

JEKYLL ISLAND – STATE PARK AUTHORITY  
January 16-17, 2023 – Approved Minutes

The Jekyll Island State Park Authority (JIA) and Committees met in Public Session on Tuesday, January 17, 2023 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  
Ms. Joy Burch-Meeks  
Mr. Joseph B. Wilkinson Jr  
Mr. Ruel Joyner  
Mr. Glen Willard  
Dr. Buster Evans (via Teleconference)  
Commissioner Mark Williams (via Teleconference)

Key Staff Present: Jones Hooks, Executive Director  
Noel Jensen, Deputy Executive Director  
Marjorie Johnson, Chief Accounting Officer  
Yank Moore, Director of Conservation and Sustainability  
Alexa Hawkins, Director of Marketing  
Zach Harris, General Counsel  
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. Dr. Evans dropped off the call at 10:33 a.m.

Chairman Atkins noted that the Board participated in a work session the previous evening, hearing presentations from Explore Georgia’s Deputy Commissioner of Tourism, Mark Jaronski and JIA’s Marketing and Sales team. He noted that the Work Session will continue after the Board Meeting.

JIA received one online public comment for this meeting:

- Jon Stevenson – Pickleball

### **I. Historic Preservation/Conservation Committee**

A. Mr. Krueger introduced Yank Moore as JIA’s new Director of Conservation. He welcomed Moore and noted that the Board looks forward to working with him in his new position. Jones Hooks, Executive Director added that Moore has been with the JIA for more than nine years, with his most recent position being Natural Resource Manager. He has both a Bachelor’s and Master’s degree in Environmental Science, and is currently participating in the 2022 Institute for Georgia Environmental Leadership program. Hooks and Krueger reiterated that the Authority is pleased to have Moore continue his work on Jekyll.

There were no public comments.

### **II. Finance Committee**

A. Mr. Bill Gross, Finance Committee Chair, noted that the November financials were included in the Board’s packet. He then summarized the December Financials including an overview of Revenues, Expenses, Net Operating Cash, Traffic Statistics, and Hotel Revenues for the month.

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- Revenues were \$2,957,202.
- Expenses were \$2,189,932.
- Net Operating Cash Income was \$767,270.
- Total Traffic Counts were 130,635 vehicles.
- Year-to-date Revenues reported by hotels were \$68.8 million.

B. Marjorie Johnson, Chief Accounting Officer, presented a request for capital equipment and projects that are needed before the end of the current fiscal year.

- The total requested from current year income equals \$114,200 and includes:
  - \$30,000 for a replacement freezer at Summer Waves
  - \$12,000 for flooring at the Golf Club House
  - \$65,000 of additional funding for the exhibit design at Hollybourne Cottage
  - \$7,200 of additional funding for audio units at the Georgia Sea Turtle Center (GSTC)
- The total requested from the Tourism Development Fund equals \$150,000 of additional funding for the bike path to the Guest Information Center.
- The total requested from the Public Improvement Fund totals \$140,000 to repair beach crossovers that suffered storm damage.

Jones Hooks, Executive Director, noted that the requests for additional funding for the project at Hollybourne and the GSTC audio units are due to receiving bids that were double the anticipated cost.

Noel Jensen, Deputy Executive Director, explained that the additional funding needed for the bike path is due to increased cost of concrete. The cost of concrete was \$85 a cubic yard when the original estimate was created, but it is now up to \$165 a cubic yard.

A motion to recommend approval of Fiscal Year 2023 Capital Equipment and Projects request as recommended by staff, was made by Mr. Krueger and seconded by Mr. Willard. The motion carried unanimously.

C. Jones Hooks, Executive Director, presented a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) for consideration. The MOA is a continuation of the bike path project from the Guest Information Center to the end of Jekyll Causeway at Highway 17. During phase one of this project, JIA paid \$45,541.23, 20% of the total cost, for preliminary engineering. Phase two will cost JIA \$108,865.53, which is 20% of the total cost to continue the scoping phase of the preliminary engineering until a concept report is complete and delivered. It is anticipated that that two more phases of design remain before construction of the bike paths may begin.

