

Environmental Advisory Committee (EAC) Minutes

May 2, 2024

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

Absent: Bill Craft (Town Council Liaison)

Staff: Brady Golden

Guests: Maureen Burns

Meeting called to order at 8:32 am ET.

➤ **Motion to Accept Meeting Agenda** 1. Sue Davidson 2. Lee Maxwell

Approved Unanimously

➤ **Motion to Accept March 2024 Minutes** 1. Lee Maxwell 2. Elise Snavelly

Sue Davidson dissented and voted against the acceptance of the minutes. The motion to accept the March 2024 minutes was carried with a majority vote.

➤ **Motion to Accept April 2024 Minutes** 1. Sue Davidson 2. Lee Maxwell

Approved Unanimously

Announcements

➤ **Margaret Johnson:** It was noted that Margaret has been laid off from her previous employment. Consequently, she will now have more time available to dedicate to Environmental Advisory Committee (EAC) activities. This development was acknowledged by the committee members, and it was expressed that Margaret's increased availability will likely contribute positively to the EAC's endeavors and initiatives moving forward. The committee extends its support to Margaret during this transition period and looks forward to her continued contributions to the committee's objectives.

➤ **Elise Snavelly:** Elise announced that the tree grant for the procurement of live oak trees, discussed in the previous month's meeting has been approved. Planting activities are scheduled to commence in December.

Reports from Staff

➤ **Brady Golden:** Brady informed the committee that Rick Patterson (Stormwater Chief) has accepted a new position at the National Forest in West Virginia. The committee expressed its best wishes to Rick for success in his new career endeavors. In the interim, Brice Taylor, the Stormwater Assistant, is assisting with responsibilities, including efforts to hire a replacement for Rick. Bryce is currently engaged in the process of obtaining the MS4 permit.

- ❖ Bill Craft, who was not present at the meeting, is tasked with following up on the update provided regarding the distribution of Friends of Storm placards to participating local businesses.
- ❖ It was noted that the town's comprehensive land use plan, covering all aspects related to land use, will undergo updates by the town-appointed group Withersravenel, starting this month. Further updates on this matter will be provided as they become available.

➤ **Bill Craft (Town Council Liaison):** *Absent.*

Old Business

➤ **Earth Day/Arbor Day, 4/26/2024:** The committee reviewed the Earth Day celebration event, which attracted an attendance of approximately 30 to 50 individuals. The subcommittee responsible for organizing the event is currently compiling feedback and formulating a plan for next year's celebration. This plan includes strategies to enhance advertising efforts well in advance of the event date and collaborating with the Town Council to commence planning as early as November. The committee expressed enthusiasm for the proactive measures being taken to improve future events and initiatives and looks forward to the continued success of the Earth Day celebration and other related endeavors. *Details provided by Elise Snavelly.*

- ❖ Furthermore, the committee discussed the possibility of pursuing the Tree City Growth Award, considering the completion of the tree survey and upcoming tree planting activities. To explore this opportunity further, the committee intends to liaise with relevant staff members within the town administration.

➤ **NCCF, Living Shoreline:** The committee discussed the upcoming Living Shoreline Cleanup scheduled for Saturday May 4th at 10:30 AM. An email notification has been disseminated to volunteers to ensure their participation. In addition to email communication, it was recommended that future events be promoted on Dave's Events platform (Appendix 3) and the OKI Locals Facebook page to enhance community outreach and engagement. *Details provided by Elise Snavelly.*

- ❖ Furthermore, a sign-up sheet for the MS4 permit will be made available at all events, allowing attendees to register their interest and support for the permit application process.

