



## ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

4:00pm, Thursday, April 11, 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, Lucia Spiotta, Dane Buckout, Belvin Olasov

Absent: Doug Hatler

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

#### 2. Citizen's Comments

Dr. Jonathan Knoche came before the Committee to express his concern of storms leaving more and more water on the island and the lack of drainage for these waters. He asked if City Council should look into another company to deal with this concern. Council Member Miars suggested he listen to the recording of the March 29 Beach Preservation Ad Hoc Committee meeting where such matters are being discussed.

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

Mr. Olasov noted that Katie McKain's name was spelled incorrectly.

**MOTION: Ms. Lovins made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 14, 2024 meeting as amended, and Mr. Olasov seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

#### 4. Old Business

##### A. Wildlife

Ms. Pringle said the native plant garden only needs to be watered twice a week now. The benches for the garden have not been ordered yet, and she has spoken to Asst. Director Asero about anchoring them into the ground. Zoning Director Simms and Ms. Lee continue to work on signage for the garden.

Ms. Pringle also reported on a stranded whale on Sullivan's Island and the first stranding of a leatherback turtle since 2021.

Ms. Lovins shared that took the new shorebird coordinator, Abby Burke, to several locations around the island.

**B. Litter**

Dr. Brotherton reported that litter data collected by the South Carolina Aquarium shows a 5% decrease in the amount of cigarette butt trash on the beach between 2022 and 2023. She suggested additional butt cannisters be installed at the marina when the new dock is completed.

**C. Water Quality**

Director Kerr said he has not heard back from Mr. Hatler regarding pricing for the water quality tests. He will push the request to City Council when he receives pricing confirmation.

MOTION: Mr. Olasov made a motion to recommend that City Council approve funding for a water quality study. Mr. Murphy seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Lovins said she has been gathering information from other municipalities about how they deal with septic systems. She reviewed highlights from the Folly Beach ordinance about septic tanks passed in 2019 and the ordinances the Isle of Palms has in relation to tying into sewer. She said it is a complex issue that needs a lot of work and study. She will continue to gather information to help the Committee develop a plan for dealing with septic systems and expanding the City sewer system. Director Kerr pointed out that expanding the sewer system is a function of the Water & Sewer Commission and regulations around it are the City's responsibility.

**D. Climate Action**

Mr. Olasov expressed his concern about bill H.5118 regarding an upcoming natural gas plant. He said the plans are not environmentally sound and the bill is being fast-tracked through the legislature without a lot debate.

Discussed ensued about the best way to make the legislature aware of the environmental concerns around the project. Director Kerr suggested Mr. Olasov speak his concerns during Citizen's Comments at the April City Council meeting. Council Member Miars said she would see if she could get the matter added to the agenda.

**E. Update on Sea Level Rise Adaptation RFP**

Director Kerr said Seamon & Whiteside will attend the next committee meeting.

**5. New Business**

**Review of efforts to publicize EAC initiatives on the City website**

Dr. Brotherton said she has spoken with the PR Officer about the best way to add and highlight the efforts of the Committee on the City's website. She shared a possible outline to thoughtfully organize the work of the Committee. Dr. Brotherton asked Committee members to send ideas, brief descriptions, and pictures to include on the website to the PR Officer and to copy her on that email.

Dr. Brotherton shared that she will give a brief presentation of their activities at the April 23 City Council meeting. She asked Committee members to email her with ideas of what to include.

6. **Miscellaneous Business**

7. **Adjournment**

The next meeting of the Environmental Advisory Committee is scheduled for Thursday, May 9, 2024 at 4pm.

Ms. Pringle made a motion to adjourn, and Mr. Olasov seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 5:26pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Nicole DeNeane  
City Clerk