



ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

4:00pm, Thursday, August 14, 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, Sean Popson, Todd Murphy

Absent: Council Member Miars

Staff Present: Administrator Kerr, Asst. Director Asero

2. Approval of previous meeting's minutes

MOTION: Ms. Popson made a motion to approve the minutes of the July 10, 2025 meetings, and Ms. Pringle seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Citizen's Comments

Ms. Marianne Chalmers read from an email she sent to City Council: "I'm writing to share my observations about the recent placement of black trash cans at the ocean end of the 25th beach access. Living nearby, I've seen a clear and concerning impact on the surrounding dunes and beach grasses. Since the placement of the black cans at this location I've observed a sharp increase in people walking into and on the dunes- often to dispose of trash, store shoes, change clothes, or even use the area as a bathroom. Discarded items like broken chairs, umbrellas, and tents are now being left directly on the dunes, damaging the fragile grasses that protect our shoreline. I've learned there's discussion of building a corral for broken items at the ocean side. This will only magnify the problem- inviting more foot traffic and giving coyotes which have historically lived in these dunes, a perfect hiding spot. That creates not only environmental harm, but a safety risk for residents, visitors, and pets. I strongly recommend placing such a structure on the street side, away from the dunes, to prevent harm. I've been documenting these changes for several months and have attached a few photos here. I'd be happy to provide the full set to anyone interested. The longer the trash cans remain where they are, the greater the damage- and some of it may be irreversible. This small change will protect the fragile ecosystem, maintain safety and preserve the natural beauty residents and visitors enjoy."

Members of the volunteer group Mujeres Latinas came before the Committee to share the trash and toy bins they are proposing be placed at key beach access paths. Haydee Irizarary said the toy boxes could be on the beach for the beach season, and the trash buckets and bins would remain year round. Director Kerr said there have been intentional efforts made to keep things off

the beach, so these items would need to be behind the dunes. Ms. Lovins would like this issue to be on the September agenda.

Linda Rowe from the SC Aquarium spoke in support of this effort to keep the beach clean.

Susan Smith spoke briefly about the bucket trees in place on Folly Beach.

4. Old Business

A. Recommendations Matrix

Administrator Kerr said a space for an Earth Day event has been added to the Recreation Center calendar for 2026. He will get the specific date from Director Ferrell. The Committee will need to plan the event.

Administrator Kerr shared that he spoke to the IOP Chamber of Commerce who has reached out to the island restaurants about the possibility of them only giving out straws when asked. He will report the feedback from the restaurants to the Committee.

Mr. Cicora asked how a public education program related to sea level rise and resilient strategies could be developed. He shared an email from Susan Smith regarding such programming. Mr. Cicora wondered how to bring more public awareness to the City's resiliency projects such as the Waterway Boulevard path improvements.

Mr. Murphy said his interpretation of that recommendation was to help individuals understand what resiliency strategies they can implement in their own lives, such as installing a rain garden in their yard.

Administrator Kerr said that too much information can become "white noise" to the public. He said pushing out information about the City's resiliency efforts is part of the PR Officer's job and will also be part of the work for the Resilience Officer, when that position is filled.

Mr. Cicora will change the recommendation status to say the Committee will explore using the website to promote and educate the public about the Sea Level Rise Adaptation Plan.

Ms. Lovins will attend the South Atlantic Salt Marsh Initiative meeting next week.

The Committee discussed ways in which to educate the public about ways in which they can protect the beach. Several ideas, including the Good Neighbor brochure discussed earlier in the year, were considered.

B. Water Quality Testing

Referencing the water quality testing information in the meeting packet, Ms. Lovins detailed the costs involved in testing the water, noting that the outcome of the first test will indicate whether further DNA testing is necessary.

MOTION: Mr. Murphy made a motion to approve the expenditure of up to \$6,780 for Fluidian and Lumin Ultra water quality testing on the island. Ms. Popson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

5. New Business -- none

EAC Participation at the Farmer's Market

Ms. Lovins asked if anyone could cover the EAC table at the next Farmer's Market. She will be attending a meeting of the Salt Marsh Initiative. She shared a poster of ideas residents could reference to make their yards more eco-friendly.

Director Kerr said that the City received a grant for more composting bins. He will get them for next month's Farmer's Market.

6. Miscellaneous Business

The next meeting of the Environmental Advisory Committee is scheduled for Thursday, September 11, 2025 at 4pm.

7. Adjournment

Ms. Pringle made a motion to adjourn, and Ms. Popson seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 5:12pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Nicole DeNeane
City Clerk