Mr. Krueger and Mr. Joyner questioned the process, and Hooks advised that the Board could choose to not continue with the project if they would like to reconsider construction of the bike paths, but that it would need to be decided today due to deadlines set by the project managers.

Noel Jensen, Deputy Executive Director, explained that to complete the causeway bike path would be a \$4,000,000 project, and through the agreements with GDOT, JIA will most likely pay less than \$1,000,000 for the project in total. He also noted that the bike path is a public safety concern, as people currently ride bikes on the causeway with traffic, and the addition of bike paths will alleviate that concern.

Ms. Burch-Meeks noted that the bike paths serve as a attraction to visitors and through years of discussion about completing the path to the end of the causeway, the agreement with GDOT is the most economical option.

A motion to recommend approval of the Memorandum of Agreement with the Georgia Department of Transportation for preliminary engineering of the Jekyll Island Causeway Bike Path and corresponding matching funds equaling 20% of the total cost of phase two of the project was made by Mr. Krueger and seconded by Mr. Willard. The motion carried unanimously.

There were no public comments.

### **III. Human Resources Committee**

No report.

### **IV. Marketing Committee**

- A. Alexa Hawkins, Director of Marketing, presented the report from the Marketing Department, highlighting the following items:
- Holly Jolly Jekyll Metrics
    - Media placement during the holiday season included regional and national coverage.
    - There were 200,000 web views of the Holly Jolly Jekyll landing page, much of which was driven by social media posts.
    - There was an increase in visitors from Florida, North Carolina, and South Carolina.
    - The Holly Jolly light tours proved successful with a 34% increase in revenue from the previous year.
  - Productions
    - Last fall a single day film production took place on Driftwood Beach. JIA received \$16,000 in exchange of full access to the beach during filming. The film, *The Menu*, was released in November and is now available to stream across several services.
    - Peter Millar completed a spring catalog shoot which will be released in March.
    - Bass Pro Shop and Cabela's has also requested to do a spring catalog shoot in the coming months.
    - All requested productions are evaluated to determine wildlife, visitor, and economic impact.
  - A new billboard was constructed at the end of the causeway on Highway 17. The design of this replacement billboard allows the signage to be seen better from both directions, and the steel beams can accommodate a digital board in the future.

Commissioner Williams praised the Holly Jolly Jekyll experience and the light tour, saying he and his grandchildren had a wonderful time when they were on Jekyll in December.

There were no public comments.

### **V. Legislative Committee**

A. Mr. Willard noted the Georgia 2023 Legislative Session began on January 9<sup>th</sup> and plans to update the Board at a future meeting. He then discussed the Jekyll Island Public Safety Facility construction shortfall of \$1.5 million. This amount was requested to be included in the Governor's Supplemental Budget, but it was denied. He opened up discussion for how to address the shortfall and the next course of action.

Jones Hooks, Executive Director, explained that JIA staff has had conversations with the Office of Planning and Budget and Georgia Senate and House Appropriations committee members in hopes that the item would make it into the supplemental budget. Unfortunately, it seems there is a theme of not including new buildings in the budget, but rather improvements to those that are existing. He explained that the project can continue, but without additional funding, it may need to be carried over a couple of fiscal years, so the question is should JIA staff and Board continue with their efforts to acquire additional funding through the State Legislature.

Noel Jensen, Deputy Executive Director, spoke to the differences between the construction of the Campground expansion and the Public Safety Facility and explained the extent that value engineering has been implemented to ensure the facility is constructed as economically as possible. He also noted that a significant delay in construction would result in a demerit in the next ISO inspection.

Mr. Krueger and Chairman Atkins encouraged Board members to pursue legislative funding as much as possible. Ms. Burch-Meeks agreed and added that Board members will need to be diligent in sharing why JIA needs the money, explaining that staff has remained conscientious of keeping costs low and that this need is not due to being unprepared but is due to unforeseen costs and inflation.

Mr. Joyner recommended looking at the budget to see what additional funds the JIA could allot for the project, and Ms. Burch-Meeks agreed that it would be a good idea to present the legislature with additional self-funding as leverage when asking for the remaining funds. Mr. Willard agreed with finding a portion of the funds and lowering the requested amount.

