

Environment and Wildlife Committee Regular Meeting

February 22, 2024 @ 11:00 AM

[Watch Live on YouTube](#)

Seabrook Island Town Hall, Council Chambers
2001 Seabrook Island Road
Seabrook Island, SC 29455



Virtual Participation: Individuals who wish to participate in the meeting via Zoom may call (843) 768-9121 or email kwatkins@townofseabrookisland.org for log-in information prior to the meeting.

AGENDA

1. CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL & FOIA STATEMENT
2. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIR
3. INTRODUCTION OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS
4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES
 - A. **Environment and Wildlife Committee Meeting**: September 14, 2023
5. COMMITTEE GOALS FOR 2024-2025
 - A. Beach Management Plan, 5-year review and update
 - B. Development of Marsh Management Plan
 - C. Environment & Wildlife Conservation Grant
 - D. Statement of Support for the Shorebird Steward Program
 - E. Discussion of Beach Bonfire Permits and working with St. Johns Fire District (SJFD) on enforcement
 - F. Public Informational meeting hosted by the Town of Seabrook Island and Camp St. Christopher on Coyotes and Seabrook Island
6. COMMITTEE COMMENTS
7. ADJOURNMENT

TOWN OF SEABROOK ISLAND

Environment & Wildlife Committee Regular Meeting
September 14, 2023



[Watch Live Stream \(YouTube\)](#)

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

Present: Jeri Finke (Chair), Mark Andrews (virtual), Dean Morr
Absent: Martha Goldstein, Patti Romano
Guests: None.
Staff Present: Joe Cronin (Town Administrator), Tyler Neman (Zoning Administrator & Chief Code Enforcement Officer), Katharine Watkins (Assistant Town Administrator)

The meeting began at 1:06PM.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Meeting held on June 8, 2023

Mr. Morr moved to approve the previous meeting minutes of June 8th; Mr. Andrews seconded. All voted in favor.

The previous meeting minutes of June 8th were approved.

OLD/NEW BUSINESS ITEMS

General discussion and review/update of issues pending before the Committee, including WHSRN designation application, beach ordinance rewrite, beach fires permitting reform, alligator safety rules, and related issues as may be raised and/or recommended by Committee members for future consideration.

Discussions were had with the committee and staff on each of these items.

NEXT MEETING

Thursday, October 12, 2023

ADJOURN

Chair Finke adjourned the meeting at 2:09PM.

Date: September 14, 2023

Prepared by: *Katharine E. Watkins*
Assistant Town Administrator

Note: These minutes are not verbatim minutes. To listen to the meeting, please use the following link:
<https://www.youtube.com/@townofseabrookisland5287/streams>



Town of Seabrook Island

2001 Seabrook Island Road
Seabrook Island, SC 29455
townofseabrookisland.org

Environment and Wildlife Grants **2024**

Contact Us: (843) 768-9121
kwatkins@townofseabrookisland.org

Town of Seabrook Island Environment and Wildlife Grants Program Program Guidelines

PURPOSE

Environment and Wildlife Promotion Grants will be awarded by the Town of Seabrook Island to provide support funding for programs and activities designed to protect and promote wildlife and wildlife habitat, sensitive and enhancing environmental and wildlife conservation efforts, or which improve citizen participation, satisfaction, and sense of place.

ELIGIBILITY

An Environment and Wildlife Promotion Grant may be awarded to (1) an organization operating and established as a non-profit entity under state and/or federal law; or (2) an organization established to advance a common interest or cause but prohibited by its written rules and guidelines from operating for a profit, including but not limited to, charitable associations, social clubs, trade, and professional groups. An eligible organization must open its membership to all persons. Organizations formally associated with a national, state or local political party will not be eligible. All activities for which grant funding is sought must be lawful under state and federal laws and conform to all ordinances, regulations, and other rules established by the Town of Seabrook Island. The Town Council always has the right to amend or limit eligibility criteria.

GRANT AWARDS

Funds will be awarded in amounts ranging from \$250.00 to \$2,500.00. The total amount of grant funds available each calendar year will be determined by, and shall not exceed, the amount included for the Environment and Wildlife Grant Program in the annual budget ordinance approved by the Town Council. Not all appropriated funds need be expended if qualifying applications are not received. Organizations may apply for more than one grant; provided, however, the total amount awarded to any organization shall not exceed \$2,500.00 in any calendar year.

