Environmental Advisory Committee
4:00pm, Thursday, June 12, 2025
City Hall
Council Chambers
1207 Palm Boulevard, Isle of Palms, SC

Public Comment:
All citizens who wish to speak during the meeting must email their first and last name, address, and topic to Nicole DeNeane at nicoled@iop.net no later than **3:00 p.m. the business day before the meeting.** Citizens may also provide public comment here: https://www.iop.net/public-comment-form

Agenda

1. **Call to Order** and acknowledgement that the press and public were duly notified of the meeting in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.

2. **Approval of previous meeting's minutes – May 14, 2025**

3. **Citizen's Comments**

4. **Old Business**

    a. Lighting ordinance presentation – Todd Murphy

    b. Interpretive Sign project

    c. Water Quality Testing

    d. Plant-a-Palm 2.0

    e. Recommendations Matrix

5. **New Business**

6. **Miscellaneous**

    Next meeting: Thursday, July 10, 2025, 4:00pm

7. **Adjournment**

ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
4:00pm, Thursday, May 14, 2025
1207 Palm Boulevard, Isle of Palms, SC
and broadcasted live on YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/user/cityofisleofpalms

MINUTES

1. **Call to order**

   Present: Laura Lovins, Mary Pringle, Eric Cicora, Cindy Marrs, Sean Popson, Todd Murphy, Lucia Spiotta

   Absent: Dane Buckout

   Staff Present: Administrator Kerr, Zoning Administrator Simms, Asst. Director Asero, Council Member Miars

2. **Citizen's Comments - none**

3. **Approval of previous meeting's minutes**

MOTION: Ms. Lovins made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 10, 2025 meeting as amended, and Ms. Marrs seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

4. **Presentations – none**

5. **Old Business**

A.   **Lighting Ordinance Presentation – Todd Murphy**

Administrator Kerr reported on a meeting that he and Zoning Administrator Simms had with Dominion Energy representatives regarding turtle-friendly lighting on the island and how Edisto Island and Folly Beach are implementing such lighting. These communities are focused on changing the lighting that can be seen from the beach. Edisto Island is creating custom-made fixtures to reduce the spread of light. A grant is helping to cover some of the costs.

Administrator Kerr said there are approximately 400 streetlights across the island with an additional 150 inside Wild Dunes. Dominion Energy charges $900/light pole to change to turtle-friendly lights. Lights are installed to SCDOT standards, and their standards are blue light. Changing to different lighting requires SCDOT permission. He also shared that Dominion Energy was unsure if the NSSF funds could be used to cover any of these costs.

Discussion ensued about the safety concerns and liability of lower lighting in some areas. Administrator Kerr suggested removing street lighting from the proposed ordinance, watch how

Edisto Island and Folly Beach implement their lighting ordinance, develop a street light plan moving forward, and develop an inventory of those lights that affect the front beach areas.

Mr. Murphy will continue to work on his presentation to City Council and bring it back to the Committee for feedback.

The Committee worked on wording changes to the proposed ordinance.

B.   **Interpretive Sign Project**

Ms. Lovins shared two quotes for the interpretive sign project, both around $13,000 for 14 mounted signs. The next step will be putting together a presentation of the proposed signs with text. She has emailed Islander 71 and the Marina about meeting to discuss the project and to see if they would be interested in sharing in any of the costs. An updated plan will be provided at the June Committee meeting.

C.   **Good Neighbor Brochure**

Mr. Murphy believes this project is likely within the recommendations matrix and should be discussed then.

D.   **Water Quality Testing – Matt Simms**

Zoning Administrator Simms shared about his meeting with the Town of Mt. Pleasant's Environmental Manager when they discussed water quality testing and microbial source tracking. The cost to test water at 3 outfalls and to track dog, human, and bird waste is approximately $1500. Zoning Administrator Simms will share a sample analysis report with the Committee members.

The Committee discussed what should be tracked and what could be done with that information. Mr. Murphy suggested an awareness campaign helping the public understand the importance of proper disposal of pet waste.

It was decided to test for human and dog waste at 3 outfalls and compare the results to the water quality results from 20 years ago. Ms. Lovins shared cost estimates from another company and will ask them for a revised quote to track human and dog waste.

E.   **Glyphosate/Round-up Ban – Eric Cicora**

Mr. Circora said since the City rarely uses glyphosate, it will be each to implement a ban on City-owned properties. He suggested the City could include recreationally-zoned areas in their ban to include the golf courses. He shared a draft of something that could be sent to City Council for their consideration.

