

JEKYLL ISLAND – STATE PARK AUTHORITY
October 18, 2022 – Approved Minutes

The Jekyll Island State Park Authority (JIA) and Committees met in Public Session on Tuesday, October 18, 2022 at the Jekyll Island Convention Center and via teleconference.

Members Present: Mr. Dale Atkins, Chairman
Mr. Bob Krueger, Vice Chairman
Mr. Bill Gross, Secretary/Treasurer
Commissioner Mark Williams
Mr. Joseph B. Wilkinson Jr
Mr. Ruel Joyner
Dr. Buster Evans (via Teleconference)
Mr. Glen Willard (via Teleconference)

Members Absent: Ms. Joy Burch-Meeks

Key Staff Present: Jones Hooks, Executive Director
Noel Jensen, Deputy Executive Director
Jenna Johnson, Director of Human Resources
Ben Carswell, Director of Conservation and Sustainability
Joseph Colbert, Conservation Wildlife Manager
Dennis Gailey, Director of Public Safety
Jenna Johnson, Director of Human Resources
Alexa Hawkins, Director of Marketing
Zach Harris, General Counsel
Maria Humphrey, Lease Manager
Anna Trapp, Executive Assistant

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

Chairman Atkins called the committee session to order at 9:30 a.m. All Board members were present either in-person or via teleconference except for Mrs. Burch-Meeks.

JIA received one online public comment for this meeting.

- Jon Stevenson – Golf Improvement Plan and Bike Paths

I. Historic Preservation/Conservation Committee

- A. Joseph Colbert, Conservation Wildlife Manager, provided an update on Jekyll Island’s Bobcat population highlighting the following points:
- The bobcat population on Jekyll has been slowly growing since the first siting in 2014, and there are approximately twelve adult bobcats and four kittens on the island.
 - Third-generation reproduction is a promising sign that Jekyll has a small but stable and sustaining bobcat population.
 - Bobcats need a significant amount of space to thrive. Through tracking, the Conservation Department knows the bobcats are using the entire island.
 - Bobcats have been seen traveling to and from the mainland, which eases concerns of a potential lack of genetic diversity.
 - Unique markings on each bobcat’s tail allows the conservation team to identify the individuals when spotted on a trail cam.

- B. Mr. Krueger announced that Ben Carswell, Director of Conservation and Sustainability will be leaving the JIA after over 10 years of service. He thanked Ben for his service and commitment to Jekyll.

Carswell thanked the Board for supporting the growth of the Conservation Department during his tenure. He noted that he could not imagine working for JIA during a better ten years than between the opening of the Convention Center and the adoption of the Greenspace Ordinance. He is proud to have contributed to the legacy of Jekyll Island through his work with the Conservation Department.

Jones Hooks, Executive Director, noted that Ben will be joining the Public Services faculty at the University of Georgia Carl Vinson Institute as the Coastal Military Community Liaison. He thanked Ben for his service, for growing the Conservation Department, and for his valuable contributions to the original 2011 Conservation Plan and the 2020 update.

There were no public comments.

II. Finance Committee

- A. Mr. Bill Gross, Finance Committee Chair, summarized the September Financials including an overview of Revenues, Expenses, Net Operating Cash, Traffic Statistics, and Hotel Revenues for the month.

- Revenues were \$2,55,966.
- Expenses were \$2,761,152.
- Net Operating Cash Loss was \$205,187.
- Total Traffic Counts were 93,323 vehicles.
- Year-to-date Revenues reported by hotels were \$56 million.

- B. Noel Jensen, Deputy Executive Director, presented a request to accept \$700 from the Southern Tennis Association. The grant funds will be used for food and supplies for the Banana Open Challenge tournament that will be held December 1, 2022 – December 4, 2022.

A motion to recommend accepting the \$700 grant award from the Southern Tennis Association was made by Mr. Wilkinson and seconded by Mr. Joyner. The motion carried unanimously.

