

JEKYLL ISLAND – STATE PARK AUTHORITY
December 14, 2021 –Approved Minutes

The Jekyll Island State Park Authority (JIA) and Committees met in Public Session on Tuesday, December 14, 2021 at the Jekyll Island Convention Center and via teleconference.

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

Members Absent: Mr. Trip Tollison

Key Staff Present: Jones Hooks, Executive Director
Noel Jensen, Deputy Executive Director
Marjorie Johnson, Chief Accounting Officer
Jenna Johnson, Human Resources Director
Melissa Cruthirds, General Counsel
Alexa Hawkins, Director of Marketing and Communications
Ben Carswell, Director of Conservation and Sustainability
Yank Moore, Natural Resources Manager
Maria Humphrey, Lease Manager
Anna Trapp, Executive Assistant

Various members of the public, JIA staff, and press were also present.

Chairman Wilkinson called the committee session to order at 9:31 a.m. Roll was called for members attending in person and those attending via teleconference.

There were two public comments received online for this meeting. A copy of the full comment was given to each Board member and becomes part of the permanent record.

- Jon Stevenson – Master Plan Update
- Susan Inman, Coastal Advocate with One Hundred Miles – Master Plan Update Petition

I. Historic Preservation/Conservation Committee

A. Yank Moore, Natural Resources Manager, provided an update on the Coastal Incentive Grant restoration project at Forston Pond. Moore explained that Forston Pond, a tidal marsh fragment, persisted in a chronically impaired state resulting in minimal tidal flushing, poor water quality, and overall low ecosystem health. To improve the tidal flushing, almost thirty yards of debris was removed. This debris included concrete and rubble from a previous bank stabilization, which was replaced with a living shoreline. Additionally, a culvert was replaced. The former culvert was too small and positioned too high for water to move through efficiently during the typical tidal cycle. The replacement culvert is larger and positioned at stream level, improving water flow.

There was one public comment:

- Bev Hopkins thanked Mr. Moore for the update and noted she looks forward to the positive impacts this project will bring.

II. Finance Committee

- A. Mr. Bill Gross, Finance Committee Chair summarized the November Financials including an overview of Revenues, Expenses, Net Operating Cash, Traffic Statistics, and Hotel Statistics.
- Revenues were \$2,374,569.
 - Expenses were \$1,976,648.
 - Net Operating Cash Income was \$397,921.
 - Total Traffic Counts were 82,455 vehicles.
 - Hotel Revenues were reported at \$3.6 million with a 52.2% Occupancy Rate.
- B. Marjorie Johnson, Chief Accounting Officer, presented the request for approval of the Public Safety Officials and First Responder Supplement grant, made available through the Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Fund and the Georgia Office of Planning and Budget. She explained the grant provides a \$1,000 pay supplement to JIA's ten full-time Public Safety Officials and First Responders. The JIA will make the payments through the normal payroll process, and then receive reimbursement for the \$1000.00 supplement per first responder plus the cost of FICA taxes. The total reimbursable amount from this grant equals \$10,765.

A motion to recommend approval of Firefighter Supplemental Pay Grant was made by Mr. Krueger and seconded by Dr. Evans. The motion carried unanimously.

There were no public comments.

II. Human Resources Committee

- A. Jenna Johnson, Director of Human Resources presented the request for approval of the Loss Prevention Policy Update. This update provides additional guidance on the expectation of all JIA employees to cooperate with any potential employee theft investigation. Additionally, it clarifies that appropriate JIA personnel are expected to participate in the prosecution of any employee theft investigations.

A motion to recommend approval of the Loss Prevention Policy Update was made by Ms. Burch-Meeks and seconded by Mr. Krueger. The motion carried unanimously.

IV. Marketing Committee

- A. Alexa Hawkins, Director of Marketing and Communications, presented the Marketing Department Report. Her report focused on Jekyll Island State Park Authority's 75th Anniversary. She highlighted a few of the events and activities planned for the yearlong celebration:
- The 75th Soiree on January 28, 2022 will kick off the celebratory year. This event is in conjunction with the Friends of Historic Jekyll Island.
 - On March 5, 2022, the Georgia Sandman will create a unique sand sculpture.
 - A vintage trailer show to be held on April 27, 2022 at the campgrounds.
 - A Beach Village Block Party on August 6, 2022 will be an end-of- summer celebration with vintage cars, throwback musical performances, and family activities.
 - Infusions with other signature events such as the Shrimp & Grits Festival.

