

The Jekyll Island State Park Authority (JIA) and Committees met in Public Session on Tuesday, September 15, 2020 in the Jekyll Island Convention Center and broadcasted to the public via YouTube.

Members Present: Mr. Joseph B. Wilkinson, Jr., Chairman
Mr. Bob Krueger, Vice Chairman
Mr. Bill Gross, Secretary/Treasurer
Mr. Trip Tollison
Ms. Joy Burch-Meeks
Commissioner Mark Williams
Dr. Buster Evans
Mr. Glen Willard
Mr. Dale Atkins

Key Staff Present: Ben Carswell, Director of Conservation
Marjorie Johnson, Chief Accounting Officer
Kate Harris, Director of Strategic Partnerships
Jones Hooks, Executive Director
Melissa Cruthirds, General Counsel
Noel Jensen, Chief Operations Officer
Michelle Webb, Executive Assistant

Various members of the public, JIA staff, and press were present and listened live via broadcast on YouTube.

Chairman Wilkinson called the committee sessions to order at approximately 9:38 a.m., introduced those participating via teleconference, and confirmed a quorum.

The roll was called. All members were present except Commissioner Williams who joined a few minutes into the meeting.

I. Historic Preservation/Conservation Committee

A. Ben Carswell, Director of Conservation introduced Dr. Rob Brown of Goodwyn, Mills, and Cawood (GMC) who presented the Glynn Shoreline Protection Plan. The Glynn Shoreline Protection Plan is a collaborative project with the City of Brunswick, Glynn County, and Jekyll Island. This presentation is a required element of the grant funding aspect of the project. Dr. Brown presented the Shoreline Assessment and Implementation Resiliency Plan which included: a timeline of weather events and grants, a review of the objectives of the plan, and information about the phases of the project.

There were no questions from the Board and no public comments.

II. Finance Committee

A. Mr. Bill Gross, Finance Committee Chair, reviewed the August financials as included in the Board materials. He reported revenue from parking fees were up this month, and in fact, exceeded year to date from the previous year for the first time. However, the Convention Center continued to show a loss due to lack of business.

Mr. Hooks commented the net operating cash, even though revenues are over budget, show that business is slower than last year. The fiscal concerns for the Authority are still

significant, especially given the lack of convention business.

A. Ms. Johnson requested approval of two leases for the golf course maintenance equipment. The previous lease of 40 years was coming to an end. The new leases will be for two pieces of used equipment at \$510.29 per a month and 15 pieces of new equipment for \$6,627.56 per a month. Both leases would begin October 1, 2020. The motion to approve the Golf Course Maintenance Equipment Leases was made by Mr. Krueger and seconded by Dr. Evans. The request was unanimously approved without objection.

B. Ms. Johnson then updated the Board regarding the State of Georgia Audits of the review of annual business leases as well as the annual JIA audit report. The report was different this year as it was done remotely due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The business lease audit is done for businesses on a rotating basis and looks at base rent, percentage rent payments, proof of insurance, security deposits, and capital reserves (as required). State findings showed approx. \$11,000 due to the Jekyll Island Authority. While Mr. Hooks complimented the accounting team for their work and for receiving an excellent report from the State, he discussed businesses who had been audited and issues found. The JIA will be working with businesses to correct issues, payments, and missing documentation. Ms. Johnson reminded the Board that a copy of the audit reports was both in their blue folders and would be emailed to each the Board members, as required by the State.

There were no public comments.

IV. Marketing Committee

A. Ms. Harris, Director of Strategic Partnerships delivered a report from the Marketing Department. Ms. Harris discussed the changing nature of the meeting industry landscape, which was starting to meet again and showed great booking numbers for 2021 calendar year. Motorcoach business was continuing to shift from international tours to more domestic trips. Therefore, Jekyll was looking to position itself as a more pivotal piece instead of just a day trip. Sales marketing staff have been making sure to connect to business partners and event planners as long term investments.

There were no questions from the board and there were no public comments.

V. Legislative Committee

Mr. Tollison, Chair of the Legislative Committee highlighted in his report the two projects which were put forward to the State of Georgia as Fiscal Year 2022 Funding Requests: the Jekyll Island Campground Expansion and the Public Safety Complex. These projects equaled total of \$5.14 million dollars in requested state funding. Mr. Tollison related to the Board the Jekyll Island Campground extension was "shovel ready". He was hopeful to have these two projects incorporated into the Governor's budget.