- C. Dennis Gailey, Director of Public Safety, presented the award contract for the Jekyll Island Fire Department (JIFD) ladder truck for consideration. He noted that a ladder truck has been a need of the JIFD, but there was the obstacle of where to store the truck. The completion and delivery of the ladder truck will coincide with the construction of the new Public Safety Complex, so storage will no longer be an issue. Gailey further explained the benefits of the truck which include a faster response time in cases that require a ladder truck, the ladder truck is dual purpose and will serve as an additional fire truck, and it offers an opportunity for the JIFD to improve their Insurance Services Office (ISO) rating. Once the truck is ordered, it expected to be completed within 18 to 24 months.

The total cost of the ladder truck from Ten-8 Fire and Safety (Pierce Manufacturing) totals \$1,136,525.00, and a down payment of \$568,262.50 will be required to begin the manufacturing process for the ladder truck. Funding for the purchase of the ladder truck will come from the Fire Equipment Reserve Fund. \$900,000.00 is set aside in this fund, with an additional \$175,000.00 approved in the FY2023 budget. The remaining funding for this purchase will be requested from parking fees in the FY2024 budget.

A motion to recommend purchasing a ladder truck in the amount of \$1,136,525 from Ten-8 Fire and Safety, with the understanding that a down payment of \$568,262.50 will be required by Pierce Manufacturing was made by Mr. Krueger and seconded by Mr. Joyner. The motion carried unanimously.

D. Jones Hooks, Executive Director, provided a brief update on a Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) grant application. JIA submitted an application for the DCA Rural Innovation Fund. The requested amount totals \$450,000 to fund the Furniture, Fixtures, and Equipment for the Mercer Medical Clinic on Jekyll.

There were no public comments.

III. Human Resources Committee

- A. Matt Bidwell with MSI Benefits Group presented a proposal for a self-insurance health plan for JIA employees. Due to the rising cost of claims paid Per Member Per Month (PMPM), MSI recommended that the JIA switch to a self-insured plan. Bidwell explained that a substantial cost savings will be seen in the proposed pharmacy plan, noting that Glynn County Board of Commissioners saw a 49% YTD cost savings in the first six months after switching to the self-insured plan. The recommended self-insured plan option will be provided through Aetna but administered through a third party, EBMS and will cost \$2,151,211.

A motion to recommend changing the JIA employee health insurance plan from a fully insured plan to a self-insured plan with reinsurance was made by Mr. Krueger and seconded by Mr. Joyner. The motion carried unanimously.

- B. Jenna Johnson, Director of Human Resources, presented an update to the Attendance and Hours Worked Policy. The proposed changes clarify the language to provide the option to apply time and half pay for critical employees during emergency situations, such as a hurricane, as designated by the Executive Director.

A motion to recommend approving the updated Attendance and Hours Worked Policy was made by Mr. Krueger and seconded by Mr. Joyner. The motion carried unanimously.

There were no public comments.

IV. Marketing Committee

- A. Alexa Hawkins, Director of Marketing, presented the report from the Marketing Department, highlighting the following items:
- During Hurricane Ian, in late September, JIA kept consistent and open emergency communications with Glynn County EMA, NWSJAX, and Governor's Office. Additionally, public platforms including the JIA website, social media, and Nixle were utilized to ensure the public was informed of all changes in the weather and closures.
 - After the storm, a media blitz followed promoting the beautiful weekend weather that Jekyll experienced, and several hotels reported a 20-30% pick-up in bookings.
 - GPB reported on the end of Sea Turtle Nesting season on Jekyll, ending with recording-setting numbers.

- Marketing has pushed out a “Coastal Twist on Leaf-Peeping” encouraging visitors to find fall in the south.
- The Fall/Winter 2022 issue of 31•81 has been released and mailed out to subscribers.
- The 31•81, *A Commemorative Collection* is available online for preorder.

There were no public comments.

V. Legislative Committee

No report.