Hawkins also noted that new brand advertising will be rolled out in January including a “Fabulous Jekyll Island” sign reiteration on the causeway and updated branding on all digital assets.

There was one public comment.

- Al Tate announced that the Jekyll Singers would be performing at the Great Dunes Park after the Board Meeting at 3:00 PM.

VI. Committee of the Whole

A. Melissa Cruthirds, General Counsel, opened the discussion of the 2021 Update to the 2014 Master Plan by informing the Board that neither staff nor the Chairman of the Board had received any objections to the update from the Legislative Oversight committee. She then introduced Leigh Askew Elkins from UGA’s Carl Vinson Institute to provide an overview of the Master Plan Update.

Elkins highlighted the following points and aspects of the 2021 Master Plan Update:

- The Plan Update was formed through the input of many stakeholders including residents, visitors, JIA staff, and various experts.
- The 2021 Update primarily focuses on the importance of balancing capacity on Jekyll Island, after the revitalization that followed the 2014 plan.
- The Master Plan Update addresses land use on Jekyll, recognizing the importance of limiting residential and commercial development on Jekyll Island. The 2021 Update calls for no new development, and it relies on the 2018 Jekyll Island Carrying Capacity and Infrastructure Assessment.
- The update includes recommendations and goals for the same topics explored in the 2014 plan: Economic Sustainability, Historic and Cultural Resources, Natural Resources, Recreation, and Transportation, Infrastructure, and Municipal Services.
- The plan includes mapping updates which show the reduction of overall land available for development by approximately fifteen acres.
- Four appendices are included in the plan:
 - Appendix A will be included in the print copy of the plan and provides a summary of the five-year goals.
 - Appendix B includes the June 16th town hall report and will be available online.
 - Appendix C includes the online survey responses and will be available online.
 - Appendix D includes public comments received following the October 2021 JIA Board meeting and will be available online.

Jones Hooks, Executive Director, addressed some of the public discussions revolving around the Master Plan Update, including the circulated misinformation and concerns that seem to be associated more so with the proposed Golf Master Plan, which Hooks noted should have been called the “Golf Improvement Strategy” rather than the “Golf Master Plan” to prevent any potential confusion.

Hooks further commented on how the JIA has balanced studies and action since the 2014 Master Plan and noted that the 2014 Master Plan focused on determining acreage and limiting development potential, while the 2021 Update is about managing capacity. He noted that the Authority has utilized the Capacity Study since 2018 to make decisions on various aspects of Jekyll Island including: the gate system, bike path improvements, water and sewer improvements, dynamic pricing for events, strategic scheduling of events over time, the

campground expansion, investments into Summer Waves to improve the guest experience, and continuing to emphasize the natural character of Jekyll Island.

Hooks further highlighted the significance of having a five-year plan opposed to a ten or fifteen-year plan, which allows for more frequent public processes overtime to assess what should be accomplished. Lastly, he commented on the importance of redesignating the 8.54 acres of Coastal Prairie to undeveloped land and praised the accomplishment of protecting those lands.

Cruthirds then presented R-2021-7, the resolution adopting the 2021 Update to the 2014 Master Plan for consideration. She summarized the timeline of the requirements for the proposed update including:

- June 16, 2021 - Public Town Hall
- September 21, 2021
 - Initial Draft was presented at a public meeting of the Board, and the Board authorized transmittal of the draft to the required State Entities
 - Notice to media distributed regarding proposed 2021 Update, Public Hearing details, instructions on how to submit public comments, and details for December 14 Board meeting.
- Public Comments were received online from September 21st to October 18th
- September 22, 2021 - Legal Notices were published in The Brunswick News and the Fulton Daily Report
- September 27, 2021 – Initial draft sent to the Legislative Oversight Committee and other required state entities
- October 5, 2021 – Revised update posted to the website (changes to Appendix C)
- October 14, 2021 – A public hearing held, and public comments received
- October 25, 2021 – Revised 2021 Update sent to required state entities
- October 28, 2021 - Revised 2021 Update posted to JIA website
- November 16, 2021 – JIA Board ratified the transmittal of the revised draft

Cruthirds confirmed that all legal requirements were met and reiterated that no objections were received from the Legislative Oversight Committee.

