



Environmental Advisory Committee

4:00pm, Thursday, July 10, 2025

City Hall

Council Chambers

1207 Palm Boulevard, Isle of Palms, SC

Public Comment:

All citizens who wish to speak during the meeting must email their first and last name, address, and topic to Nicole DeNeane at nicoled@iop.net no later than **3:00 p.m. the business day before the meeting**. Citizens may also provide public comment here:

<https://www.iop.net/public-comment-form>

Agenda

1. **Call to Order** and acknowledgement that the press and public were duly notified of the meeting in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.
2. **Approval of previous meetings' minutes – June 2 and 8, 2025 [p.2-8]**
3. **Citizen's Comments**
4. **Old Business**
 - a. Lighting ordinance [p.9-10]
 - b. Water Quality Testing [p. 11]
 - c. Glyphosate/Round-up – usage and education [p. 12]
 - d. Recommendations Matrix [p. 13]
5. **New Business**
6. **Miscellaneous**

Next meeting: Thursday, August 14, 2025, 4:00pm

7. **Adjournment**



Special Environmental Advisory Committee Meeting

10:00am, Monday, June 2, 2025

City Marina, Isle of Palms, SC

MINUTES

1. Call to Order

Present: Laura Lovins, Cindy Marrs, Todd Murphy, Sean Popson, Mary Pringle

Also present: Council Member Miars, Susan Hill Smith

2. Purpose – on-site review of interpretive sign project

Ms. Smith shared the proposed locations of the signs at the public dock. She said they will be at a height and angle to be ADA-compliant and accessible to children.

Discussion ensued about the most impactful locations, possible information to include on the signs, and potential ways to mount the signs.

Ms. Lovins shared that she and Ms. Smith will meet with Islander 71 and Marina representatives later in the month to see if they would be interested in sponsoring the sign project. Ms. Lovins is also reaching out to Wild Dunes to see if Terri Haack is the person there to speak with about their possible sponsorship.

3. Adjournment

Ms. Pringle made a motion to adjourn the meeting, and Mr. Murphy seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 10:52am.

Respectfully submitted,

Nicole DeNeane
City Clerk



ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

4:00pm, Thursday, June 12, 2025

1207 Palm Boulevard, Isle of Palms, SC

and broadcasted live on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/user/cityofisleofpalms>

MINUTES

1. Call to order

Present: Laura Lovins, Mary Pringle, Eric Cicora, Cindy Marrs (via Zoom), Sean Popson, Todd Murphy

Absent: Dane Buckout, Lucia Spiotta

Staff Present: Administrator Kerr, Asst. Director Asero, Council Member Miars (via Zoom)

2. Citizen's Comments

Mr. Jimmy Carroll shared a handout with the Committee which is attached to these minutes. He explained the genesis of Plant-A-Palm 2.0. He is asking for the Committee's blessing on the project. They are asking the City for ongoing maintenance and irrigation of the trees. They hope to have them planted in the fall.

Mr. Hugh Swingle of the Family Vacation Rental Group said he is excited about the project, and his group has donated 10 trees to the project.

Mr. Benjamin Farmery, Front Beach business owner, also spoke in favor of the project and has committed 22 trees to the project.

3. Approval of previous meeting's minutes

Ms. Popson noted a spelling error on page 2, section E.

MOTION: Ms. Pringle made a motion to approve the minutes of the May 15, 2025 meeting as amended, and Mr. Murphy seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

MOTION: Ms. Pringle made a motion to reorder the agenda to allow for discussion about the Plant-A-Palm project first. Mr. Murphy seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Presentations – none

5. Old Business

A. Plant-A-Palm 2.0

Administrator Kerr said the City will not be financially supporting this project other than to irrigate and maintain the trees. Money for that will come from the City's Tree Fund. He added that the Public Services & Facilities Committee and City Council will need to work through the land use of the lot since Public Works often uses it as a location to hold debris before it is hauled off the island.

Mr. Murphy suggested adding other native plants to the parking lot. Administrator Kerr will speak with the landscape designer about that.