VI. Committee of the Whole

- A. Zach Harris, General Counsel, presented the Second Reading of the Greenspace Ordinance. The Greenspace Ordinance is recommended as part of the Golf Improvement Plan to preserve areas of Jekyll Island. The ordinance establishes specific, limited permitted uses and improvements to an overlay of existing golf course acreage. Those uses must be authorized by the JIA. The ordinance does not change any existing law or alter any existing golf use. Its purpose is to protect approximately 650 acres on Jekyll from unpermitted use.

A motion to recommend approval and adoption of the Enacting Ordinance, Ordinance #2022-2, and the attached Greenspace Preservation Ordinance was made by Mr. Krueger and seconded by Mr. Gross. The motion carried unanimously.

- B. Jones Hooks, Executive Director, presented the proposed concept for Hilton Tapestry at the Beachview Club. This project has been extensively discussed by the Design Review Group and the recommended concept is a 76 total key hotel property. It will be a complete renovation of the existing facility that ties into the new structure and additional rooms, creating a u-shape. The additional structure will be a three-story tower on the south side, which is currently a parking lot. All of the heritage trees at this property will be retained on the property, and additional landscaping will be required to retain the lushness of that area. A parking variance of a 1:1 ratio will also be required, which other hotels on Jekyll are subject to. This encourages additional landscaping at the property. The property will be affiliated with Hilton’s Tapestry brand, which will allow the hotel to keep the Beachview Club name.

A motion to recommend approval of the concept plan for Hilton Tapestry Beachview Club dated May 15, 2022 and last revised October 11, 2022 with a variance for a minimum parking requirement of 1:1, contingent upon the stipulations recommended by staff was made by Commissioner Williams and seconded by Mr. Joyner. The motion carried unanimously.

- C. Jones Hooks, Executive Director, presented the proposed concept for the Anchor Restaurant at Jekyll Holiday Inn. The proposal demolishes the existing pool bar structure and rebuilds a restaurant on the same footprint with an additional 1520 square feet included in the design. The restaurant will have a total dining and staff capacity of 175 persons

A motion to recommend approval of the concept plan for The Anchor Restaurant at Jekyll Holiday Inn was made by Mr. Gross and seconded by Mr. Kruger. The motion carried unanimously.

- D. Zach Harris, General Counsel, presented a revised lease agreement with Mercer Medicine, LLC. The lease was approved pending additional legal review at the September 20, 2022

Board meeting. Upon discussions with Mercer’s counsel, due to the nature of health care services, modifications were needed. The monthly percentage rate has been switched to an annual breakpoint, but it is the same equivalent amount for each month over the year. JIA and Mercer also agreed to other minor changes including removal of the requirement to discount services, correcting the maximum allowance on architectural design plans to accurately reflect the \$35,000 figure discussed, and adding a section addressing and defining Common Area. All other terms remain the same as what was presented and approved on September 20, 2022.

A motion to recommend approval of the revised lease agreement with Mercer Medicine, LLC., was made by Mr. Joyner and seconded by Mr. Gross. The motion carried unanimously.

E. Maria Humphrey, Lease Manager, presented an update on a previously approved lease agreements.

- On April 12, 2022, the Board approved a lease for Purple Turtle, LLC. to operate a Lilly Pulitzer Signature Store at Furness Cottage in the Historic District, pending legal review. During the review process, the tenant raised several concerns including the age of the structure, the third and fourth floors only being accessible via stairs, and the limited usable floor space. Due to concerns with the economic viability, the tenant did not sign the lease, but she has asked to be considered in the future should a different space become available.
- On September 20, 2022, the Board approved a new lease for 10 Main Street, Suite 102 with Cardon Enterprises, LLC. to continue operation of Caroline’s Gifts. Verbal confirmation was obtained, but the lessee decided not to sign the lease and vacated the premises on October 20, 2022.
- The JIA will accept business proposals for both properties located at 101 Old Plantation Road and 10 Main Street, Suite 102.

