

Environmental Advisory Committee (EAC) Minutes

July 20, 2023

Present: Margerat Johnson (Chairperson), Lee Maxwell, Chris Riegert, Allen Dearly, David Sonnenfeld, Sue Davidson, Vacant, Vacant

Absent: Elise Snavely

Staff: Brady Golden

Guests: None

Meeting called to order at 0830hrs.

- **Motion to Accept Meeting Agenda-** 1. Chris Riegert 2. Lee Maxwell
Approved Unanimously
- **Motion to Accept April 2023 Minutes-** 1. Chris Riegert 2. Lee Maxwell
Approved Unanimously

Announcements

- Per EAC Chairperson the EAC actions from the June 2023 meeting will be reviewed as the first item of old business and not at the beginning of the meeting as requested by the EAC Secretary.

Staff Report

- Mr. Brady Golden reviewed three (3) Items with the EAC:
 - **EAC Webpage-** Brady restated what was in an email sent on July 19th by Mike Emory, Oak Island Communication Manager, that informed the EAC that they could not work directly with him regarding the EAC webpage. We were informed that we had to request change requests/updates via Brady. EAC webpage content administrators do not agree with that change to our normal process of working directly with Mike Emory. Not only is it more timely working directly with Mike, it eliminates communication mistakes and delayed responses. *EAC agreed that David and Allen would follow up directly with Mike.*
That same email stated that the EAC contact form on the EAC webpage was being eliminated by the communication director without discussion with the EAC
 - **PO for Printing Recycling Stickers-** Brady gave Sue Davidson -who heads the recycling effort for the EAC- the contact information for the town's finance department to submit her purchase order reimbursement.
 - **Stormwater Workshop-** Rick Patterson, Town's Stormwater Chief, conducted a stormwater workshop on July 13th with four (4) EAC members and Brady Golden. He took the group to two (2) sites and went over the

elements of sound stormwater practices and examples of how to achieve a smart yard.

Old Business

- **Meeting Venue and Date-** It was determined by the Town that the EAC will meet in the Ocean Education Center (4700 E. Oak Island Drive). If it works for the EAC, it will be its permanent meeting venue. The EAC approved a motion to meet in the future on the first Thursday of the month starting on August 3th.

Motion: There was a Motion made by EAC to meet on the first Thursday of the month. The motion was made by David Sonnenfeld and seconded by Chris Riegert. Approved- Unanimously. Margaret Johnson, EAC Chairperson, will get with Brady Golden to move forward on the approved motion. (Margaret Johnson)

- **Sustainable Economic Development (SED) Working Group (WG)-** Members of the SED WG are Allen Dearry (Chair), Chris Riegert and Lee Maxwell. The SED's goals are to promote the advantages of planned green growth and recommend avenues for educating the public on green growth. The meeting that was scheduled on July 10th per the below motion with the Town's new Economic Development Director (EDD) was unilaterally canceled by the Town Clerk. The EDD tentatively planned to attend the July EAC meeting but did not attend. The SED will attempt to reschedule a meet with the EDD.
- **Motion: There was a Motion that EAC meet with the Town of Oak Island new Economic Development staff lead, Hallie Willis, to discuss near-term opportunities EAC and her can work together.** The motion was made by Allen Dearry and seconded by Chris Riegert. Approved- Unanimously.

Contact the SED WG chair for more details. (Allen Dearry)

- **Skip the Plastic Straw Initiative (SPSI)- Ready to implement --**The advertising and the implementing materials -including posters- are back from the printers and are ready to distribute. They were very professionally done. Lee conducted a test run with 15 establishments and eight (8) establishments accepted at the time of presentation to implement the SPSI. He is working with his volunteers to visit all the identified establishments in 30 days. Reference the EAC webpage for more information. This would make a great "The Current" article. (Lee Maxwell)
- **EAC Webpage-** The new roster was updated after new appointments by Town Council and June 2023 Minutes were posted. Reference Staff report for details on maintenance of EAC webpage. David Sonnenfeld was not notified by the Town Clerk of his EAC appointment by the Town's Council.