MOTION: Mr. Murphy made a motion to recommend the Plant-A-Palm 2.0 plan to City Council. Ms. Lovins seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

B. Lighting ordinance presentation – Todd Murphy

Mr. Murphy shared the latest draft of the proposed lighting ordinance as well as what he may say to City Council when it is presented to them for First Reading.

Discussion ensued about clarifying that the ordinance is focused on residential lighting. Council Member Miars will work with Mr. Murphy to provide the necessary clarity. Administrator Kerr will send the original and redline versions of the ordinance to the Committee.

C. Interpretive Sign Project

Ms. Lovins thanked everyone for attending the June 1 meeting on the public dock regarding the interpretive sign project. She and Ms. Smith will meet with representatives from Islander 71 and the Marina on June 23 to discuss possible sponsorship of the signs.

D. Water Quality Testing

MOTION: Ms. Popson made a motion to defer this discussion until the next meeting. Mr. Cicora seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

E. Recommendations Matrix

Mr. Cicora referenced the reduced matrix he, Ms. Marrs, and Ms. Popson compiled. It is attached to these minutes.

After a brief discussion about the first few recommendations, Council Member Miars said the recommendation about reviewing to-go packaging will be on the next Public Services & Facilities Committee agenda.

Administrator Kerr will add a status column to the matrix and update it as discussed. Mr. Cicora suggested the Committee review a few of them each month. Administrator Kerr will send the full recommendations to the Committee as the text of some were cut off. City Clerk DeNeane will send the link to the Community Enrichment Plan to the Committee members.

6. **New Business**

7. **Miscellaneous Business**

The next meeting of the Environmental Advisory Committee is scheduled for Thursday, July 10, 2025 at 4pm.

8. **Adjournment**

Ms. Popson made a motion to adjourn, and Mr. Cicora seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 5:27pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Nicole DeNeane
City Clerk

Environmental Aspect of Palm Trees

#1) Air quality. Palm trees act as air filters; think about this being a parking lot. Palm trees absorb pollutants like carbon dioxide, nitrogen oxides, sulfur dioxide, converting them into less harmful compounds. They also help trap dust and other airborne particles.

#2) Palms provide oxygen. Like all plants, palms produce oxygen through photosynthesis, contributing to the air we breathe.

#3) Soil Health. Their strong root system helps to bind soil and prevent erosion while their leaf litter can add to the soil fertility.

#4) Biodiversity. Palm trees provide a habitat and shelter for various birds and animals.

#5) Shade. Palm trees provide shade, which can help cool down the areas beneath; think of the heat that parked cars emit which the palm reduces, thus effectively reducing the heat islandwide.

#6) Palm Trees. They are a timeless sentinel of tropical regions. They act as a stress reduction oasis. Studies have shown that being surrounded by Palm Trees can help reduce stress. The Palm Tree is a botanical wonder of tropical and sub-tropical regions, it holds a special place in human culture and ecology. With its iconic silhouette, versatile uses, and ecological importance, the Palm Tree stands as a symbol of resilience, abundance, and tropical allure.

Historical Reference

#7) The Isle of Palms! The Sabal Palm is the background of the Isle of Palms logo made back in 1953. The Beach Company offered the city 5.5 acres of land in 1986, and the island wanted it before there was ever a parking problem. Unfortunately, we didn't have the money, but held a public referendum to buy the acreage knowing that parking would be an issue one day. The referendum passed 8-1 and we bought the lots for \$1,674,793, thus preventing it from being developed. We were ahead of our time. Now we find ourselves the scapegoat of a tri-county parking group, and we have responded through a grassroots combination of residents and businesses who want to pay for and turn this barren lot into an oasis with 135 Palm Trees for our guests; how do we say no?

