to be included in the audit. Mr. Olasov said he would have more details on the audit next month.

Director Kerr noted that the City’s overall energy usage has gone down over the past few years. It is likely due to more energy efficient buildings and appliances.

MOTION: Mr. Olasov made a motion to recommend the Climate Action Resolution to City Council for approval. Dr. Plunkett seconded the motion.

Committee members discussed when to involve the other coastal communities in such an effort to help amplify the message. It was suggested that this effort be passed by City Council before engaging with other communities so as to not slow down the process.

Discussion ensued about some wording changes to the document. Wording regarding the formation of a Climate Action Plan will be included. Director Kerr and Mr. Olasov will wordsmith the document before presenting it to the Public Works Committee in April.

VOTE: The motion passed unanimously.

iv. **Litter**

Dr. Plunkett shared that among the many benefits of membership in Palmetto Pride are grants for numerous projects and activities. She said that the \$1500 membership fee can be covered by a grant from Keep America Beautiful, which also includes \$3500 for projects after six people within the City participate in their certification process. She said that many of the activities and projects completed on the island are part of the certification process. She shared that Palmetto Pride will also provide cigarette butt cannisters to the City for free.

Dr. Plunkett said there needs to be an official organization, whether it be a government entity or a 501(c)(3), to receive any monies from Keep America Beautiful or Palmetto Pride. Suggestions for an appropriate entity included the beach cleanup crews or the newly formed Chamber of Commerce. Ms. Marino said she would reach out to Kelly Thorvalson of the SC Aquarium and Dr. Plunkett will call Susan Smith for their input.

Director Kerr said a conference call with the appropriate people could be set up before the next Committee meeting to better understand the standards the City will need to adhere to in order to have membership in SC Palmetto Pride and Keep America Beautiful.

5. **New Business -- none**

6. **Miscellaneous Business**

Regarding the cigarette cannisters, Director Kerr reported that starting next week the Public Works Department will begin a pilot program of installing and emptying cannisters in the commercial district. He said the cannisters ordered by Public Works turned out to be the size of a beer can but recognized that the effort could be expanded later after they have had time to work the emptying of the cans into their schedule. He will report on the effort at April's meeting.

Director Kerr also reported on an effort to create a Conservation Station at 1118 Ocean Boulevard. Susan Smith is working with designers from the SC Aquarium to come up with a space that would include trash bins, leave/take a toy bin, and various educational components of what to do and not do at the beach. There will be a fundraising effort after the completion of the conceptual design and pricing are complete.

Ms. Faires remarked that more public education is needed regarding recycling. Mr. Olasov mentioned Charleston County's efforts regarding composting. Director Kerr asked for information about that be sent to him so that he could send it out to the group.

The next meeting of the Environmental Advisory Committee will be Thursday, April 21, 2022 at 4:00pm.

7. **Adjournment**

Dr. Plunkett made a motion to adjourn, and Mr. Olasov seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 5:29pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Nicole DeNeane
City Clerk

EXAMPLE ORDINANCES

Kiawah Ordinance:

Sec. 16-409. Digging holes on the beach prohibited.

Altering the contour or shape of the flat beach area by digging shall be prohibited. No person shall possess on or about Kiawah's beach a metal shovel of any type. Violators will be subject to assessed fines in accordance with section 16-816 of this chapter.

Exceptions:

- (1) Kids' plastic shovels no more than 14 inches in length;
- (2) Authorized personnel; and
- (3) Sponsored KICA, KIGR or TOKI events. All holes created shall be filled at the end of the event or penalties shall be assessed to the sponsor in accordance with section 16-816 of this chapter.

(Ord. No. 2017-20 , § 2, 11-7-2017)

Hilton Head Ordinance:

Sec. 8-1-211. Unlawful activities enumerated.

- (22) *Digging holes and shovels.* Anyone digging a hole or creating a sand structure on the beach shall restore the sand to its natural condition before leaving the beach and no later than thirty (30) minutes prior to sunset as stated by the National Weather Service. Shovels, except those that are made of wood and/or plastic and that are less than thirty (30) inches in length and six (6) inches in width, shall be prohibited on the beach. No persons shall dig any hole to a depth greater than twelve (12) inches on the beach. Authorized personnel, including members of the Sea Turtle Patrol, town employees performing work related to beach preservation, and others approved by the town shall be exempt from the application of this section.
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Myrtle Beach Ordinance:

Sec. 5-14. Personal use of public beach structures prohibited; obstruction on the beach prohibited; items left are considered abandoned.