A motion to recommend adoption of R-2021-7, the resolution adopting the 2021 Update to the 2014 Master Plan, was made by Mr. Gross and seconded by Mr. Krueger. Roll was called, and the motion carried unanimously.

B. Melissa Cruthirds, General Counsel, presented the request to change the assignment of the Holiday Inn Ground Lease from Georgia Coast Holdings, LLC to Jekyll Island Beachfront Hotel, LLC, which is an affiliate of New Castle Hotels and Resorts LLC. Cruthirds noted that the principles of the proposed lessee submitted all the required documentation and passed the Authority's background checks.

Jones Hooks, Executive Director added that Newcastle is pursuing investors through an online marketplace for investors at CrowdStreet.com.

A motion to recommend approval of the assignment of the Holiday Inn Ground Lease from Georgia Coast Holdings, LLC to Jekyll Island Beachfront Hotel, LLC was made by Mr. Krueger and seconded by Mr. Gross. The motion carried unanimously.

- C. Melissa Cruthirds, General Counsel presented the transfer of the Beach House Restaurant Ground Lease from Georgia Coast Holdings I, LLC to Jekyll Restaurant Owner, LLC. She noted as part of the transfer, the parties reviewed and agreed to several revisions to the Restaurant Ground Lease including: an increase to the base rent, stricter requirements for the lessee to obtain JIA approval when assigning this lease, defined restrictions to any closures due to remodeling, clarification that JIA approval is required prior to construction, repairs, or renovations, an increase to the lessee's reserve account deposits, and rescission of the First Amendment to the Ground Lease.

Cruthirds confirmed that the Jekyll Restaurant Owner, LLC submitted all required documentation and passed the JIA's background checks. She then presented the three voting items for the Board's consideration.

1. A motion to recommend approving the Memorandum of Understanding as to the Beach House Restaurant Ground Lease was made by Mr. Gross and seconded by Mr. Krueger. Roll was called, and the motion carried unanimously.
 2. A motion to recommend assigning the Beach House Restaurant Ground Lease from Georgia Coast Holdings I, LLC to Jekyll Restaurant Owner, LLC contingent upon execution of an Amended Lease as set forth in the Memorandum of Understanding was made by Mr. Krueger and seconded by Mr. Gross. Roll was called, and the motion carried unanimously.
 3. A motion to recommend authorizing an amended lease to be executed as to the Beach House Restaurant Ground Lease without additional Board approval so long as such amendment reflects the intention of the parties as set forth in the Memorandum of Understanding was made by Mr. Krueger and seconded by Mr. Gross. Roll was called, and the motion carried unanimously.
- D. Melissa Cruthirds, General Counsel, presented the transfer of the Beachview Club Hotel Lease from Georgia Coast Holdings II, LLC to Jekyll Hotel Owner, LLC, noting the hotel will be franchised as part of the Tapestry Collection by Hilton and a future request for a name change is anticipated. She further noted as part of the transfer, the parties reviewed and agreed to several revisions to the Hotel Ground Lease including: an increase to the base rent, a decrease to the date of the first CPI adjustment, removal of provision that disallowed an increase or decrease in base rent if the acreage under the lease changed, and a limitation on the number of rooms that can be closed during critical travel times due to renovations.

Cruthirds confirmed the principles of Jekyll Hotel Owner LLC have submitted all required documentation and passed the JIA's background checks.

Jones Hooks, Executive Director noted that no concepts or plans have been submitted to the JIA for renovations or the addition of rooms at this property at this time, and he clarified that should any such changes be requested, they would go through the Design Review Process, as have other projects.

1. A motion to recommend approving the memorandum of Understanding as to the Beachview Club Hotel Lease was made by Mr. Gross and seconded by Dr. Evans. Roll was called, and the motion carried unanimously.
2. A motion to recommend assigning the Beachview Club Hotel Ground Lease from Georgia Coast Holdings II, LLC to Jekyll Hotel Owner, LLC contingent upon execution of an Amended Lease as set forth in the Memorandum of Understanding was made by Mr.