Search Complete

61 results were found

Go to Search Results

Go to Prospecting

2.2 acres

Ocean Blvd

1968

1.16 acres

3.36 acres

Sea Cabins

Ocean Blvd

Ocean Blvd

Pavilion Dr

Ocean Inn

1100

3.15 ac

196

196

196

196

196

196

196

196

196

196

196

196

put blue

100 ft
60 ft
40 ft
20 ft

160'

196'

1111

Type of Recommendation	Actionable (Multiple Items)
Budgetary Cost	(All)
Initiative	Environmental Advisory Committee
Assigned Committee	(All)
Rec #	Short
Timeline of Implementation	
Row Labels	
Environmental Stewardship and Management	
Add an annual eco-themed event to the Recreation Department's annual calendar.	
Adjust packaging ordinances to close loopholes and align with neighboring municipalities.	
Conduct a comprehensive water quality assessment.	
Develop a public education program on resilient strategies.	
Develop plan to increase awareness of challenges and solutions that includes "Do No Harm" messaging for residents, visitors, developers and businesses.	
Educate the owners of septic systems in the proper maintenance and encourage owners to have their septic systems checked and serviced according to established standards	
Encourage and provide incentives for residents, businesses, developers, Wild Dunes Resort and Homeowner Associations (HOA's) to increase native plants on residential and commercial properties.	
Facilitate more programming focused on understanding and protecting our natural environment (e.g. beach/saltmarsh/waterways, native plants, native and endangered species).	
Include in Request for Proposals (RFPs) for landscaping.	
Involve public in South Carolina Aquarium's Searise sign project.	
Join the South Atlantic Salt Marsh Initiative (SASMI).	
Monitor DHEC/OCRM testing of ocean waters impacting the island	
More local promotions with links/QR codes pointing to iop.net "Beach Rules" – including tie-ins with Beach Shuttle.	
Partner with Chamber of Commerce and Isle of Palms Cleanup Crew on workshops for businesses on sustainability practices.	
Recruit volunteer neighborhood captains for regular cleanups of non-commercial sections of beach and island's interior.	
Secure more related media coverage.	
The City should continue to support tree-planting programs along streets and develop a long-term plan which prioritizes streets and identifies the types of trees to be used	
With guidance from local experts, emphasize native plants and gardens at all city parks and properties.	
Stormwater Management	
Establish educational and volunteer programs to promote community involvement.	
Grand Total	

Sec. 5-4-17. Sea turtle protection; outdoor lighting regulations.

- (a) *Definitions.* The following words, terms and phrases, when used in this section, shall have the meanings ascribed to them in this subsection, except where the context clearly indicates a different meaning:
- (1) *Artificial light* means any source of light emanating from a manmade device, including, but not limited to, incandescent, mercury vapor, metal halide, or sodium lamps, flashlights, spotlights, streetlights, vehicular lights, construction or security lights.
 - (2) *Floodlight* means reflector-type light fixture which is attached directly to a building and which is unshielded.
 - (3) *Low profile luminary* means a light fixture set on a base which raises the source of the light no higher than forty-eight inches (48") off the ground, and designed in such a way that light is directed downward from a hooded light source.
 - (4) *Development* means any existing structure for which a building permit has been duly issued and any new construction or remodeling of existing structures when such remodeling includes alteration of exterior lighting.
 - (5) *Person* means any individual, firm, association, joint venture, partnership, estate, trust, syndicate, fiduciary, corporation, group or unit, or Federal, State, County or municipal government.
 - (6) *Pole lighting* means a light fixture set on a base or pole which raises the source of the light higher than forty-eight inches (48") off the ground.
- (b) *Development.* No artificial light shall illuminate any area of the beach other than in compliance with this section. Building and electrical plans for construction of single-family or multifamily dwellings, commercial or other structures, including electrical plans associated with parking lots, dune walkovers or other outdoor lighting for real property if lighting associated with such construction or development can be seen from the beach, shall be in compliance with the following:
- (1) Floodlights shall be prohibited. Wall-mounted light fixtures shall be fitted with hoods so that no light illuminates the beach.
 - (2) Pole lighting shall be shielded in such a way that the point sources of light will not be visible from the beach. Outdoor lighting shall be held to the minimum necessary for security and convenience.
 - (3) Low-profile luminaries shall be used in parking lots and such lighting shall be positioned so that no light illuminates the beach.
 - (4) Dune crosswalks shall utilize low-profile shielded luminaries which shall be turned off from sunset to sunrise during the period of May 1 to October 31 of each year.
 - (5) Temporary security lights at construction sites shall not be mounted more than fifteen feet (15') above the ground. Illumination from the lights shall not spread beyond the boundary of the property being developed and in no case shall those lights illuminate the beach.
- (c) *Use of lighting.* It is the policy of the City for both new and existing development to minimize artificial light illuminating any area of the beach. To adhere to this policy, lighting of structures which can be seen from the beach shall be in compliance with the following:
- (1) Lights illuminating buildings or associate grounds for decorative or recreational purposes shall be shielded or screened such that they are not visible from the beach, or turned off from sunset to sunrise during the period of May 1 to October 31 of each year.
 - (2) Lights illuminating dune crosswalks of any area oceanward of the primary dune line shall be turned off from sunset to sunrise during the period of May 1 to October 31 of each year.