- (d) Except for city issued special permitted events, metal shovels shall not be used for recreational digging on the beach. City personnel working in their official capacity are exempt from this section.

Sec. 5-4-15. Beach regulations.

- (A) No land or building situated in whole or in part in a critical area as defined in S.C. Code 1976, § 48-39-10, as amended, shall be used, occupied, constructed, altered or moved without compliance with the State of South Carolina Beachfront Management Act (S.C. Code 1976, § 48-39-10 et seq., as amended).
- (B) No land, building or other manmade structure situated in whole or in part landward of the critical area as defined in S.C. Code 1976, § 48-39-10, as amended, but within a two hundred fifty-foot (250') radius of the mean high-water mark of the Atlantic Ocean, Breach Inlet, or Dewees Inlet, shall be used, occupied, constructed, erected, altered or moved except in compliance with the requirements set forth in this section and all other requirements set forth in this chapter or any other City ordinance.
 - (1) Only beach-compatible sand may be used for any erosion control or beach renourishment activities. Sea walls, revetments, bulkheads, groins, rip-rap or any other hard erosion control structures or devices are strictly prohibited. Hard erosion control structures or devices shall include bags with a capacity greater than five (5) gallons per bag. Hard erosion control structures or devices shall not include bags containing beach-compatible sand with a capacity of five (5) gallons or less per bag, subject to the following restrictions:
 - (i) No straps, soldier piles, tape, wire, rope, or any other material or device shall be used to hold together or fasten any sand bags in place;
 - (ii) No filter cloth, geotextile fabrics, mats or other underlayments shall be placed in conjunction with the use of any sand bags; and
 - (iii) All sandbags shall be commercially manufactured for the purpose of holding sand, be tan, off-white or white in color, and manufactured with single layer fabric, with a grab tensile strength not exceeding three hundred (300) pounds or a trapezoidal tear strength not exceeding one hundred (100) pounds.
 - (2) Walkways over sand dunes which meet all of the requirements of S.C. Code 1976, § 48-39-130(D), as amended, and all regulations promulgated thereunder, shall be allowed.
 - (3) Placement of sand fence and installation of vegetation in accordance with OCRM Critical Area Regulations R.30-13 shall be allowed.
 - (4) Other than walkways over dunes, sand fencing and vegetation, no alteration of primary oceanfront sand dunes shall be allowed.
- (C) No person shall obstruct any beach or beach access within the City. Violation of this section shall be a misdemeanor, and punished in accordance with the provisions of section 1-3-66.
 - (1) For purposes of this section, the term "beach access" means any public route of ingress to and egress from the beach.
 - (2) For purposes of this section, the term "obstruct" or "obstruction" means any act or occurrence that inhibits pedestrian use of the beach access, including but not limited to the placement of vegetation or fencing within the beach access, the erection of any barrier within the beach access, any change in topography in the beach access, or the placement of any material in, on, over, under or touching the beach access that impedes or adversely affects pedestrian use.
 - (3) The City shall have the right to remove all obstructions to the beach or beach accesses. In removing such obstructions, the City, its employees, contractors and agents, may enter onto private property in order to remove the obstruction.

- (4) All costs of removal, including costs of personnel and equipment and any reimbursement for damage, shall be borne by the person placing or creating the obstruction.
- (5) The following activities are deemed to be obstructions to beach access, and are punishable in accordance with section 1-3-66:
 - (a) It shall be unlawful to drive a vehicle on any public beach or beach access, except as follows:
 - (1) Vehicular use of the beach and beach access which is determined by the City Council to be for public health and safety purposes;
 - (2) Emergency use of the beach and beach accesses by emergency vehicles; or
 - (3) Other vehicular use of the beach or beach accesses approved by City Council.
 - (b) It shall be unlawful to park a vehicle in the public right-of-way in such a manner as to block or obstruct use of a beach or beach access.

(D) Digging holes and shovels. Anyone digging a hole or creating a sand structure on the beach shall restore the sand to its natural condition before leaving the beach and no later than thirty (30) minutes prior to sunset as stated by the National Weather Service. Shovels, except those that are made of wood and/or plastic and that are less than thirty (30) inches in length and six (6) inches in width, shall be prohibited on the beach. No persons shall dig any hole to a depth greater than twelve (12) inches on the beach. Authorized personnel, including members of the Island Turtle Team, City employees performing work related to beach preservation, and others approved by the City shall be exempt from the application of this section.