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

- The JIA Vehicle Maintenance department obtained two consecutive Tier 1 scores from the Office of Fleet Management. The team consisting of Ben Rushing, Alvin Dixon, John Neal, and Sam Williams received three out of four awards issued at a recent State Fleet meeting in Savannah, GA. There are over 200 state fleets under the Georgia Department of Administrative Services, and JIA’s fleet is ranked number one.
- Three parties submitted proposals for the construction of the Public Safety Complex, Dabbs Williams, Iugis, and Burke. Interviews will take place in November.
- Bike path renovations continue on Jekyll and should be complete by the end of October, despite delays with obtaining commitments from concrete plants.
- The design for the bike path that will run from Jekyll Island to end of the causeway has been established. This is a partner project with GDOT, and the anticipated completion date is pending.
- The cart barn that was used at Great Dunes Golf Course will be moved and reconfigured for use as a public works office behind the current warehouse.
- Christmas decorating is underway, beginning earlier than usual to accommodate the Shrimp and Grits festival schedule.

G. Jones Hooks, Executive Director, presented the Executive Director’s report highlighting the following items:

- The JIA has \$3.1 million dollars’ worth of projects on the proposed SPLOST referendum, and he reminded residents to go vote.
- A video was shared that shows the difference between coastal views on Jekyll Island, Tybee Island, Fernandina Beach, and St. Simons Island. Hooks emphasized the uniqueness of the coastal prairie area and the importance of retaining the naturalness that is Jekyll and protecting acreage through the Greenspace Ordinance.

H. For the sake of time, Mr. Atkins refrained from providing comments.

There were three public comments:

- Beverly Hopkins commented on the bike path update. She supported increased pavement, but she raised concern about the safety aspect of the transition of the bike path off of the bridge onto the causeway.
- Aaron Carone thanked the Board for approving the Greenspace Ordinance.
- Courtney Reich, Coastal Director for Georgia Conservancy, supported the adoption of the Greenspace Ordinance, noting it will help to create, preserve, and restore open spaces on Jekyll.

The Chairman continued directly into the JIA Board Meeting.

The Jekyll Island State Park Authority (JIA) Board Meeting
October 18, 2022

The Board Meeting was called to order at 10:53 a.m., and all members were present either in-person or via teleconference, except for Mrs. Burch-Meeks who was absent.

Action Items

1. Mr. Krueger moved to accept the minutes of the September 20, 2022 Board Meeting as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Williams. There was no discussion, and the minutes were unanimously approved.
2. The recommendation from the Finance Committee to accept the \$700 grant award from the Southern Tennis Association carried by unanimous approval.
3. The recommendation from the Finance Committee to purchase a ladder truck in the amount of \$1,136,525 from Ten-8 Fire and Safety, with the understanding that a down payment of \$568,262.50 will be required by Pierce Manufacturing carried by unanimous approval.
4. The recommendation from the Human Resources Committee to change the JIA employee health insurance plan from a fully insured plan to a self-insured plan with reinsurance, carried by unanimous approval.
5. The recommendation from the Human Resources Committee to approve the updated Attendance and Hours Worked Policy carried by unanimous approval.

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6. The recommendation from the Committee of the Whole to approve and adopt Enacting Ordinance, Ordinance #2022-2 and the attached Greenspace Preservation Ordinance carried by unanimous approval.
7. The recommendation from the Committee of the Whole to approve the concept plan for Hilton Tapestry Beachview Club dated May 15, 2022 and last revised October 11, 2022 with a variance for a minimum parking requirement of 1:1, contingent upon the stipulations recommended by staff carried by unanimous approval.
8. The recommendation from the Committee of the Whole to approve the concept plan for The Anchor Restaurant at Jekyll Holiday Inn carried by unanimous approval.
9. The recommendation from the Committee of the Whole to approve the revised lease agreement with Mercer Medicine, LLC, carried by unanimous approval.

The motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Krueger and seconded by Mr. Joyner. There was no objection to the motion and the meeting adjourned at 10:59 a.m.