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- (3) Security lights shall be permitted throughout the night so long as low-profile luminaries are used and screened in such a way that those lights do not illuminate the beach.
- (d) *Publicly owned lighting.* Streetlights and lighting at parks and other publicly owned beach areas shall be subject to the following:
- (1) Streetlights shall be located so that most of their illumination will be directed away from the beach. These lights shall be equipped with shades or shields that will prevent backlighting and render them not visible from the beach.
 - (2) Lights at parks or other public beach access points shall be shielded or shaded or shall not be utilized during the period of May 1 to October 31 of each year.
- (e) *Enforcement and penalty.* Violation of any provision is hereby declared to be a misdemeanor, punishable and enforceable pursuant to the provisions of section 1-3-66.
- (Code 1994, § 5-4-17)

Section xx-xx-xx. New and Existing Residential Development.

The purpose of this section is to control light spillage and glare so as not to adversely affect motorists, pedestrians, natural areas, vistas, and land uses of adjacent properties. More specifically, this section is intended to:

- Control lighting to assure that excessive light spillage and glare are not directed at adjacent properties, neighboring areas, and motorists;
 - Protect livability and enjoyment for residents and visitors;
 - Filter and reduce glare from artificial light sources, preventing “sky and neighborhood glow”; and
 - Avoid negative impacts to wildlife from exterior lighting.
- (a) Outdoor lighting on residential structures must be shielded so that light is directed downward and does not shine directly onto any natural including the Intracoastal Waterway, marsh, or other natural areas.
- (b) Outdoor lighting on residential structures shall not shine directly into the yard or windows of adjacent residential uses.
- (c) Light fixtures in excess of 60 watts or 100 lumens shall use full cut-off lenses or hoods to prevent glare or spillover onto adjacent lands and natural areas.
- (d) Upwardly-directed lighting shall not be used to illuminate structures, except for low-wattage architectural lighting. These lights should be on a timer such that they are turned off by 10:00pm every day
- (e) It is recommended that all exterior lighting be rated at or below 3000 Kelvin. While exceptions may exist, this limitation provides a balance of safety and security with a more amber tone of light being emitted.

James Riddle, with Woolpert, has given me cost information for additional bacterial testing. Woolpert is a third party company that helps with collection as well as interpretation of bacterial testing.

The company that does both pre-screening for bacteria (called Fluidion) as well as the full DNA, Microbial Source Tracing, is LuminUltra.

James feels that we should do the pre-screening for bacteria (non-specific) first at the 3 outfalls we have identified. If it is low, there is no need to move forward with the MST/DNA testing at that point. We would have the opportunity to go back within 20 days to test again – each Fluidion test kit comes with six (6) test tubes. If again, the 2nd test does not show high enough levels of bacteria, we could pause, and possibly try again a few months later.

To just do the Fluidion testing is about \$1500-\$2000.