He said a further step could be taken by banning its use among the licensed lawncare businesses that serve the island residents and businesses. Council Member Miars asked how something like that could be enforced. Ms. Marrs suggested an educational campaign for the residents, encouraging them to speak with their lawncare providers.

Administrator Kerr reported that Wild Dunes does use glyphosate on its property. Ms. Marrs said she would speak with Terri Haack to see how easy it might be to ban its use or change to other products within Wild Dunes.

Administrator Kerr suggested publicizing that the City does not use glyphosate on its properties, conduct a public information campaign about glyphosate use, add information to the City's newsletter and website about glyphosate, and publicize the issue in the island's two newspapers. Council Member Miars agreed that not using glyphosate on City-owned properties should be a City policy and not an ordinance.

Ms. Lovins will work with Ms. Popson and Ms. Marrs on potential articles for the newspapers and bring them to the June meeting.

6.   **New Business**

Community Enhancement Task Force recommendations

After some discussion about how to begin working on the recommendations from the Community Enrichment Task Force and other plans, the Committee decided that Ms. Marrs, Mr. Cicora, and Ms. Popson will work as a subcommittee to review the recommendations and organize them in to like initiatives. They will bring their work back to the Committee in June.

7.   **Miscellaneous Business**

Ms. Lovins asked to be added to the City Council agenda for their May 27 meeting to share an update of the Committee's current activities.

The next meeting of the Environmental Advisory Committee is scheduled for Thursday, June 12, 2025 at 4pm.

8.   **Adjournment**

Mr. Murphy made a motion to adjourn, and Ms. Popson seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 5:54pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Nicole DeNeane
City Clerk

Sec. 5-4-17. Outdoor lighting regulations.

The purpose of this section is to control light spillage and glare so as not to adversely affect motorists, pedestrians, natural areas, vistas, and land uses of adjacent properties. More specifically, this section is intended to:

- Control lighting to assure that excessive light spillage and glare are not directed at adjacent properties, neighboring areas, and motorists;

- Protect livability and enjoyment for residents and visitors;

- Filter and reduce glare from artificial light sources, preventing "sky and neighborhood glow"; and

- Avoid negative impacts to Sea Turtles and other wildlife from exterior lighting.

(a) *Definitions.* The following words, terms and phrases, when used in this section, shall have the meanings ascribed to them in this subsection, except where the context clearly indicates a different meaning:

   (1) *Artificial light* means any source of light emanating from a manmade device, including, but not limited to, incandescent, mercury vapor, metal halide, or sodium lamps, flashlights, spotlights, streetlights, vehicular lights, construction or security lights.

   (2) *Floodlight* means an artificial light fixture which is intensely bright and broad-beamed.

   (3) *Low-profile luminary* means a light fixture set on a base which raises the source of the light no higher than forty-eight inches (48") off the ground, and designed in such a way that light is directed downward from a hooded light source.

   (4) *Development* means any existing structure for which a building permit has been duly issued and any new construction or remodeling of existing structures when such remodeling includes alteration of exterior lighting.

   (5) *Person* means any individual, firm, association, joint venture, partnership, estate, trust, syndicate, fiduciary, corporation, group or unit, or Federal, State, County or municipal government.

   (6) *Pole lighting* means a light fixture set on a base or pole which raises the source of the light higher than forty-eight inches (48") off the ground.

   (7) Beachfront property means any property that is adjacent to the beach or dunes or any structure that can be seen from the beach.

(b) *Use of lighting.* It is the policy of the City for both new and existing development that outdoor lighting

and lighting of structures shall be in compliance with the following:

   (1) For the protection of Sea Turtles and other wildlife, no artificial light shall be visible from the beach.

   (2) For beachfront properties, floodlights shall be prohibited. External wall-mounted light fixtures shall be fitted with hoods so that no light is visible from the beach.

   (3) Lights illuminating buildings or associated grounds for decorative or recreational purposes shall be shielded or screened such that they are not visible from the beach.

   (4) Pole lighting shall be shielded in such a way that the point sources of light will not be visible from the beach. Outdoor lighting shall be held to the minimum necessary for security and convenience.

(5)   Low-profile luminaries shall be used in parking lots and such lighting shall be positioned so that no light is visible from the beach.