APPLICATION

Organizations wishing to apply for a Environment and Wildlife must complete and submit an application form to the Town Clerk during the calendar year for which the grant funds would be expended.

For the 2024 calendar year, grant applications will be accepted starting March 1, 2024. The first review of applications will take place on March 16, 2024, and will be completed within 45 days. Applications received after the first review will be considered in the order in which they are received and will be approved or disallowed within 60 days of receipt. Applications will be accepted until the earlier of October 1, 2024, or upon the commitment of all available grant funding for 2024.

Please return completed grant applications to:

Town of Seabrook Island
Attn: Town Clerk
2001 Seabrook Island Road

REVIEW

Grant applications will be reviewed, and either approved or rejected, by the town's Environment and Wildlife Committee. The Environment and Wildlife Committee. Applications approved by the Committee will be submitted to the Town Council for final review. The Environment and Wildlife Committee shall have the authority to establish rules for reviewing applications, including asking for additional information, suggesting changes to the application to ensure it conforms with all grant criteria, and/or requesting an in-person or virtual presentation to better judge the application. Applications approved will be submitted to the Town Council for final approval.

DELIVERY OF GRANT FUNDS

Organizations receiving funding from the Environment and Wildlife Grant program shall submit to the Town Clerk all necessary documentation, including invoices and/or paid receipts, documenting the organization's commitment or expenditure of awarded grant funds. All disbursement requests will be reviewed and approved by the Town Administrator. Upon approval, a disbursement check will be issued to the organization. Disbursement requests must be received no later than December 15th of the calendar year within which the grant was awarded. Grant funds that are uncommitted or unspent at the end of the calendar year will be returned to the town's General Fund.



Town of Seabrook Island

2001 Seabrook Island Road
Seabrook Island, SC 29455
townofseabrookisland.org

Environment and Wildlife Promotion Grant

2024

Contact Us: (843) 768-9121
kwatkins@townofseabrookisland.org

The Town of Seabrook Island invites applications from eligible organizations for funding from the Environment and Wildlife Promotion Grants program. Environment and Wildlife Promotion Grants will be awarded to provide support for programs and activities that are designed to benefit the Town of Seabrook Island by promoting environmental and wildlife conservation efforts or which improve citizen participation, satisfaction and sense of place. Applications will be accepted beginning on February 1, 2024, and will continue to be accepted until the earlier of October 1, 2024, or until all available funds have been committed.

1 APPLICANT INFORMATION

Organization Name			
Contact Person			
Mailing Address			
Phone Number		Email Address	
Brief description of the organization and its membership			
What is the organization's annual budget?			
Is this organization registered as a non-profit organization under state and/or federal law?		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <i>If Yes, Tax ID #</i>	
		<input type="checkbox"/> No	
If this organization is <u>NOT</u> registered as a non-profit organization, please explain how and why the organization operates as a not-for-profit under the grant's eligibility criteria			

2 GRANT AMOUNT

Amount Requested (<i>Min: \$250.00; Max: \$2,500.00</i>)	
---	--

3 PROJECT BUDGET

In the space below, please provide a detailed budget showing how the requested funds will be spent if awarded:

Item(s) or Service(s) to be Purchased	Vendor (If Known)	Amount Budgeted
		\$
		\$
		\$
		\$
		\$
		\$
		\$
TOTAL		\$

4 PURPOSE

In the space below, please describe how these funds will be used to benefit the Town of Seabrook Island

--

5 REIMBURSEMENT

Upon presentation of all required documentation and/or receipts, to whom should the grant check be sent?

--

Note: All documentation must be submitted to the Town Clerk no later than December 15th of the grant year.

6 CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that all information contained herein is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I certify that I have the authority to submit this application on behalf of the above-named organization. I acknowledge that the Town reserves the right to require additional information and that the submittal of this application is not a guarantee of grant funding. On behalf of the organization, I acknowledge that any awarded funds shall be spent in accordance with all applicable laws and shall conform to the guidelines of the grant program. Furthermore, I acknowledge that the town is not party to nor liable for any dispute associated with the expenditure of awarded funds.

