Environment and Wildlife Committee Special Meeting
June 20, 2024 @ 10:00 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. APPROVAL OF MINUTES
   A. Environment and Wildlife Committee Meeting: May 9th, 2024

3. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION
   A. Marshfront Management Plan Kickoff Meeting – Dr. Nicole Elko, Coastal Consulting, Inc.

4. COMMITTEE COMMENTS

5. ADJOURNMENT
Environment and Wildlife Committee Regular Meeting
May 9, 2024
Watch Live on YouTube

MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL & FOIA STATEMENT

   Present: Gordon Weis (Councilman, chair), Mark Andrews, Fred Demler, Dean Morr
   Absent: Jamie Geiger
   Staff Present: Joe Cronin (Town Administrator), Abby Grooms (Communications & Events Manager), Tyler Newman (Zoning Administrator), Katharine Watkins (Asst. Town Administrator)
   Guests Present: Carol Price (Seabrook Island Garden Club), Lauren Rust (Lowcountry Marine Mammal Network)

   The meeting was called to order at 10:00 AM.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

   A. Environment and Wildlife Committee Meeting: April 11, 2024

      Mr. Morr moved to approve the previous meeting minutes of April 11th; Mr. Delmer seconded. All voted in favor.

      The previous meeting minutes were approved.

3. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION

      a. Lowcountry Marine Mammal Network, requested amount: $2,500.00

         Ms. Rust summarized the request from Lowcountry Marine Mammal Network.

         Discussions were had with members of the committee.

         Mr. Morr moved to recommend to the town council the approval of the Lowcountry Marine Mammal Network request in the amount of $2,500.00; Mr. Delmer seconded. All voted in favor.

         The recommendation was approved.
b. Seabrook Island Garden Club, requested amount: $619.00

Ms. Price summarized the request from the Seabrook Island Garden Club.

Mr. Morr moved to recommend to the town council the approval of the Seabrook Island Garden Club in the amount of $619.00; Mr. Geiger seconded. A vote was taken as follows:

Ayes: Delmer, Morr, Gordon
Recusal: Andrews

The recommendation was approved.

B. Discussion of proposed Seabrook Island Property Owners Association (SIPOA) Alligator Programs and Coyote Management Plan


Councilman Weis noted SIPOA is working to have the same information on coyotes and alligators between the Town, the Club, and SIPOA.

Discussions were had with committee members and members of the audience.

4. COMMITTEE COMMENTS

Mr. Andrews commented on the discussions had regarding drones with the Special Committee on Short-Term Rentals and ultra-light aircraft on the beach.

Discussions were had with members of the committee.

Mr. Morr noted that SCDNR has closed access to Deveaux Bank as of May 8th.

Discussions were had with members of the committee.

5. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Delmer moved to adjourn the meeting; Mr. Morr seconded. All voted in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 10:37 AM.

Date: May 9th, 2024
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
Marshfront Management Plan
AGENDA

1. The Team
2. Phased Approach & Task Deliverables
3. Project Schedule
4. Additional Open Discussion
Phase 1
- Data gathering
- Public outreach

Phase 2
- Work sessions
- Draft plan development

Phase 3
- Final plan development
Principal in-Charge

Nicole Elko, Ph.D.
President
Elko Coastal Consulting, Inc.

Project Management

Cheyenne Twilley
Coastal Resilience Planner
Elko Coastal Consulting, Inc.
Phase 1: Data Gathering

- Obtain and review studies, historical accounts, plans, data, surveys, existing sea level rise maps, town ordinances, zoning, and development standards.
- Analyze to gain a comprehensive understanding of existing Town plans, policies, and regulations.
- Synthesize information from these sources into an initial listing of marshfront management concerns.
Phase 1: Public Outreach

- Interview Key Stakeholders to establish a shared understanding of marshfront concerns, needs & gaps.
- Key Stakeholder examples: Town officials and staff, selected committee members, local experts, Town Council, public safety, property management, etc.
- Coalesce interview data into a brief online survey to solicit feedback on the most pressing concerns, ideas & expectations regarding marshfront mitigation strategies, challenges & opportunities.
- Produce a prioritized list of stakeholder concerns, paired with potential mitigation strategies.
Phase 1: Potential Marsh Management Measures

**ENGAGE:** Educate the public, property owners, and decision-makers about undesirable marsh changes, seek input on Plan and Plan updates

**MONITOR:** Detect changes in wetland vegetation species composition and structure within the salt marsh over time

**PROTECT:** Prevent or correct trajectories leading to impairments to the marsh by adopting marsh management regulation, adopt a seawall setback, etc.

**RESTORE:** Manage vulnerable areas and mitigate against future issues and undesirable changes

**ADAPT:** Increase marsh ability to adjust to changing environmental conditions

*Resilience n.*
The capacity of a system or community to recover from unexpected impacts.
Phase 1: Questions

• Are there specific recommended key stakeholders to interview?
• Would the Town staff like to review a draft of interview questions before the interviews are conducted?
• Are there any plans the Town wants to include in our review? Would you like the consulting team to provide a list before the plan review begins?
• Is there any information regarding existing studies on the marsh?
• What does effective engagement look like to you? What defines success?
Phase 1: Next Steps

- Compile list of key stakeholders for interviews
- Draft interview questions
- Compile list of plans for review
- Obtain any existing data
- Begin scheduling interviews
- Synthesize data analysis
Phase 2: Work Sessions

- Plan for and participate in a joint Environment & Wildlife Committee and Town Council work session with key stakeholders
- Conduct field trip to critical marshfront locations
- Share findings from the community engagement activity
Phase 2: Draft Plan Development

- Identify short and medium-term action items*, as well as long-range opportunities * that will require additional research or funding.
- Solicit input and feedback toward draft plan recommendations.
- Discuss strategies for educational outreach to residents, property owners, commercial establishments, and other stakeholders.
- Produce matrix of potential actions, recommendations, and opportunities.

* Examples of the actions listed above:

  Immediate/short-term action: An ordinance to establish variable marsh buffers and setbacks along different sections of the island.

  Medium-term action: Development of a federal grant application to conduct a site assessment for various flood reduction techniques such as Living Shorelines.

  Long-range opportunity: Funding and construction of a shovel-ready flood mitigation project such as drainage improvements combined with large-scale marsh restoration.
Phase 3: Final Plan Development

- Draft the Marshfront Management Plan
- Submit draft plan to the Town/Committee for comments and feedback
- Present before Council/Public
- Finalize a concise MMP, 1-page summary, and blurbs for website and social media promotion
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