

Environmental Advisory Committee (EAC) Minutes

February 01, 2024

Present: Margaret Johnson (Chairperson), Lee Maxwell (Vice Chairperson), Elise Snavelly, Allen Dearry, Sue Davidson, David Sonnenfeld, Jeweleen Mustard, Vacant, Vacant

Absent: None

Staff: Brady Golden, Rick Patterson

Guests Hon. Bill Craft, Maureen Burns, Carrie Winkler Jennewein, Peggy Lacey

Meeting called to order at 0830hrs.

- **Motion to Accept Meeting Agenda-** 1. Allen Dearry 2. Lee Maxwell
Approved Unanimously
- **Motion to Accept September 2023 Minutes-** 1. Jeweleen Mustard 2. Sue Davidson
Approved Unanimously

Introduction of Guests

- **Tree City USA- Oak Island Recreation Center-** Ms. Carrie Jennewein, Oak Island Recreation Center Coordinator, attended the EAC meeting to affirm a partnership regarding Tree City activities on Friday, April 26th (Arbor Day). She indicated that the EAC could utilize the recreation center building and grounds but recommended that we reserve what we needed soon. She also suggested a few possible activities and/or audiences that we should be prepared to accommodate.
- **Green Church Initiative, United Trinity Methodist Church, Southport-** Ms. Peggy Lacey from United Trinity Methodist Church is the lead of the church's Creation Care -Green Church Initiative. She handed out a flier with a wealth of pertinent information about this initiative. This is a national initiative and revolves around Psalm 24, "*The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it*". It basically states we should be good stewards of the earth. The mission is to green every aspect of their church, and partner with other churches and organizations to promote recycling, reduction, reuse and refuse. For more information contact Peggy at peg4bells@gmail.com.

Staff Report

- **Mr. Brady Golden-** He reported that:
 - Trash-Recycling is managed on the island by the town, and on the mainland mainly by individual HOAs. He also stated the increase in cost was related to recycling cost increases.
 - EAC could advertise educational and event messages on the Oak Island Recreation Center Sign. The Recreation Center Director, Heather O'Brien, said to let her know what's needed and she will make it happen. Thanks Heather.

- **Mr. Rick Patterson (Stormwater Chief)**- Rick attended the EAC meeting and provided an update on his projects-

- **Update-- Stormwater Educational Meeting for Contractors-** Two (2) workshops were held to date. They averaged about 20 contractors. The workshops were well received.

Note: The next workshop is not scheduled yet but most likely will be at the end of February 2024. He will focus on the new Tree Ordinance (i.e., Chapter 32) and his audience will be contractors and realtors.

- **Update-- Friends of Stormwater Awards-** “Friends of Stormwater” plaques are ready for distribution for three (3) businesses.



The plaques are dated for 2023. Rick prefers to have a Town Council member and an EAC member make the three (3) separate presentations.

Note- On hold until Oak Island Town Council approves the presentation. Rick is securing that approval.

- **Public Outreach Programs- Arbor Day/Tree City USA-** His preliminary plans are to build an event around education on how to plant and maintain trees. He initially is thinking on having groups of volunteers mulch the town’s newly planted trees in various town locations. More detail to follow later as his plans evolve.
- **Recent Tree Planting By Town-** Rick reported that the town planted 45 Live Oaks at the west end of Oak Island Drive. They are 1.5” diameter and 10-12’ high trees. They were planted no closer than 40’ apart to allow for a mature root system and canopy when they become heritage trees in about 75 years. The cost for this initial planting comes to about \$10K. The long-range plan is to do again for the next three (3) years. This is a major step forward in regaining valuable tree canopy that the town has lost to unsupervised development. Good work all.

Old Business

- **Arbor Day-** Arbor Day is on April 26th and will be celebrated in conjunction with Tree City USA events. A team led by Elise Snavelly (EAC) will start the planning with a kickoff meeting on February 5th. The team currently consists of Jeweleen Mustard (EAC) and David Sonnenfeld (EAC). More to come. (Elise Snavelly)
- **Recycling Grant Funds-** The EAC Chairperson, Margaret Johnson and EAC member Sue Davidson had a meeting with the Town's new Finance Director, Ms. Kathryn Adams, to discuss the loss of recycling grant funds that were to be used 2023. She agreed to find monies to replace about \$1K of the lost funds before the end of the town's current fiscal year, and she recommended EAC apply for new grants as soon as possible. (Margaret Johnson, Sue Davidson)
- **EAC Oak Island Town Council Presentation-** The EAC presentation to the Oak Island Town Council has been scheduled for the Town Councils monthly February 13th meeting. EAC presentation will be sent out to Town Council via the Town Clerk before the meeting. The presentation will focus on overviews of the following EAC initiatives:
 - EAC webpage
 - Sustainable Economic Development (SED)
 - Skip the Plastic Straw Initiative (SPSI)Materials for the presentation were sent to the EAC Chairperson on Friday, February 2nd for review and distribution to relevant parties. Presenters will be Allen Deary and Lee Maxwell from the EAC. Presentation materials will be posted later on the EAC webpage. **Note: At time of posting the February 2024 EAC Minutes the presentation to the Town Council was cancelled due to a negative perception by town staff of EAC intent.** (Margaret Johnson, Allen Deary, Lee Maxwell)
- **NCCF- Living Shoreline Events-** Elise Snavelly is working with Scott Thornall, Public Works Director, to get the current oyster bags upgraded to a more wake resilient option. The current oyster bags are deteriorating due to a high wake action on the Intercoastal Waterway (IW). More to come.