Applicant Signature	
Applicant Printed Name	
Submittal Date	

Please return completed applications to: Town of Seabrook Island
Attn: Town Clerk
2001 Seabrook Island Road
Seabrook Island, SC 29455

SEABROOK ISLAND TOWN COUNCIL

STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF THE SEABROOK ISLAND BIRDERS AND THE SHOREBIRD STEWARD PROGRAM

January 24, 2023

The Seabrook Island Birders (SIB) is an organization composed of local volunteers who are dedicated “to learning, protecting and providing for the well-being of the incredible variety of birds that inhabit Seabrook Island throughout the year.” (*seabrookislandbirders.org*) Included in SIB’s mission is the implementation of a Shorebird Stewardship Program on Seabrook Island’s beaches. The Stewardship Programs is sponsored by the SC Department of Natural Resources, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, and SC Audubon.

The Seabrook Island Town Council applauds these volunteer efforts and recognizes the benefits to the community of the organization’s extensive conservation, research, and educational efforts for the migratory shorebirds, seabirds, and other birds that visit and inhabit Seabrook Island. As such, the Council is pleased to endorse the SIB plan to continue its Shorebird Steward Program on the beach of Seabrook Island in 2023.

With this endorsement, Town Council understands that SIB will operate the on-beach program in accordance with the Town’s beach ordinance and will coordinate activities, including any temporary signage, with the Town Administrator. The Town also understands that the on-beach activities will be focused on, but not exclusively limited to, that area of the beach between Boardwalk 1 and Cap’n Sams Inlet; will be conducted during the migratory and nesting season(s); and that Council will be kept apprised of the progress and impact of those activities.

Further, Council understands and expects SIB’s on-beach educational approach to continue to be passive in that it will encourage residents and visitors to approach the volunteer(s) to “Ask About the Birds” rather than volunteer(s) actively approaching beachgoers. This includes offering electronically transmitted links for photographs and educational materials and providing ongoing training for SIB volunteers designed to promote shorebird education through positive interactions, and to do with any safety/health protocols that may be warranted (such as were necessary and implemented by SIB for COVID-19 in 2020-2022).

Recognizing that the Shorebird Steward Program often includes research activities by local, academic, and professional scientists, whose work is hindered when birds are unduly disturbed during study sessions, Council recognizes that researchers may need to request beachgoers to walk around the flocks and to “give the birds space” to facilitate their research. It is acknowledged that stewards and researchers are not responsible or authorized to enforce Town ordinances or federal/state regulations, and that they will report incidents to the Town’s code enforcement officers that they believe are in violation of the Town’s beach ordinance as being harmful to the birds and/or their habitat. Any needed calls to code enforcement will be documented with pictures when possible.

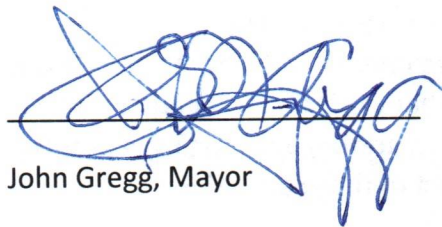
It is expected that in 2023 the Steward Program will continue to expand its data collection to more fully document beach interactions (when information is volunteered by the beachgoers) and will share the information with the Town. Data will include whether the interaction is with a property owner or visitor, age of beachgoer, and whether the interaction was overall positive, negative, or neutral.

Council understands that steward volunteers and associated researchers will be identified by uniform vests or t-shirts, and when appropriate, Town-approved temporary signage.

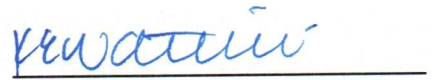
The Council's endorsement of the on-beach program, and recognition of research activities, carries with it no obligation for funding. SIB, however, is an organization eligible to apply for a Community Promotion Grant from the Town.

As it did in January 2020, 2021 and 2022, the Seabrook Island Town Council makes this endorsement with thanks to the SIB for establishing the Shorebird Stewardship Program on Seabrook Island and with congratulations for its tremendous success.

This statement was approved by the Town Council for the Town of Seabrook Island on the 24th day of January 2023.



John Gregg, Mayor



Katharine E. Watkins, Town Clerk