Krueger and seconded by Mr. Gross. Roll was called, and the motion carried unanimously.

3. A motion to recommend authorizing an amended lease to be executed as to the Beachview Club Hotel Lease without additional board approval so long as such amendment reflects the intention of the parties as set forth in the Memorandum of Understanding was made by Mr. Krueger and seconded by Mr. Gross. Roll was called, and the motion carried unanimously.

E. Maria Humphrey, Lease Manager, presented for consideration an award of RFP #367, Vendor Services for Historic Carriage Tours and Beach Trail Rides to Golden Isles Carriage and Trail at Three Oaks Farm. JIA received two qualified bids for this RFP. The bidders were Allie Zorn Equestrian, Inc. and Golden Isles Carriage and Trail at Three Oaks Farm, the current lessee. The selection committee reviewed and ranked each of the proposals, and both candidates were invited to give a presentation to the selection committee. Through the presentation and interview process, Golden Isles Carriage and Trail at Three Oaks Farm emerged as the apparent finalist.

1. A motion to recommend awarding RFP #367 to Golden Isles Carriage and Trail at Three Oaks Farm was made by Dr. Evans and seconded by Mr. Krueger. The motion carried unanimously.

Humphrey continued, reviewing the recommended updates to the lease terms including: a monthly base rent of \$2,327.67, a percentage rent of 3% of gross revenue payable monthly, and relocation closer to the beach at Clam Creek.

2. A motion to recommend approval of the Lease with Golden Isles Carriage and Trail at Three Oaks Farm, pending contract completion and legal review was made by Mr. Gross and seconded by Dr. Evans. The motion carried unanimously.

F. Noel Jensen, Deputy Executive Director, provided an Operations Update highlighting the following topics:

- The Christmas Lights on Jekyll have increased from 250,000 in 2015 to approximately 1,000,000 in 2021. Jensen noted that the capacity of the lights is close to capping out and the goal to have a designated route through the display of lights has been reached.
- Campground Revenues have increased by \$1,000,000 since 2016, which is only one factor in the campground expansion. The long-term strategic plan for the campground on Jekyll is to balance the occupancy between short-term and long-term guests as well as creating and expanding the availability of the campground to allow a more diverse demographic the opportunity to experience the Jekyll Island Campground.
- Jekyll Island maintained the following Public Safety 2021 Ratings: a Class 5 Flood Rating, a Class 3 Insurance Services Office (ISO) Rating, and a National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Firewise USA Community Designation
- \$400,000 of the revenue received from the increased Water/Wastewater fees have been used on Water/Wastewater capital projects including: rebuilding gearboxes, installation of UV treatment, and generator improvements.
- Campground Expansion Update:
 - The public comment period for the Environmental Assessment Procedure (EPA) open until December 22, 2021.
 - The tree survey is complete and is being further assessed to determine any additional adjustments needed.

- JIA received a full set of design development drawings for the Public Safety Complex as well as the architect’s rendition of the external view of the complex.
- A company has committed to lining the Man O’ War pool at Summer Waves, and it is scheduled to be operational in May 2022.

G. Jones Hooks, Executive Director, presented the request for approval of the proposed 2022 Board Meeting Dates. These dates were provided to the Board at the November 16th meeting and no objections or conflicts were received.

A motion to recommend approval of the Proposed 2022 Board Meeting Dates was made by Mr. Gross and seconded by Mr. Gross. The motion carried unanimously.

H. Jones Hooks, Executive Director, Presented the Executive Director’s Report. He discussed the following points:

- A *Michigan Golf Journal* article on Jekyll Island golf courses
- As part of the Golf Course Improvement Strategy, the archeological study draft report is complete.
- Disappointing Destinations comparison that shows both extremes of the COVID-19 pandemic’s impact on travel.
 - A *Travel + Leisure* article titled “Course Correction” discussed a carbon-offset scheme pilot program in Crested Butte, Colorado and noted how COVID-19 spurred a rush outdoors, producing a concern for sustainability in many tourism destinations.
 - An online update from *Morning Brew* stated that due to COVID-19, only 43 international visitors visited Bali, Indonesia during the first nine months of 2021 compared to 6.3 million in 2019.
- The RCLCO Marketing Analysis Study will be updated to reflect the most up-to-date numbers and presented at a future Board meeting.
- Due to the pandemic, Camp Jekyll’s numbers have significantly decreased to one-tenth of their usual number of student participants, and most of their current business comes through third-party groups.
- The importance and significance of mandating fire extinguishers in licensed rental properties as part of the inspection process.