Mr. Hooks reminded the Board these projects were unsuccessfully submitted last year. The Campground Expansion project had successfully passed through the House Appropriations Committee and into the House budget, but then did not make it through the Senate with the death of Senator Hill and the arrival of the COVID crisis. Mr. Hooks related that Appropriations Chair England was supportive of these projects, but funding would be much easier to acquire if they were included in the Governor's budget. Mr. Hooks also reminded the Board of their action last year reclassifying land from the 2014 Master

Plan for these two projects. Mr. Hooks was hopeful that if the JIA budgets allowed, the Board would see design work for the Public Safety building in the new year.

There were no public comments.

VI. Committee of the Whole

A. The Golf Master Plan Final Presentation was delivered by Troy Vincent, of Vincent Design. The presentation, as included in the meeting materials, started with Jekyll Island facts, information about the National Golf Foundation Assessment, the Master Plan objectives, JIA priorities, and public response highlights. The next part of the presentation focused on the recommended Golf Master Plan which included Master Plan Opportunities and Master Plan Acreage Comparison – concepts vs. recommended plan. Then Mr. Vincent discussed the Master Plan components: the golf courses, conservation areas, development areas, the Master Plan Advantage, golf course phasing, the new Great Dunes Course concept, Pine Lakes concept, new par 3 course, and the Indian Mound 9-hole concept. Then the cost estimates of existing golf course and master plan golf course implementation was presented. Finally, the program element examples showed repurposed existing clubhouse, an enhanced entrance, golf lodge and villas, an assisted and independent living facility, public green space, nature amenities, and moving forward the next steps JIA may consider.

The Board members had a number of questions. First, Mr. Gross asked if the recommendations were adopted; what the number of rounds or projected revenue would be. Mr. Vincent answered that while projections had not been run, there was a significant demand for classic golf courses. He felt that many people who travel for golf were bypassing Jekyll. He felt this was a good first phase because he predicted a significant amount of promotion would be gained by word of mouth.

Mr. Gross then asked about the efficiency savings from reduced maintenance of the proposed smaller area. Mr. Vincent stated that the current 63 holes of golf were being maintained below standards, and a reduction in golf would allow a better alignment of what costs should be (despite the amazing work and effort of the JIA Golf Course Maintenance team).

Mr. Gross also asked if Vincent Design would be providing a pro forma on the estimated performance with the proposed improvements. Mr. Vincent stated no, however a final report would be produced. Mr. Hooks stated some of that information could be found in the National Golf Foundation report, as that study was looking more at operations than the Vincent Design Master Plan team.

Mr. Krueger asked about the anticipated cost to maintain the current facility. Mr. Vincent stated that the current staffing was 16 people for 63 holes of golf, while usually there are 16 people to 18 holes of golf. He is amazed at what the Golf Course Maintenance team had been able to do with the limited staff and resources. Mr. Hooks stated improvements such as the newly approved equipment voted on earlier in the meeting will help. However, he emphasized that there were more golf holes than JIA can maintain at a proper level. However, the choice of what direction golf should take is the decision of the Board.

Mr. Krueger felt that with no action, golf would continue to decline. Mr. Vincent stated that the current level of use was not sustaining. Mr. Vincent felt with all the golf history on Jekyll Island, it should continue.

Commissioner Williams asked the fee structure. Mr. Hooks explained some of the current structure. Mr. Vincent stated he had seen similar pushes at municipal golf courses to delay upgrades to maintain lower user fees. He had seen several solutions to these concerns including freezing membership costs for those who are members before the upgrades and providing lower rates for individuals who live in a certain mile radius. Because of the state of the golf course, and the amount of subsidy from the authority, there is room for creativity in pricing. Mr. Hooks spoke to the possibility of dynamic pricing for individuals and the possibility of charging differently for different golf experiences such as casual vs. competitive. Mr. Vincent confirmed this kind of pricing was not uncommon.

Mr. Jensen stated that timely action was required on a number of issues such as the aging irrigation system on Great Dunes and the mutated grasses on the Pine Lakes course. He remarked that with the significant amount of deferred maintenance currently hanging over the courses, small fixes over time may result in the same cost as the proposed improvements.

Dr. Evans stated he felt that the Vincent design had done a good job addressing many of the concerns raised by disparate groups of people who want different things from golf. Mr. Hooks reassured that with changes in the golf courses, an increase in marketing would ensue.

Mr. Hooks then discussed the next steps. It was his intention to pull together data from both previous studies and new sources. However, Mr. Hooks stated that there is currently no money allocated to the project, and no defined time frame. Mr. Hooks clarified that the golf course was running at a deficit of \$600,000 to \$675,000. Mr. Gross looked forward to the possibility of financing these changes to create a more positive financial situation. There were no further questions from the Board.

The Board recessed for a 7-minute break.