Elise proposed the 2024 Living Shoreline maintenance events. The schedule is a follow:

2024	Date	Time (hrs)	Alt. Date	Alt. Time
Winter	March 9	1200-1400	March 23	1300-1500
Spring	May 4	1030-1200	May 25	1500-1630
Summer	September 21	1630-1800	September 28	1100-1230
Fall	November 16	1330-1530	November 30	1230-1430

Motion: *There was a Motion made that the EAC approve the Living Shoreline 2024 maintenance schedule:* The motion was made by Elise Snavelly and seconded by David Sonnenfeld. Approved- Unanimously.

The approved 2024 Living Shoreline maintenance schedule will be added to the EAC webpage. (Elise Snavelly)

- **EAC Governance Document-** No update to document. The document is now called the EAC Charter will be presented to the Town Council by Allen Dearry on February 13th. David will update the document based on guidance from Town Council and/or Town Clerk. When approved the document will be stored on the EAC webpage. (David Sonnenfeld)
- **EAC Sustainable Economic Development (SED) Team** (Allen Dearry, Lee Maxwell, Jeweleen Mustard) – The SED team **met** with the Town’s Economic Development Director, Hallie Willis to determine common interests between what she is doing with business development versus the EAC’s SED effort, and to determine if there is any interest on her part regarding SED workshops to educate town staff, EAC members and others. Hallie was supportive and there is a recommendation that the EAC SED Team attended the Business Advisory Committee meetings to find common ground.

In addition, the SED team has produced a draft SED staff position description. It was compiled by the SED Team. It is the *opinion* of the SED Team that a focal point for the SED framework is needed sooner than later to coordinate and integrate the Town’s future development projects. ***There is a cautionary note from the EAC Chairperson that it might be premature and not received well in the spirit in which is being presented and that it might be better to wait for the more positive opportunity to push forward to the decision maker.*** The SED Staff Position Description can be found in Appendix A of these EAC Minutes.

Motion: *There was a Motion made that the EAC provide the Town of Oak Island staff, committee members and the interested public an educational workshop on the topic of “Sustainable Economic Development.”* The motion was made by Allen Dearry and seconded by Elise Snavelly. Approved- Unanimously. **October 2023. To date has not been scheduled.**

Motion: *There was a Motion made that the EAC Sustainable Economic Development (SED) Team liaison with the Oak Island Business Advisory Committee (BAC) regarding an educational opportunities related to the topic of “Sustainable Economic Development.”* The motion was made by Jeweleen Mustard and seconded by Elise Snavelly. Approved- Unanimously. **February 2024.**

Motion: *There was a Motion made that the EAC Sustainable Economic Development (SED) Team proactively recommend to the Oak Island Town Council the need to develop a SED staff position as the Town’s focal point for future SED*

efforts. The motion was made by Allen Dearry and seconded by Jeweleen Mustard. All. Approved- Unanimously. **February 2024.**

- **Skip the Plastic Straw Initiative (SPSI)**—36 of 50 Oak Island establishments have accepted utilizing non-plastic straws, six (6) are pending acceptance of the program, and seven (7) have not accepted the program. Not able to make contact with decision maker for two (2) businesses. Lee will send out to EAC members the list of business's who accepted not using plastic straws so members can confirm compliance when they eat at a particular establishment. Please note that participation means that the business has agreed to execute at least one of the elements listed below:
- Offer straws only upon request
 - Elimination of Plastic Single Use Straws
 - Placement of the “Skip the Straw” tent cards
 - Display the “10 Reasons to Skip the Straw” poster

Not all the business has agreed to execute all of the elements of the initiative. (Lee Maxwell)

- **EAC Communication-** David obtain EAC webpage utilization statistics form Mike Emory, Oak Island Communication Director, dated August 8, 2023 to January 12, 2024:

Event	Statistics
Total Views	425
Unique Users	194
Views per Use	2.19
Average Engagement Time (seconds)	50

The EAC webpage ranks currently #113 out the entire Oak Island URL catalog of about 1,457 total.

There are currently two (2) open EAC vacancies.

The EAC webpage was last updated n January 9, 2024. (David Sonnenfeld, Allen Dearry)

New Business

None.

Meeting was Adjourned at 10:15 am

Motion: *There was a Motion made to adjourn the Febraury 2024 EAC meeting.*
The motion was made by Lee Maxwell and seconded by Jeweleen Mustard.
Approved- Unanimously.