If the pre-screening does come back with significant levels of bacteria (general), then we would move forward with the MST/DNA testing. James feels we need to test for more than just dogs and humans – we need to have more species to have a better comparison of possible human bacteria against other species that are common to our area – elk/deer, bird, gull, dog, human. We need to establish both the numerator and the denominator in our ratios of bacteria, and the more species you test for, the better metrics you will begin to establish.

To move forward with the MST/DNA testing for 5 species would cost around \$2,650-\$2900. Again, the test kit would come with 6 test tubes, so we could do a second round of MST/DNA for \$1900-\$2150.

He stressed it is the number of times that you test and get your results that will determine how more accurate your data is. If the human bacteria consistently comes back consistently high, then we will begin to build a good case that we have issues with septic systems that are failing or seeping effluent into our water.

Glyphosate Education

I wanted to present in the following ideas to begin to help educate the community on the dangers glyphosate in herbicides - in order to get a more comprehensive ban ordinance passed, I feel we are going to have to do a lot of community outreach:

- 1) get an EAC table at the remaining three (3) IOP Farmer's Market events and have literature/ hand -outs about the dangers glyphosate poses to humans, animals and pollinators
- 2) have one of the EAC committee members (preferably Eric) write editorial articles to be submitted to both the Island Eye News and the Island Vibe about our work on ordinances banning glyphosate.

Initiative	Status	Next Step
Add an annual eco-themed event to the Recreation Department's annual calendar.	Investigating	Doug to ask Rec Center about an Earthday event
Adjust packaging ordinances to close loopholes and align with neighboring municipalities.	Investigating	Await Green Group Report Card
Conduct a comprehensive water quality assessment.	Ongoing	Address during July Meeting
Develop a public education program on resilient strategies.	Investigating	Discuss how to use city newsletter
Develop plan to increase awareness of challenges and solutions that includes "Do No Harm" messaging for residents, visitors, developers and	Investigating	Doug to get more context
Educate the owners of septic systems in the proper maintenance and encourage owners to have their septic systems checked and serviced according to established standards		
Encourage and provide incentives for residents, businesses, developers, Wild Dunes Resort and Homeowner Associations (HOA's) to increase native plants on residential and commercial properties.		
Facilitate more programming focused on understanding and protecting our natural environment (e.g. beach/saltmarsh/waterways, native plants, native and endangered species).		
Include in Request for Proposals (RFPs) for landscaping.		
Involve public in South Carolina Aquarium's Searise sign project.		
Join the South Atlantic Salt Marsh Initiative (SASMI).		
Monitor DHEC/OCRM testing of ocean waters impacting the island		
More local promotions with links/QR codes pointing to iop.net "Beach Rules" – including tie-ins with Beach Shuttle.		
Partner with Chamber of Commerce and Isle of Palms Cleanup Crew on workshops for businesses on sustainability practices.		
Recruit volunteer neighborhood captains for regular cleanups of non-commercial sections of beach and island's interior.		
Secure more related media coverage.		
The City should continue to support tree-planting programs along streets and develop a long-term plan which prioritizes streets and identifies the types of trees to be used		
With guidance from local experts, emphasize native plants and gardens at all city parks and properties.		
Establish educational and volunteer programs to promote community involvement.		

Update on Interpretive Sign Project:

Susan [Hill Smith] and Laura [Lovins] met with Mike Shuler, owner of the IOP Marina, and Scott Toole on 6/23, to give him the overview of the interpretive sign project at the City pier. We are pleased to let you know that Mike has committed \$5000 towards the project.

Susan and Laura then met with Dave Lorenz, co-owner of Islander 71 on 6/24 to give him the overview, and ask for a \$5000 donation/commitment to the project. He is in the process of discussing it with Jon Bushnell, his partner, and we are hopeful to have a commitment from them this week.

In addition, Susan and Laura are meeting with Kaitlyn Hackathorn, graphic designer for the Botany Bay WMA/Heritage Preserve, on 7/16, to discuss her help with doing the graphic artwork for the interpretive signs.