



ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

4:00pm, Thursday, October 17, 2024

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, Mary Pringle, Todd Murphy, Laura Lovins, Belvin Olasov

Absent: Dane Buckout, Lucia Spiotta, Doug Hatler, Council Member Miars

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

2. Citizen's Comments -- none

3. Approval of previous meeting's minutes

MOTION: Ms. Pringle made a motion to approve the minutes of the September 12, 2024 meeting, and Ms. Lovins seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Presentation - none

5. Old Business

A. Wildlife

Ms. Pringle, Ms. Lovins, and Mr. Olasov shared what they learned at the recent Native Plant Symposium.

Ms. Pringle said that Sharlene Johnson will be at the native plant garden on November 15 at 9:30am to help winterize the garden. Ms. Pringle asked about a small budget to help keep the garden thriving, and Director Kerr said there are funds for that.

Asst. Director Asero would like to look at native alternatives for the City's flower beds across the island. It was suggested that Ms. Johnson and Eddie Bernard of the Town of Mt. Pleasant could make recommendations for proper plantings.

B. Litter

Dr. Brotherton shared information and recommendations she prepared around the City's need to replace the beach trashcan collection vendor next year. That document is attached to these minutes.

Asst. Director Asero shared what he learned about the beach trashcan collection process on Kiawah Island. Discussion ensued as to the scope of work involved in trash collection on the beach across the island. The Committee discussed benefits of a hybrid plan that would include trash cans on the beach as well as cans along the roadside.

Director Kerr proposed that Asst. Director Asero and Dr. Brotherton work on a map that would identify the places where trashcans would be on the beach and or along the roadside and bring it to the next meeting. That map could then be used to help assess a cost estimate for a new vendor.

C. Water Quality

Director Kerr said the engineers are waiting for the “right” water event to collect water samples.

D. Climate Action

Mr. Olasov reported that Charleston County is still waiting to hire a new coordinator for their sustainability office. He would like to see municipal action on prioritizing the action items listed in the Climate Action Plan.

Director Kerr reported that City Council will vote on the installation of the solar panels at their October 22 meeting. They have asked for information on cost savings of the panels.

Ms. Lovins said she, Dr. Brotherton, and Mr. Hatler will meet with Council Member Pierce to discuss efforts to work with the Water & Sewer Commission on sewer expansion and the possibility of sharing the expense of a federal lobbyist. Director Kerr said they have met with the Ferguson Group and will meet with them again next week. The City’s State lobbyist has also referred them to another federal lobbyist to consider. He is unsure if this matter will be discussed at the City Council meeting next week.

Mr. Olasov asked about the energy efficiency efforts during a City Hall renovation. Director Kerr said the current discussion around City Hall is focused on whether or not to renovate City Hall or build a new one in a different location.

6. New Business

A. Discussion of light pollution and exterior lighting ordinance

Mr. Murphy shared some preliminary information he and Ms. Spiotta gathered from the internet regarding light pollution. He also shared how some other island municipalities like Pawley’s Island and Folly Beach have addressed light pollution. He will speak to Folly Beach staff to understand how they approached the issue of changing the lighting and educating the public about the change. The matter will be discussed further at the next meeting.

B. Update on the Sea Level Rise Adaptation Plan

Director Kerr said a final draft of the Sea Level Rise Adaptation Plan should be delivered in the next 30 days. The Committee will be given the opportunity to review it.

6. **Miscellaneous Business**

7. **Adjournment**

The next meeting of the Environmental Advisory Committee is scheduled for Thursday, November 14, 2024 at 4pm.

Ms. Lovins made a motion to adjourn, and Mr. Olasov seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 5:32pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Nicole DeNeane
City Clerk

Environmental Advisory Committee

10/17/24

Background Information:

According to <https://gis.dhec.sc.gov/beachaccess/>, the IOP has 55 beach access points. Open, yellow garbage cans can be found at these access points. The number of cans ranges between 1 and 12 depending on the location of the access path and the amount of foot traffic. In addition, there are open black cans along the front beach commercial area and open yellow cans in the municipal parking lot.

Most trash cans are located on the beach and rest on sand which makes them susceptible to tipping over when a discarded beach chair or tent is placed in the can. Wind can blow litter out of the cans on the beach and animals and birds can remove food scrapes and wastepaper. Cans on the beach must be removed by public works personnel when the area is threatened by tropical systems and king tides. Some trash cans have been relocated to streetside in areas affected by erosion.

Current Contract:

The cans are currently emptied by an independent contractor, who uses specialized equipment that requires the use of open trash cans.

Recommendations:

Location of trash cans

A hybrid approach is recommended. Trash cans may be placed streetside at most beach access paths. Access paths with the heaviest foot traffic (i.e. 25th) may also have additional cans placed behind the dune line. At the front beach commercial area, trash cans would be needed at both the street and behind the dune line.

Type of opening

A covered opening is desirable. Options for a covered opening are a 1) dome top with disposal access on 4 sides or 2) a pull-down handle. Both options would keep birds and animals out, keep rain out, and prevent large items such as tents from being discarded in the trash cans. These options would possibly require an interior can and a trash bag. 3) Current roll carts used by homeowners are also an option at streetside.

Aesthetics

Trash cans should not be an eye sore. Options for improved appearance include using a color that blends with the environment or a wrap. In order to be consistent with our ordinances, cans at street side should be kept in an enclosure.

Worthy of Consideration

Bigbelly cans may be worth considering at streetside on the front beach commercial area. These 50-gal cans are fully enclosed, have a pull-down handle and a foot pedal opening, fullness indicator and a solar powered compactor, which reduces the frequency of emptying. Some models will even collect data. They are aesthetically pleasing and can be covered in a wrap. They can be purchased or leased with a maintenance contract. They are currently being used in Charleston and Pawley's Island. They are more expensive but may be a possible Palmetto Pride project, IOP Chamber Project, or grant opportunity.

Final Thoughts

If any change is made, it will require education of the community about the rationale for the change.