(6)   Lights illuminating dune crosswalks of any area oceanward of the primary dune line shall be shielded or screened such that they are not visible from the beach.

(7)   Temporary security lights at construction sites shall not be mounted more than fifteen feet (15') above the ground. Illumination from the lights shall not spread beyond the boundary of the property being developed and in no case shall those lights be visible from the beach.

(8)   Security lights shall be permitted throughout the night so long as low-profile luminaries are used and screened in such a way that those lights are not visible from the beach.

(9)   Outdoor lighting on residential structures must be shielded so that light is directed downward and does not shine directly onto any natural including the Intracoastal Waterway, marsh, or other natural areas.

(10)   Outdoor lighting on residential structures shall not shine directly into the yard or windows of adjacent residential uses.

(c)   *Individual use of lights.* No unfiltered light (any color spectrum except red) shall be shone on adult sea turtles, turtle eggs, hatchlings, or any other wildlife on the beach.

(d)   *Publicly owned lighting.* Streetlights and lighting at parks and other publicly owned beach areas shall be subject to the following:

(1)   Streetlights shall be located so that most of their illumination will be directed away from the beach. These lights shall be equipped with shades or shields that will prevent backlighting and render them not visible from the beach.

(2)   Lights at parks or other public beach access points shall be shielded or shaded or shall not be utilized during the period of May 1 to October 31 of each year.

(e)   *Enforcement and penalty.* Violation of any provision is hereby declared to be a misdemeanor, punishable and enforceable pursuant to the provisions of section 1-3-66.

(Code 1994, § 5-4-17)

