



ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

4:00pm, Thursday, April 13, 2023

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, Linda Plunkett, Mary Pringle, Sandra Brotherton, Belvin Olasov, Council Member Bogosian

Absent: Doug Hatler, Jonathan Knoche, Jordan Burrell

Staff Present: Director Kerr, Zoning Administrator Simms, PR Coordinator Mikell-Yudchenko

2. Approval of previous meeting's minutes

MOTION: Dr. Plunkett made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 9, 2023 meeting, and Ms. Pringle seconded the motion. The minutes passed unanimously.

3. Citizens' Comments -- none

4. Old Business

A. Water Quality

Dr. Brotherton noted that Mr. Hatler was not present to review the goals of the Water Quality subcommittee.

Director Kerr reported that they are in discussions with Charleston Waterkeepers to do water quality testing for the City. The Water Quality subcommittee is also speaking with DHEC and the monitoring they are doing. Dr. Knoche can speak to those conversations next month.

Director Kerr also shared the City's Adopt-a-Drain initiative that will be rolled out at the May 16 Disaster Expo. He believes the program will bring awareness to the need to keep the drainage ditches clear. Those who adopt a drain can either keep the drain clear of debris or report to the City when clearing is needed. He said there will be about 100 drains up for adoption.

Dr. Plunkett suggested using the promotion of the Adopt-a-Drain program as an opportunity to suggest residents become more active in keeping their neighborhoods free of litter.

Director Kerr said PR Coordinator Mikell-Yudchenko will work on how to get the word out to the public about the program.

B. Climate Action

Mr. Olasov said that the Town of James Island has debuted solar panels on City Hall and its new cultural center. He would like to see the IOP City Council consider such an option for its public buildings. He said he could have one of James Island's Council members come speak to the committee about their solar panels, the cost, and who installed them.

Director Kerr said the City did look into the placement of solar panels 10-15 years ago. Rather than place solar panels on the buildings, the City opted to pay for panels in professionally managed solar farm in a less hurricane-prone area that would have offset the cost of solar panels. He will look to see if the City may still be receiving a credit on its electrical bills.

Mr. Olasov also shared the Town of Mt. Pleasant has adopted a Low Impact Development ordinance that incentivizes green building practices. He will share the ordinance with Committee members. He would like to speak with experts about the workings of such an ordinance and how it could be implemented in a smaller municipality.

C. Wildlife

Director Kerr reported that approximately 53 turtle signs have been put up at beach accesses across the island.

Ms. Pringle reported that she and Ms. Faires attended the Coyote seminar at the Recreation Center and found it to be very informative.

D. Litter

Director Kerr said he hopes to have Elizabeth Fisher of Fisher Recycling at the May meeting for a mid-year update. He also reported that there will be a food composting workshop at the Recreation Center on April 25 at 5pm. He anticipates they will need to host another workshop as this one will only allow 50 people to attend.

Dr. Brotherton said she received an email from Susan Smith who suggested the Committee look into the Fill-A-Bag program as an additional way of encouraging litter collection on the beach. After some discussion, Director Kerr will speak to the Public Works Committee and the Wild Dunes Community Association about the possibility of adding these stations at 5th, 25th, 42nd, and 53rd avenues as well as Breach Inlet and the new 34A Beach Access. The City would be responsible for station maintenance and replacing the buckets as needed while the program would pay for the installation of the stations.

Ms. Smith also suggested putting covered beach trash cans on the beach. Director Kerr stated that the equipment used by the company who empties the beach trash cans prevents them from having covered trash cans on the beach. He will look into the matter and report back to the Committee.

Dr. Brotherton asked if there was any interest in the installation of more cigarette butt cannisters, suggesting locations near the marina store or restaurant might be a good place for another

cannister. Director Kerr said that the current cannisters are well utilized, but it would be up to the marina lease holders to decide if they would like them near their establishments.

5. Miscellaneous Business

A. Discuss takeaways from the Beach Advocates Conference

Ms. Pringle said that most of the Committee members attended the Beach Advocates meeting and shared some of her observations from the meeting. Dr. Plunkett said she was struck by the number of legislative officials who were in attendance at the meeting. She also noted the collaborative nature of the meeting with attendees very willing to share what was working in their communities.

B. Update on Sea Level Rise Adaptation Plan RFP

Director Kerr said the RFP for this plan is out and due at the end of next week. The Planning Commission will grade the plans and interview the candidates before giving their recommendation to City Council. He said it may be necessary to spend more money than is budgeted to get a plan of substance. The City is speaking with the Sea Grant Consortium about their willingness to partner with the City on the Plan.

C. Discussion with PR Coordinator Chondra Mikell-Yudchenko

PR Coordinator Mikell-Yudchenko said the Committee can give her topics they would like to see put out to the community and she will develop plans to disperse that information. Mr. Olasov said information needs to go out about the food composting session and the Adopt-a-Drain program.

6. Adjournment

The next meeting of the Environmental Advisory Committee will be Thursday, May 11, 2023 at 4pm.

Dr. Plunkett made a motion to adjourn, and Mr. Olasov seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 5:16pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Nicole DeNeane
City Clerk