Minutes compiled and submitted by: David Sonnenfeld

Appendix: The SED team has produced a draft SED vacancy description for EAC reference. It was compiled by the SED Team and will be presented at the February 13th Town Council Meeting.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT SUSTAINABILITY DIRECTOR

Local Title

- Sustainability Coordinator
- Chief Sustainability Officer
- Sustainability Manager
- Environment and Sustainability Manager

Job definition

- Sustainability is the ability to maintain or improve the quality of life for present and future generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. It strives to maintain an ecological balance in the environment by governing resource usage, reducing waste and pollution, and protecting natural resources.
- A chief sustainability officer oversees and facilitates an organization's internal and external environmental impact. Basically, everything a CSO manages is managed with sustainability as the dominant factor in decision-making and strategy implementation. CSOs identify inefficiencies in processes as well as non-ecofriendly practices and replace them with green practices while maintaining or increasing efficiency.
- Sustainability involves preventing depletion of natural resources, analyzing current ecological impact, and advocating for the use of sustainable practices. It also involves policy analysis and knowledge of environmental regulations and climate change.
- The field includes sustainable economic development. The incumbent is responsible for integrating natural resource and environmental protection into planning and development efforts. By evaluating environmental conditions across the town, we can improve availability and access to natural areas and public spaces while fostering sustainable development that protects and restores our environment.

Office of Sustainability (Raleigh)

- The Office of Sustainability works to create an organizational environment where each City departmental operation, investment, and initiative incorporates the Council's commitment to building a sustainable city.

- **Mission:** The Office of Sustainability (OS) works collaboratively to prioritize economic, social, and environmental efforts at an individual, organizational, and community-wide level. The OS works to create efficiencies, save resources, and strengthen innovative partnerships through testing new technologies and encouraging new ways of thinking that positively impact the environment, our local economy, and all who live, work and play in Raleigh.
- **Vision:** A vision of a sustainable Raleigh is a community resilient to natural, social and economic challenges, rich in diverse perspectives and collaboration, and innovative in its approach to strengthening the future for all who live, work and play in Raleigh.

Examples of Work

- Lead planning of town sustainability initiatives and programs, including natural resource preservation and sustainable economic development.
- Directly manage sustainability initiatives and programs.
- Facilitate collaboration of interdepartmental/agency task forces, teams, and working groups.
- Administer local sustainability office, staff, and budget.
- Coordinate department/agency directors/managers in managing, measuring, and monitoring sustainability initiatives and programs.
- Advise and respond to elected officials about sustainability issues.
- Conduct policy analysis, development & advocacy.
- Promote sustainability with employees in the government and as a part of the government's culture.
- Communicate sustainability goals and progress to the public.
- Develop and implement sustainability measuring and monitoring systems.
- Engage with state and/or federal governments, and/or other local governments in region.
- Engage with community and/or interest/stakeholder groups (e.g., neighborhood organizations).
- Participate with local and state committees, professional associations, and other groups working on environmental management, sustainability, compliance, energy, and other natural resource conservation and resiliency efforts.
- Serve as the Town's representative to boards, commissions and organizations engaged in issues pertaining to sustainability and environmental management.
- In collaboration with the Town's Communication Director, responds to media requests for comment on environmental or sustainability issues.
- Coordinate special events, local conferences, and expositions (e.g., Earth Day, Arbor Day).
- Engage with vendors of sustainability technology, equipment, tools, etc.

- Fundraising (grant development) for sustainability office and projects.

REQUIREMENTS:

Education

- Graduation from an accredited college or university with a Bachelor's/Master's degree in relevant field: environmental planning, environmental science, sustainable business, environmental engineering, public administration/policy.

Experience

- Three to five years of experience in the field of urban sustainability or environmental planning, working professionally in government, business, consulting, nonprofit, and/or academic sectors.

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities (KSAs)

- Critical thinking skills to solve problems and enact creative thinking to provide solutions.
- Strong verbal communication skills to clearly articulate ideas and understanding.
- Technical writing skills to create and manage important documentation.
- Ability to identify areas of inefficiency or areas of opportunity for maximizing sustainability in local government practices.
- Knowledge of current models and programs for urban sustainability and environmental planning, including federal and state policies and measurement/monitoring of sustainability.
- Knowledge of climate change science, principles of energy and environmental management, social behavior change, and economic development.
- Knowledge of public administration and public policy development, including government financing mechanisms and intergovernmental relations.
- Knowledge of organization-change management strategies and methods.
- Ability to direct/support systems analysis, strategic planning processes, organization development processes.
- Ability to effectively analyze and develop programs, policies, and initiatives.
- Ability to manage projects and administer programs and/or an Office of Sustainability and supervise staff, and to coordinate programs with other administrative offices.
- Ability to develop positive relations with other departments and agencies, and elected officials, and to facilitate collaborative planning processes.
- Ability to develop performance measurement systems and initiate continuous improvement processes.