Mr. Gross noted the importance of keeping reserves high due to the storms and hurricanes the island is highly susceptible to in order to stay prepared in a time of crisis.

Mr. Krueger encouraged Board members to get involved in the conversations with legislators to support this project and requested a timeline and notes from the JIA staff that the Board can use in their conversations. Hooks noted a summary sheet for the requested Public Safety Facility funding was included in the Board's Blue Folder, but it would be revised and sent to the Board.

## **VI. Committee of the Whole**

- A. Noel Jensen, Deputy Executive Director, presented a request to award the bid for a replacement digital outdoor display for the Convention Center. The current digital display is 10 years old, with a 10 to 12-year life expectancy. A new two-sided display was approved as a capital budget purchase at \$100,000. JIA staff received three competing bids for the replacement of the Convention Center sign with one new, fully customizable, two-sided display from Watchfire as well as restoration of the existing case with fresh paint and new lettering. The three bidders were Dalton Signs, Inc., ANS Signs, Inc., and Whitfield Signs Company. The bidder presenting the lowest responsive bid was Dalton Signs, Inc. for an amount of \$77,901.50.

A motion to recommend awarding the Convention Center digital sign bid to Dalton Signs, Inc was made by Mr. Gross and seconded by Mr. Krueger. The motion carried unanimously.

- B. Noel Jensen, Deputy Executive Director, presented the request to issue RFP# 372 for a contractor to design, build, and commission a communications tower on the south end of Jekyll Island that would accommodate up to four wireless communication carriers. Three carriers currently use the south water tower, and the addition of this monopole tower would alleviate the challenges associated with the current placement.

A motion to recommend issuing RFP 372 for a contractor to design, build, and commission a Communications Tower was made by Mr. Joyner and seconded by Mr. Wilkinson. The motion carried unanimously.

- C. Noel Jensen, Deputy Executive Director, presented the request to issue RFQ #343 for wastewater professional engineering services, including subcontracting and supervision of wastewater lawn cleaning with an interactive sewer line mapping service. This RFQ will allow a firm with the appropriate expertise to manage the entire camera sewer mapping operation opposed to that responsibility falling to JIA staff.

A motion to recommend issuing RFQ 343 for wastewater professional engineering services was made by Mr. Joyner and seconded by Mr. Gross. The motion carried unanimously.

- D. Jones Hooks, Executive Director, presented a revised site plan for the Hilton Tapestry Beachview Club. This plan will save all the signature trees that were of concern at the beginning of the design review process and meets the required 1 to 1 parking variance that was approved at the October 2022 Board meeting. The Design Review Group (DRG) has reviewed and approved the revised site plan as presented.

Hooks noted that following DRG approval, the Board's next step will be to review and consider the schematic design at a future Board meeting.

Yank Moore, Director of Conservation, commented that the foundation of the additional will be placed on an area that is already disturbed and the architects and designers cooperated with JIA staff to have the building fit around the existing majestic oak trees to preserve the character of the site.

A motion to recommend approving the site plan for the Beachview Club hotel was made by Mr. Kruger and seconded by Mr. Joyner. The motion carried unanimously.

- E. Jones Hooks, Executive Director, presented a revised site plan for the Anchor Restaurant at Jekyll Holiday Inn. The facility will replace the current pool bar at the hotel. It will have a larger footprint, but it will not disturb any of the natural environment. DRG members have reviewed and approved the site plan as presented, and the schematic design will be presented at a future Board meeting.

A motion to recommend approving the site plan for the Anchor Restaurant at Jekyll Holiday Inn Resort was made by Mr. Joyner and seconded by Mr. Wilkinson. The motion carried unanimously.

- F. Zach Harris, General Counsel, presented the proposed resolution to revise and adjust licensing fees for alcohol related charges including alcoholic beverage applications, renewal, and event permits. The terminology of this resolution and associated fees align with the revised ordinance adopted in June 2022. Harris read aloud the license descriptions and fees before the Board.