➤ **Recycling:** Sue Davidson spoke with Mayor Liz White at the Arbor Day celebration and gave the “OK” to proceed with recycling education efforts. Sue expressed concern regarding the future of recycling and emphasized the importance of community engagement in advocating for its continuation. To this end, all members are encouraged to attend the upcoming May 14th Town Council meeting at 6 PM to advocate for recycling. At the aforementioned meeting, representatives from GFL and Sunoco will present data on recycling, including a breakdown of associated costs, and will address pertinent questions such as the identity of purchasers for our recycled materials. Furthermore, it was highlighted that aluminum and plastic are banned from North Carolina landfills, underlining the urgency of recycling efforts. Additionally, the committee raised the question of whether recycling contributes to the Tree City certification. *Details provided by Sue Davidson.*

- ❖ Margaret Johnson suggested drafting a Comprehensive Recycling Education Program to be presented during the June Town Council meeting.

➤ **BHI Conservancy Coastal Sustainability Symposium:** Lee Maxwell reported that Jennifer Wiggin, representing the Bald Head Island Conservancy Coastal Sustainability Symposium, discussed shared environmental and development issues. The conversation highlighted common concerns and challenges faced by both towns in the realms of

environmental preservation and development. The committee acknowledged the importance of such dialogues in fostering collaboration and exchange of ideas between communities facing similar issues. It was noted that opportunities for further discussions and potential collaboration initiatives with Bald Head Island may arise in the future. *Details provided by Lee Maxwell.*

➤ **Green Growth Toolbox (GGT), 5/21/2024:** The "Greene Growth Toolbox" initiative from the North Carolina Wildlife Resource Center, spearheaded by Alicia Davis, is scheduled to take place on May 21 in Bergen County. Location: Pender County Public Library, Michael Y. Taylor Meeting Room 103 South Cowan Street, Burgaw, NC 28425 Date and Time: Tuesday, May 21st, 2024 - 9:00 AM to 12:30 PM. Please email Alisa Davis at alisa.davis@ncwildlife.org to register or for questions. (Appendix 1) *Details provided by Lee Maxwell.*

- ❖ Brady Golden will be in attendance at the event and will provide a report to the committee during the June meeting.

Action Items

➤ **Bill Craft:** Tasked with following up on the update provided regarding the distribution of Friends of Storm placards to participating local businesses.

➤ **Margaret Johnson:** Comprehensive Recycling Education Program Draft for next meeting in preparation for the June Town Council Meeting.

- ❖ Researching the organization of the Beach Ambassadors program and follow-up on behalf of the EAC.
- ❖ Additionally, discussions took place regarding the location of various resources, including the Enviroscape stored along with other committee resources.

New Business

➤ **EAC Beach Music Event Table:** Sue Davidson proposed the idea of setting up an Environmental Advisory Committee (EAC) education table during the beach music events scheduled for June. The proposed dates for this initiative are either Friday, June 14 or Friday, June 21 from 4 PM to 6 PM at the beach music event in Middleton Park.

Motion: There was a Motion made that the EAC attend the Beach Music Event to provide educational materials to promote EAC initiatives.

1. Lee Maxwell
2. Jeweleen Mustard

Approved Unanimously

Adjournment at 9:37 am ET.

➤ **Motion to Adjourn**

1. Elise Snavely

2. Sue Davidson

Approved Unanimously

Minutes compiled and submitted by: Jeweleen Mustard

Appendix

Appendix 1:

Introduction to the NC Wildlife Resources Commission's Green Growth Toolbox

Location: Pender County Public Library, Michael Y. Taylor Meeting Room
103 South Cowan Street, Burgaw, NC 28425

Date and Time: Tuesday, May 21st, 2024 - 9:00 AM to 12:30 PM

The Green Growth Toolbox (www.ncwildlife.org/greengrowth) was developed by the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission and is a non-regulatory technical assistance program for communities interested in conserving wildlife habitats and natural resources through land use planning methods. This type of proactive planning secures benefits for our communities, the future of our wildlife and economy, helps to protect working farms and forests, and helps to ensure that development permit requirements are met ahead of time.

Who should attend? Planning staff, transportation and utilities staff, elected officials, landscape architects, developers, planning board members, citizen groups, and others interested or involved in land use planning, development, or wildlife habitat conservation.

