Beach Preservation Committee
9:00am, Thursday, June 4, 2026
City Hall Council Chambers
1207 Palm Boulevard, Isle of Palms, SC

MINUTES

1. **Roll Call**

Present: Dietmar Ostermann, Alice Bova Wendi Pasterik, Dan Slotchiver, John Schilling, Council Member Cohen

Staff Present: Administrator Kerr, Deputy Administrator Kuester

2. **Citizen's Comments**

City Clerk DeNeane read a citizen's comment sent via email. That email is attached to these minutes.

3. **Approval of previous meeting's minutes – May 7, 2026**

MOTION: Mr. Slotchiver made a motion to approve, and Ms. Pasterik seconded the motion. The minutes of the May 7, 2026 meeting passed unanimously.

4. **Old Business**

A. **Alternative analysis progress update with Foth/Olsen**

Chris Creed, Evan Heeg, Zak Bedell, and Sydney Goodman of Foth/Olsen met with Committee members via Zoom to discuss minimum healthy beach conditions. Mr. Creed used their work on Hilton Head Island as an example. He noted that Hilton Head Island has not adopted a minimum healthy beach condition.

Mr. Creed said the next steps for him and his team include establishing a "study" baseline which will consider where the beach wants to be. They will recommend this adjustable line be some number of feet seaward of development to the dune crest. From there, they will develop alternatives including scope and probable quantities and prepare an initial cost analysis. The group will return to the July 2 Beach Preservation Committee meeting for an initial review of the alternatives.

Mr. Creed said they have received very positive feedback from the regulatory agencies regarding their proposed alternatives. Sand via the USACE will likely not be considered in their analysis as they are concerned about its reliability as a sand source. They view this sand as supplemental.

B. **Update on Beach Renourishment project**

Administrator Kerr said Marinex is now under contract with the City for the maximum amount of sand. Marinex will work around the two properties that have not signed easements. The escrow agreement and funds are in place.

Staff has been meeting with Marinex regarding staging, and they anticipate mobilization to begin soon. Sand is expected to begin arriving mid-to-late July. Staff is also working on a predictive tool for the City's website so residents and visitors can estimate where the project will be.

Administrator Kerr reported that USACE is still working through the costs of having the mud balls removed on the south end of the island.

The Committee briefly discussed building some sort of dune protection at the properties where easements were not given.

5. **New Business**

NOTE: Due to a change in Dr. Elko's schedule, the Committee added in a conversation about the beach monitoring report and then held a discussion with the City's State lobbyists. Dr. Elko joined the meeting at the end for a discussion about the benefits of sand fencing and vegetation.

A. **Discussion of Hilton Head Island's beach monitoring report**

Mr. Schilling detailed what he likes about the beach monitoring report done by Foth/Olsen for Hilton Head Island. Mr. Ostermann asked Mr. Schilling to prepare a recommendation for the Committee to consider at their July meeting.

Mr. Schilling will send his thoughts to Administrator Kerr who will share them with Mr. Traynum to determine what changes are feasible.

B. **Discussion of State support for beach nourishment- Jim Merrill, Tompkins, Thompson & Brown Government Affairs**

Warren Thompkins and Campbell Mims spoke with the Committee about their efforts at the State level on behalf of the City of Isle of Palms.

Mr. Thompkins said somewhere between $7.5 million and $10 million will be set aside in the next State budget for beach concerns. He stated they would continue to seek funds for beach maintenance while also working to secure a permanent funding source for beach-related concerns.

Mr. Thompkins noted that changes to ATAX laws are problematic. They are seeking flexibility to allow coastal communities to find new sources of revenue to support beach maintenance. He hopes the four counties with beaches will work together on this issue.

Administrator Kerr will forward City Council's directives to the lobbyists to the Committee. He also explained to the Committee how the City received funding from SCPRT for the beach renourishment, noting the possibility of receiving more.

Mr. Thompkins said they work to secure funds for other City projects and capital purchases so that the City can redirect their funds to beach management.

Mr. Ostermann asked if the City has asked the lobbyists to "change this ridiculous classification of Wild Dunes as a closed beach." Administrator Kerr said they have not asked them to do that, but he will speak with City Council about it.

C. **Discussion of benefits of sand fencing and vegetation- Nicole Elko, Elko Coastal Consulting**

Dr. Nicole Elko joined the Committee to discuss the benefits of sand fencing and vegetation. Administrator Kerr noted that the City's plan for fencing and vegetation has not been fully developed yet. There is $75,000 outside of the project budget to cover these expenses. Dr. Elko stated that the installation of both is important and should be done immediately.

Administrator Kerr stated that a prior concern about sand fencing is the debris that it creates during storms. Dr. Elko explained that the intent of the fencing is to disappear into the dune as it grows while the vegetation will continue to grow up through the dune. She said roping and posts can help with protecting the vegetation. She prefers beach walkovers to beach paths. Administrator Kerr shared that the City secures beach walkovers through grants, and they are not part of this renourishment project.

Discussion ensued about the types of vegetation, options for their placement, and the best time to plant them.

6. **Miscellaneous Business**

Mr. Slotchiver asked when City Council will discuss becoming a federally-managed beach. Administrator Kerr said they City received noticed that the Federal government will fund $750,000 towards the study, and City Council will be discussing its matching portion later this month. The expense is not currently budgeted for FY27. Further discussion on the matter will take place within the Committee should City Council opt to move forward with this option.

The next meeting will include another update from Foth/Olsen, a discussion with the City's Federal lobbyist, and Mr. Schilling's recommendations to change the beach monitoring report.

The next meeting of the Beach Preservation Committee will be Thursday, July 2, 2026 at 8:30am.

7. **Adjournment**

Ms. Paterik made a motion to adjourn the meeting, and Mr. Schilling seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 11:26am.

Respectfully submitted,

Nicole DeNeane
City Clerk