B. Melissa Cruthirds introduced the second reading of O-2020-3, False Alarms which was being considered for adoption. This ordinance was written to address the concern of false alarms pulling safety resources and follows other municipalities examples. She reported there had been a single public comment which was concerned about both the amount of the fines and about fines being levied against residential rental owners. Ms. Cruthirds stated residential rental owners had not been an issue thus far, and her research showed that other municipalities did not differentiate between residential and commercial properties in regard to fines. Dennis Gaily, Director of Public Safety reported he had already seen a reduction in false alarms with the introduction of this ordinance. He stated the amount of the fines were designed to be slightly higher than costs of repairing faulty alarm systems. He felt the discretion built into the ordinance allowed for reasonable administration.

Dr. Evans requested to change the ordinance Sec. 12-27 (d) penalties assessed for each violation within a 12-month period lines 88 through 90 to have the penalties for the third false alarm be set at \$150, the fourth false alarm be set at \$300, and after the fourth false alarm the fine be set at \$500. The Board agreed to the revision. The motion to adopt the ordinance as revised was made by Dr. Evans. The motion was seconded by Mr. Krueger. The motion as amended was unanimously approved.

C. Ms. Cruthirds also presented revisions to Jekyll Island Authority Board By-Laws and other policies. The bylaws are contained in the policy manual, which were last updated in 2018. Multiple revisions were proposed, some grammatical and some to tighten language and make wording more concise. Some revisions clarified the Authorities role and responsibilities with the Board and Executive Director.

Mr. Hooks clarified these changes had been delivered to the board in advance of the meeting and that several of the changes were just reorganizations of information from one page to another. Other proposed changes simply update the document to administrative functions, such as the possession of the seal. Finally, this revision proposes the change of the ability to call a regular meeting in three calendar days rather than five calendar days, with consultation of the chair, offering a little more flexibility. Mr. Krueger moved to adopt the revisions to the Jekyll Island Authority Board By-Laws and other policies. The motion was seconded by Mr. Gross. The motion was unanimously approved.

D. Mr. Jensen introduced item regarding the Authorizing Notice of Proposed Amendment request for the Master Plan Amendment for the Georgia Power Substation. He explained that due to the powerline upgrade performed by Georgia Power, a new substation is needed to provide more reliable power. Mr. Dialo Cartwright of Georgia Power then spoke to the Board. He stated that reclassifying land and building a substation at this time would be a good long-term solution for Jekyll's future. Ms. Cruthirds spoke to the legal aspects of the master plan amendment process. After last year's master plan amendments, there was 77 acres able to be developed on Jekyll Island. Of the 77 acres, the requested 2.59 acres will be allotted from 46 acres set aside for "public health, public safety, or public recreation". Ms. Cruthirds also noted that the 0.2043 acres of land the current Georgia Power substation sits on would be returned to the Jekyll Island Authority for reclassification back to undeveloped land. The suggested action of today would be the notification of state authorities of the proposed Master Plan reclassification. The next step in the process would be a public hearing which had been set for October 6th at 5 p.m. in the Jekyll Island Convention Center. Public comment was also available online. The Board would vote on this Master Plan Amendment in December if there were no objections from the Jekyll Island-State Park Authority Legislative Oversight Committee. Commissioner Williams asked if this amendment needed to go through the State Properties Commission as well, and Ms. Cruthirds answered no. The motion to approve was made by Mr. Krueger and seconded by Mr. Gross. The motion was unanimously approved.

E. Mr. Jensen then briefed the Board about the engineering and installation design of a new slide complex for Summer Waves Water Park. He reminded the Board of the previous approved acquisition of a water slide complex (at considerable savings) from a closed Pooler water park. The slide had been moved to Jekyll Island, but funding to engineer and install the new equipment was cut from the budget due to COVID-19. The newly phased project had received a financially favorable quote for the engineering from the same firm that did the original engineering in Pooler. If approved, the engineering would give the JIA a much more accurate assessment of how much the completed project will cost, how much of the project can be done in-house, and take the first steps to opening this attraction for the next season. Staff requested \$67,775 for geotechnical analysis, engineering, and installation of the new Summer Waves Slide Complex and Splash Pad extension (which came free with the purchase of the slide). Mr. Gross moved to approve the request. The motion was seconded by Mr. Krueger. The motion was unanimously approved.