Registration: Please email Alisa Davis at alisa.davis@ncwildlife.org to register or for questions.

We hope you can attend!

Appendix 2:

----- Original Message -----

Subject: Re: Recycling presentation GFL and Sonoco TC May 14th 6pm

From: SueDavid <SueDavid@twc.com>

Sent: Monday, April 29, 2024, 7:19 PM

To:

mayorwhite@oakislandnc.gov, bcraft@oakislandnc.gov, BCiullo@oakislandnc.gov, tcartner@oakislandnc.gov, mmartin@oakislandnc.gov, jbach@oakislandnc.gov

CC:

lstites@oakislandnc.gov, joshua.toler@gflenv.com, kevin.fisher@sonoco.com, suedavid@twc.com, margaretjohnson@yahoo.com

Hello,

Understanding the recycling process, costs, impact on landfill life as well as cost shifting when recycling not done is pivotal as Town Council considers the future of OKI community recycling. Also the service bundling and increased costs to Town for trash services if recycling is dropped. Important is the reduced rate calculation for Town wide resident service versus individual cost per resident for Opt In recycling services. Recycling tends to be successful when it is accessible and easy for Residents. A community that does not recycle tends to have increased littering which has associated costs. Recycling is part of our Town's environment friendly vision, reputation and Tree City designation.

Josh Toler, the Operations Manager at GFL, will deliver a presentation at the May 14th Town Council meeting. GFL is the transport agent for both our residential recycling and trash.

GFL delivers ALL recycling to Sonoco, our material reclamation center in Wilmington. There items are sorted and prepared for distribution to companies that create new products. Kevin Fisher, the Procurement Manager for Sonoco, will attend the May 14th Town Council meeting. He is happy to answer questions regarding Sonoco's role in the process. Councilman Craft has asked me to contact Lisa Stites to have Mr Fisher added to the meeting agenda.

The decision to continue or discontinue recycling will have an impact on the local, regional and global environment. The decision will have impact not only in the immediate future but long range as Brunswick County looks at landfill options when our current landfill in Sampson County has reached capacity. The cost of developing a new landfill, after permits obtained, can run hundreds of million of dollars. Landfills require the right geographic placement, special linings, methane capture, meeting of strict regulation and complex daily operation oversight.

Important to note is that placing recyclable plastics and aluminum into the general trash stream is banned in North Carolina. The Residents that do not recycle will actually be violating NC Statute. Many counties are banning cardboard from landfills. Landfill space is limited and precious.

Import of raw materials to manufacture new metals, plastics and glass is the expensive especially considering we already have many of these recyclable materials in circulation. GFL and Sonoco provide jobs and community service. If we don't keep materials in circulation, cost shifting results in increased costs of food and other items as packaging costs rise. The transport of raw materials from China, South America and South Africa is expensive, polluting and the transport ships cool their engines with ocean water jettisoning warmed water back into the ocean. These ships leak petroleum and discharge human waste into the water.

I am happy to assist with questions and connections as Council looks at this critical line item in the budget. There are many other reasons to continue our community recycling program. The bottom line is that recycling is "the right thing to do."

Thank you,

Susan Davidson
Environmental Advisory Committee Member

Appendix 3: <https://theeventguide.com/events/>

Appendix 4:

NCCF, Living Shoreline Events

- ❖ Spring: May 4, 10:30-12:00 *Alt. Date/Time: May 25, 15:00-16:30*
 - ❖ Summer: September 21, 16:30-18:00 *Alt. Date/Time: September 28, 11:00-12:30*
 - ❖ Fall: November 16, 13:30-15:30 *Alt. Date/Time: November 30, 12:30-14:30*
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Appendix 5:

Third Annual Johnston Coastal Sustainability Symposium – April 9, 2024

<https://bhic.org/conservation/coastal-sustainability/>