Melissa Cruthirds, General Counsel provided an update on the Code Revision Project, noting that initial drafts are still being reviewed and commented on by staff, a public input session is tentatively planned for January 2022, and project completion is anticipated for March or April 2022. Cruthirds stated the anticipated timeline is subject to change.

I. Mr. Wilkinson presented the Chairman Comments acknowledging the remarkable work of the JIA staff and their efforts to provide families with lifelong memories during the holiday season.

Mr. Wilkinson opened the floor to public comments. There were three public comments made during the meeting:

- Mindy Egan commented on public concern regarding overdevelopment and how the 2021 Master Plan Update should adequately address those concerns.
- David Kyler commented on the importance of adopting limits on development that can be legally enforced.

- Susan Inman commented on the Master Plan Update, asking for an amendment that specifies the future uses of developed acreage on Jekyll Island, or a moratorium on development until a land use map is developed.

The Chairman continued directly into the JIA Board Meeting.

The Jekyll Island State Park Authority (JIA) Board Meeting
December 14, 2021

The roll was called at 11:31 a.m., and all members were present either in-person or via teleconference except for Mr. Trip Tollison and Ms. Joy Burch-Meeks, who were absent.

Action Items

1. Dr. Evans moved to accept the minutes of the November 16, 2021 board meeting as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Krueger. There was no discussion, and the minutes were approved unanimously.
2. The recommendation from the Finance Committee to approve the Firefighter Supplemental Pay Grant carried by unanimous consent.
3. The recommendation from the Human Resources Committee to approve the Loss Prevention Policy Update carried by unanimous consent.
4. The recommendation from the Committee of the Whole to adopt R-2021-7, Resolution Adopting the 2021 Update to the 2014 Jekyll Island Master Plan carried by unanimous consent through a roll call.
5. The recommendation from the Committee of the Whole to approve the assignment of the Holiday Inn Ground Lease from Georgia Coast Holdings, LLC to Jekyll Island Beachfront Hotel, LLC carried by unanimous consent.
6. Beach House Restaurant Lease
 - a. The recommendation from the Committee of the Whole to approve the Memorandum of Understanding as to the Beach House Restaurant Ground Lease carried by unanimous consent.
 - b. The recommendation from the Committee of the Whole to approve the assignment of the Beach House Restaurant Ground Lease from Georgia Coast Holdings I, LLC to Jekyll Restaurant Owner, LLC carried by unanimous consent.
 - c. The recommendation from the Committee of the Whole to authorize an amended lease to be executed as to the Beach House Restaurant Ground Lease without additional board approval so long as such amendment reflects the intention of the parties as set forth in the Memorandum of Understanding carried by unanimous consent.
7. Beachview Club Hotel Lease
 - a. The recommendation from the Committee of the Whole to approve the Memorandum of Understanding as to the Beachview Club Hotel Ground Lease carried by unanimous consent.
 - b. The recommendation from the Committee of the Whole to assign the Beachview Club Hotel Ground Lease from Georgia Coast Holdings II, LLC to Jekyll Hotel Owner, LLC carried by unanimous consent.
 - c. The recommendation from the Committee of the Whole to authorize an amended lease to be executed as to the Beachview Club Hotel Ground Lease without additional board approval so long as such amendment reflects the intention of the parties as set forth in the Memorandum of Understanding carried by unanimous consent.
8. The recommendations from the Committee of the Whole to Award RFP #367 to Golden Isles Carriage and Trail at Three Oaks Farm and to approve the lease terms, pending legal review and contract completion, carried by unanimous consent.

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9. The recommendation from the Committee of the Whole to approve the proposed 2022 Board Meeting dates carried by unanimous consent.

There were no public comments.

The motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Krueger and was seconded by Dr. Evans. There was no objection to the motion and the meeting adjourned at 11:41 a.m.