Recommendation	Source	Category/Focus	Timeline	Type of Recommendation	Budget	Initiative2
Emphasize sustainable/environmentally friendly practices at the Recreation Center.	Community E	Environmental	Short	Exploratory		Infrastructure Improvements
Facilitate more programming focused on understanding and protecting our natural environment (e.g. beach/saltmarsh/waterways, native plants, native and endangered species)	Community E	Environmental	Short	Actionable		Environmental Sustainability
Preserve, protect, manage and enhance the island's natural resources – including the beach, salt marsh and natural areas in the island's interior.	Community E	Environmental	Long	Aspirational		Environmental Sustainability
Secure grants, provide community education, and collaborate with neighboring communities and state agencies.	Community E	Environmental	Long	Aspirational		Revenue & Funding
Evaluate whether more resources (ex. staff) are needed for proper enforcement.	Community E	Environmental	Medium	Exploratory	$$	Talent Management
Develop consistent data collection that includes water quality testing for the ocean, creeks, marsh and interior; surveys of related wildlife and ecosystems; and sea level rise mea	Community E	Environmental	Long	Actionable	$	Environmental Sustainability
Make environmental data easy to understand, access and share.	Community E	Environmental	Long	Aspirational		Environmental Sustainability
Advance recommendations from city's developing Sea Level Rise Adaptation Plan.	Community E	Environmental	Long	Aspirational		Environmental Sustainability
Model, map & monitor areas most susceptible to sea level rise, flooding & storm surges.	Community E	Environmental	Long	Actionable		Environmental Sustainability
Predict social and economic impacts of climate changes, including cost calculations.	Community E	Environmental	Long	Aspirational		Environmental Sustainability
Determine and articulate long-term goals for Adaptation plan that are proactive and transparent. Communicate these elements effectively to the public.	Community E	Environmental	Long	Aspirational		Forecasting
Add solar panels to city buildings when it makes sense for sun exposure and roof replacement schedules.	Community E	Environmental	Medium	Actionable	$$$	Environmental Sustainability
Explore transition to battery-powered landscaping equipment to reduce carbon emissions, air & noise pollution.	Community E	Environmental	Medium	Exploratory	$$$	Environmental Sustainability
Consider requesting sustainable practices in city's request for proposals and bids.	Community E	Environmental	Short	Exploratory		Environmental Sustainability
Encourage fuel efficiency as a consideration when buying new vehicles.	Community E	Environmental	Short	Aspirational		Environmental Sustainability
Evaluate feasibility of safely of adding electric vehicle charging stations.	Community E	Environmental	Medium	Exploratory	$$	Environmental Sustainability
Make IOP's environmental leadership a clear and consistent part of the city's brand.	Community E	Environmental	Long	Aspirational		Communications
Secure more related media coverage.	Community E	Environmental	Short	Actionable		Communications
Add signs to public dock to highlight the location's natural resources, geography and history.	Community E	Environmental	Short	Actionable	$$	Communications
With IOP Cleanup Crew, pursue IOP Conservation Station exhibit at Front Breach	Community E	Environmental	Medium	Actionable	$$	Environmental Sustainability
Develop plan to increase awareness of challenges and solutions that includes "Do No Harm" messaging for residents, visitors, developers and businesses.	Community E	Environmental	Short	Actionable		Communications
Provide QR codes in city signage and required messaging for STR's that direct visitors to environmental rules and best practices.	Community E	Environmental	Medium	Actionable	$	Communications QR
Explore ways to better share rules with non-English speaking visitors.	Community E	Environmental	Short	Exploratory		Communications
Create a guide – available electronically and in print form – for residents, developers, contractors and property managers to promote IOP native plants, trees, eco-friendly landsca	Community E	Environmental	Medium	Actionable		Environmental Sustainability
Add an annual eco-themed event to the Recreation Department's annual calendar.	Community E	Environmental	Short	Actionable		Environmental Sustainability
Involve public in South Carolina Aquarium's Searise sign project.	Community E	Environmental	Short	Actionable		Environmental Sustainability
Pursue promising "natural defense" strategies.	Community E	Environmental	Medium	Actionable	$$$	Environmental Sustainability
Encourage neighborhoods to work collaboratively to facilitate connection to the public system without grinder pumps.	Community E	Environmental	Long	Actionable		Septic & requested Management
Routinely collect floodwater samples to pinpoint problems and help prioritize areas where individual onsite disposal systems should be replaced.	Community E	Environmental	Short	Actionable	$$$	Septic & Sewer Management
Explore funding to aid elderly and fixed income residents in connecting their residences to the public sewer system.	Community E	Environmental	Medium	Exploratory		Septic & Sewer Management
Consider location of at-risk palmettos – important to our community's identity & resiliency – and other significant native trees in setting priorities.	Community E	Environmental	Medium	Exploratory		Environmental Sustainability
Join the South Atlantic Salt Marsh Initiative (SASMI).	Community E	Environmental	Short	Actionable		Marsh Preservation
Consult with groups like Charleston's M.A.R.S.H. project, Charleston Waterkeepers, Charleston Climate Coalition, South Carolina Aquarium, Barrier Island Eco Tours, Coastal Ex	Community E	Environmental	Short	Aspirational		Environmental Sustainability
Partner with neighboring coastal communities, especially Mount Pleasant & Sullivan's Island.	Community E	Environmental	Short	Aspirational		Environmental Sustainability
With guidance from local experts, emphasize native plants and gardens at all city parks and properties.	Community E	Environmental	Short	Actionable		Environmental Sustainability
Include in Request for Proposals (RFPs) for landscaping.	Community E	Environmental	Short	Actionable		Environmental Sustainability
Target city properties at risk of flooding for adding examples of "rain gardens" and dry ponds.	Community E	Environmental	Medium	Exploratory	$$$	Environmental Sustainability
Encourage and provide incentives for residents, businesses, developers, Wild Dunes Resort and Homeowner Associations (HOA's) to increase native plants on residential and co	Community E	Environmental	Short	Actionable		Environmental Sustainability
Pursue grants to support re-wilding, rain gardens, salt marsh retreat in vulnerable residential areas.	Community E	Environmental	Medium	Actionable		Environmental Sustainability
Involve residents in planting and monitoring vegetation to help stabilize drainage ditches/canals.	Community E	Environmental	Medium	Actionable		Stormwater Management
Explore funding a city-wide tree survey to document all native trees on the island.	Community E	Environmental	Medium	Actionable	$$	Environmental Sustainability
Recruit volunteer neighborhood captains for regular cleanups of non-commercial sections of beach and island's interior.	Community E	Environmental	Short	Actionable		Litter Management