David presented to the EAC members that the next phase of the EAC webpage development in June 2023 to add an educational section. On hold for now. (Allen Dearry/David Sonnenfeld)

Motion: There was a Motion made to the EAC to form an EAC Educational Working Group to determine the next steps in EAC webpage development. The motion was made by Allen Dearry and seconded by Lee Maxwell. Approved-Unanimously. **On hold until remaining EAC vacancies are filled.**

- **Living Shoreline-** There will be another workday on Thursday September 14 from 12 to 3 pm and lunch will be provided at the Oak Island Rec Center. Bonnie Mitchell from the NC Coastal Federation (NCCF) will be determining the exact plans for the day, but most likely lunch for EAC members and shoreline clean-up volunteers (and maybe an informal talk) will be from 12 to 1 pm at the Rec Center, followed by a shoreline cleanup -including placing new bags of shell or rock onto the oyster reef - at Veterans Park. Registration with NCCF will most likely be required to get an accurate head count for lunch. Bonnie will send Elise the registration link later to be posted to the EAC website. (Elise Snavely)
- **Recycling-** New recycling labels will be printed without magnets. Reference Staff report for details on procuring new printed labels. EAC strategy is to promote securing the new labels on exiting residential exterior trash bins. EAC will pass out at events, via rental agencies and/or by mailing, but not by affixing via volunteers going street to street. There was a recommendation to post the recycling label information electronically on rentals sites. (Sue Davidson)
- **EAC Budget Working Group (EBWG)-** The EBWG will meet on July 24th to discuss the draft EAC governance document, the draft budget process document and the drafted EAC 2023-2024 budget. The abbreviated budget process enumerated by Mr. Golden to submit EAC budget request in December and to tie individual line requests to the EAC mission was all the EAC received from him after a month of waiting for a response. (Allen Dearry)

Because there are several budget questions regarding the town's budget process/ and procedures, the EAC is mapping and describing those processes and procedures so we can fully and successfully engage in FY 24-25. David Sonnenfeld presented his initial attempt at describing the town's budget processes (Handout 3) at the June 2023 EAC meeting and had requested from **Mr. Golden answers to his posed questions and possibly a meeting with the town's budget expert (Action Item). No response to questions by Mr. Golden by July 2023 meeting.**

- **Smart Yards**- David Merkle resigned from the EAC and was the EAC's resident expert regarding implementation of Smart Yards. He is still listed as the contact for Smart Yards on the EAC webpage. EAC is looking for a new EAC member – maybe recruited from current smart yard holders - to take the official lead regarding Smart Yards. (Margerat Johnson)

New Business

- **Pro Tem Election**- Pro Tem EAC Chairperson is the vice chairman in the absence of the actual chairperson. (Margaret Johnson)

Motion: There was a Motion made to elect Lee Maxwell as EAC Pro Tem (vice Chairperson. The motion was made by Sue Davidson and seconded by Chris Riegert. Approved- Unanimously.

- **EAC Governance Document**- A EAC governance document was drafted by David Sonnenfeld and was modeled after the proposed Business Advisory Board's drafted governance document. It is still being reviewed in the EAC Budget WG for additions. After the additions the document by the EBWG it will be sent to EAC members for individual comment by August 4th EAC meeting. When done the EAC will get it approved by the Oak Island Town Council. It is needed by the EAC members -especially new members- so that we have a clear set of guidelines on how the EAC operates. (David Sonnenfeld)
- **Tree and Vegetation Stakeholder (TVS) Meetings**- Lee Maxwell and Chris Riegert represented the EAC at the Tree and Vegetation Stakeholder Meetings. There were several items discussed including for example:
 - Tree retainment based on specific diameter at breast height (dbh) versus number of trees retained on developed lot,
 - Zone delineation based of tree species vs coastal ecosystem,
 - Tree retainment based on incentives vs violations, and
 - Instituting a heritage tree program.

The goal of the TVS is to give the OKI Planning Board a hard recommendation to rewrite the existing UDO (Chapter 32) with the elements that were discussed at the meeting. Along with the tree canopy study and the new OKI Planning Board updates the Oak Island Town Council will make an informed decision at the October 2023 meeting to preserve trees on the island.

- **OKI Beautification Event-** EAC was invited to participate in the upcoming OKI Beautification event being held on September 26th for 9-12 pm. More details to follow.

Action Items

- *Margaret Johnson, EAC Chairperson to talk with Brady Golden, Town Planner about securing a budget line item in next year's FY24/25 budget. **Not Completed until after December 23 submittal of EAC budget request.***
- *Margaret Johnson, EAC Chairperson will setup meeting with the Town of Oak Island new Economic Development staff lead, Hallie Willis, to discuss near-term opportunities EAC and her can work together. **Not Completed.***
- *Mr. Golden will secure a copy of the NCFS grant application and/or submitted justification used to approve the grant. **Not Completed.***
- *Mr. Golden will secure answers to questions -and/or direct meeting to discuss answers- regarding the town's budget processes sent to him after the last EAC meeting on June 15th. **Not Completed.***

Meeting was Adjourned at 10:00 am

Motion: *There was a Motion made to adjourn the July 2023 EAC meeting.* The motion was made by Lee Maxwell and seconded by Chris Riegert. Approved- Unanimously.

Minutes submitted by: David Sonnenfeld