F. Mr. Jensen also reviewed the proposed resolution R-2020-4 to accept Georgia Department of Transportation (GADOT) contract for Jekyll Island Airport. The resolution was to accept the reimbursement of costs up to \$460,767.90 for electrical rehabilitation, pavement rejuvenation, and remarking at the Jekyll Island Airport. With an additional funds up to \$437,743.25 from the FAA and up to \$23,024.65 in state funding, the local match was only \$7,095.10 from Jekyll Island. This resolution would authorize both the matching fund and the ability of the Chairman, Attorney, and Executive Director to sign documents for this project. Dr. Evans moved to adopt this resolution which was seconded by Mr. Krueger. The motion was unanimously approved.

G. Mr. Hooks presented the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) Application Scope Change Letter. He stated that in 2016 the Jekyll Island Authority had received a grant to create a bike path to go from the Jekyll Island Bridge to the Welcome Center. However, after all the engineering requirements were met, the bike path was unable to be fully constructed leaving the path unfished. Jekyll Island was approved to apply for a second grant to extend the bike path from the current stopping point to the Welcome Center and then all the way to the end of the causeway to the intersection of Highway 17. However, it was brought to our attention by the TAP administrators the Cedar Creek Bridge was not wide enough to accommodate the originally planned 10' wide multipurpose path. Original suggestions were to widen the bridge to accommodate the path or build a separate pedestrian bridge, both of which were not fiscally viable. In consultation with GADOT, it was agreed that the scope of the project could be modified from a 10' multipurpose path to an 8' wide bike path which would fit on the existing bridge at no additional cost. Mr. Krueger moved to approve the scope change letter, and the motioned was seconded by Mr. Gross. The motion was unanimously approved.

H. Mr. Hooks gave the Executive Director's Report. First, he reported on the recent ransomware attack JIA had experienced last Thursday. He reported this intentional attack by the perpetrators had been quickly and efficiently mitigated by Coastal Computer Consulting, the third-party IT vendor for the JIA. A recent Zoom call with various state authorities confirmed Coastal Computers' excellent work, knowledge, and security practices compliant and sometimes exceeded state standards. Mr. Hooks reported that the Authority was about 90% back to normal. The Authority had been contacted by the perpetrators, but to date were uncertain about their demands. He reported that additional security will be added following this incident. Mr. Hooks reported that he would keep the Board updated about this situation.

Next, Mr. Hooks announced to the Board that the Chairman had approved the addition of a November meeting on Tuesday, November 17. This meeting was in the addition the previously scheduled December 8 meeting.

The full \$2.2 million of Special Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) money had been received from Glynn County and the authority will be moving forward with the final projects. The small parking nodes around the island as advocated in the carrying capacity study as well as other small venue improvements will be distributed for bids.

Also, work on beach crossovers continued. There was a new a Beach Crossover Construction webpage to provide updates. Three of the crossovers will now have Americans with Disabilities Act access.

The Authority had also been notified Jekyll Island had been declared a Census Designated Place. This was great news as it will provide census data specific to Jekyll Island for the first time.

Mr. Hooks confirmed the FY 2021 Strategic Plan and funding requests were sent to the State of Georgia by the required deadline.

Finally, Mr. Hooks updated the Board about the successful tennis and youth golf tournaments on the island.

I. Mr. Wilkinson stated in the Chairman's Comments how proud he was of the staff and how grateful he was for their service.

There were no public comments.

The Board moved directly into the Board Meeting Agenda.

The Jekyll Island State Park Authority (JIA) Board Meeting
September 15, 2020

Chairman Wilkinson opened the JIA board meeting and announced there was still a quorum.

1. Commissioner Williams moved to approve the minutes of the August 18, 2020 Board Meeting as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Krueger. There was no discussion and the minutes were approved without objection.
2. Approval of the Golf Course Maintenance Equipment Leases, a recommendation from the Finance Committee was adopted unanimously.
3. A recommendation from the Committee of the Whole to adopt ordinance O-2020-3, False Alarms was adopted unanimously.
4. A recommendation from the Committee of the Whole to approve revisions to Jekyll Island Authority Board By-Laws and other policies as included in the meeting materials were adopted unanimously.
5. A recommendation from the Committee of the Whole to authorize sending notice of a proposed amendment of the Master Plan for a Georgia Power substation to the required state officials was adopted unanimously.
6. A recommendation from the Committee of the Whole to approve engineering and installation design of the new slide complex for Summer Waves Water Park was adopted unanimously.
7. A recommendation from the Committee of the Whole to adopt resolution R-2020-4 to accept the Georgia Department of Transportation (GADOT) contract for Jekyll Island Airport was adopted unanimously.
8. A recommendation from the Committee of the Whole to approve Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) Application Scope Change Letter was adopted unanimously.

The motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Kruger and seconded by Mr. Gross. There was no objection to the motion and the meeting adjourned at 12:14 p.m.