Action	Category	Type	Timeframe	Priority	Cost	Topic
In addition to existing Front Beach setup, explore adding the following to high-traffic beach access paths, with placement closer to the street than dunes: •Cleanup bucket tree •"No Toys Left Behind" bin • Bench for visitors to help them collect their things	Community E	Environmenta	Short	Exploratory	$	Litter Management
Adjust packaging ordinances to close loopholes and align with neighboring municipalities.	Community E	Environmenta	Short	Actionable		Litter Management
Partner with Chamber of Commerce and Isle of Palms Cleanup Crew on workshops for businesses on sustainability practices.	Community E	Environmenta	Short	Actionable		Environmental Sustainability
Consistent message on welcome signs to "Leave Only Footprints" and "See Beach Rules at www.iop.net ."	Community E	Environmenta	Short	Aspirational		Communications
Signage at ALL public beach access points with No Smoking message + QR code or complete list of restrictions for beachgoers.	Community E	Environmenta	Short	Actionable	$$	Communications
More local promotions with links/QR codes pointing to iop.net "Beach Rules" – including tie-ins with Beach Shuttle.	Community E	Environmenta	Short	Actionable		Communications
Initiate Pilot Projects including: Living shorelines Bioswales and rain gardens.	Sea Level Rise	Stormwater M	Medium	Actionable		Environmental Sustainability
Develop a public education program on resilient strategies.	Sea Level Rise	Environmenta	Short	Actionable		Environmental Sustainability
Develop a comprehensive marsh management plan.	Sea Level Rise	Environmenta	Medium	Actionable	$$	Marsh Preservation
Conduct a comprehensive water quality assessment.	Sea Level Rise	Environmenta	Short	Actionable	$	Septic & Sewer Management
Transition high-risk properties from septic to sewer systems.	Sea Level Rise	Environmenta	Long	Aspirational		Septic & Sewer Management
Establish educational and volunteer programs to promote community involvement.	Sea Level Rise	Stormwater M	Short	Actionable		Recreational Offerings
Incorporate recommended improvements from the water quality assessment.	Sea Level Rise	Environmenta	Short	Actionable	$$	sewer & septic
Incorporate marsh management plan.	Sea Level Rise	Environmenta	Medium	Actionable	$$	Marsh Preservation
Transition all at-risk properties from septic to sewer systems.	Sea Level Rise	Environmenta	Long	Aspirational		Septic & Sewer Management
Maintain policies and procedures to ensure that beaches, marshlands and marinas are protected and preserved.	Comprehensi	Environmenta	Short	Aspirational		Forecasting
Monitor DHEC/OCRM testing of ocean waters impacting the island	Comprehensi	Environmenta	Short	Actionable		Environmental Sustainability
Create a public awareness/education program aimed at protecting the sensitive ecosystem of a barrier island, to include protection of dunes and marshes and their vegetation, a	Comprehensi	Environmenta	Medium	Actionable		Communications
Investigate the potential for establishing, or acquiring, City owned, undeveloped green spaces	Comprehensi	Environmenta	Long	Exploratory	$$$	Environmental Sustainability
Pursue enforcement of ordinance(s) aimed at protecting loggerhead turtle nesting activities and sites	Comprehensi	Environmenta	Short	Exploratory		Wildlife Stewardship
Support other regulations that protect wildlife and vegetation	Comprehensi	Environmenta	Short	Aspirational		Environmental Sustainability
Pursue development of ordinances, education and awareness programs to improve air quality, such as smoking regulations and support of public transportation.	Comprehensi	Environmenta	Short	Aspirational		Environmental Sustainability
Support OCRM in administering measures that protect marshes on the backside of the island.	Comprehensi	Environmenta	Short	Maintenance		Marsh Preservation
The City should meet periodically with the Water and Sewer Commission and strive for a "team approach" to addressing waste water and water issues that will arise in future year	Comprehensi	Environmenta	Short	Aspirational		Septic & Sewer Management
In conjunction with the Water and Sewer Commission, the City should take those steps appropriate to facilitate additional sewer service on the island	Comprehensi	Environmenta	Short	Aspirational		Septic & City Management
The City should continue to support tree-planting programs along streets and develop a long-term plan which prioritizes streets and identifies the types of trees to be used	Comprehensi	Environmenta	Short	Actionable		Environmental Sustainability
Consider additional ways of reducing littering on the island	Comprehensi	Environmenta	Short	Exploratory		Litter Management
Educate the owners of septic systems in the proper maintenance and encourage owners to have their septic systems checked and serviced according to established standards	Comprehensi	Environmenta	Short	Actionable		Septic & Sewer Management

$ (< $50,000)
$$ ($50,000 - $100,000)
$$$ (> $100,000)

Short (< 1 year)
Medium (1 - 5 years)
Long (> 5 years)

Aspirational: long-term vision with no clear policy or action recommended
Exploratory: policy or action to explore and consider further
Actionable: clear policy or budgetary action that can be taken immediately
Maintenance: upkeep of existing practices, policies, or activities