Ms. Burch-Meeks asked why the JIA is purposely keeping this cost below that of Glynn County's fees. Harris responded that the Authority has a statutory mission to remain affordable for Georgians of average means. Hooks added that JIA's model is different from Glynn County, since the Authority receives a percentage of revenue from its lessees.

A motion to recommend approving Resolution R-2023-1 to revise alcoholic beverage licensing fees as proposed by staff was made by Mr. Joyner and seconded by Mr. Gross. The motion carried unanimously.

G. Jones Hooks, Executive Director, presented the Executive Director's report noting the Board's Blue Folder items include Georgia State Patrol reports and various feedback from Jekyll Island visitors.

H. Mr. Atkins presented the Chairmans comments. He thanked all the Board members for their presence and the thorough discussion and participation during the meeting.

There were no public comments:

The Chairman continued directly into the JIA Board Meeting.

**The Jekyll Island State Park Authority (JIA) Board Meeting**  
**January 17, 2023**

The Board Meeting was called to order at 11:07 a.m., and all members were present either in-person or via teleconference, except for Dr. Evans who was absent.

**Action Items**

1. Mr. Krueger moved to accept the minutes of the November 15, 2022 Board Meeting as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Willard. There was no discussion, and the minutes were unanimously approved.
2. The recommendation from the Finance Committee to approve the Fiscal Year 2023 Capital Equipment and Projects request as recommended by staff carried by unanimous approval.
3. The recommendation from the Finance Committee to approve of the Memorandum of Agreement with the Georgia Department of Transportation for preliminary engineering of the Jekyll Island Causeway Bike Path and corresponding matching funds equaling 20% of the total cost of phase two of the project carried by unanimous approval.
4. The recommendation from the Committee of the Whole to award the Convention Center digital sign bid to Dalton Signs, Inc carried by unanimous approval.
5. The recommendation from the Committee of the Whole to issue RFP 372 for a contractor to design, build, and commission a Communications Tower carried by unanimous approval.
6. The recommendation from the Committee of the Whole to issue RFQ 343 for wastewater professional engineering services carried by unanimous approval.
7. The recommendation from the Committee of the Whole to approve the site plan for the Beachview Club hotel carried by unanimous approval.

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8. The recommendation from the Committee of the Whole to approve the site plan for the Anchor Restaurant at Jekyll Holiday Inn Resort carried by unanimous approval.
9. The recommendation from the Committee of the Whole to approve Resolution R-2023-1 to revise alcoholic beverage licensing fees as proposed by staff carried by unanimous approval.

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

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The Jekyll Island Authority (JIA) Board met in public for a Work Session on Monday, January 16, 2023.

**Members Present:**

Dale Atkins  
Robert “Bob” W. Krueger  
William “Bill” H. Gross  
Joseph B. Wilkinson, Jr.  
Glen Willard  
Joy Burch-Meeks  
Ruel Joyner

**Members Absent:**

Commissioner Mark Williams  
Dr. Buster Evans

**Staff Present:**

Jones Hooks  
Noel Jensen  
Zach Harris  
Alexa Hawkins  
Kevin Udell  
Maria Trammell  
Anna Trapp

**Invited Presenter:**

Mark Jaronski, Deputy Commissioner for Explore Georgia, the tourism division of the Georgia Department of Economic Development

**Work Session:**

The following items were presented to the Board for discussion. No action was taken:

- A. State of Tourism, Jekyll Island Impressions, and Jekyll Island Features in Explore Georgia Marketing
- B. 2023 Group Sales Forecast for Jekyll Island
- C. 2023 Outlook: Marketing Partnerships and Insights



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**Members Present:**

Dale Atkins  
Robert “Bob” W. Krueger  
William “Bill” H. Gross  
Joseph B. Wilkinson, Jr.  
Glen Willard  
Joy Burch-Meeks  
Ruel Joyner

**Members Absent:**

Commissioner Mark Williams  
Dr. L.C. “Buster” Evans

**Staff Present:**

Jones Hooks  
Noel Jensen  
Marjorie Johnson  
Jenna Johnson  
Zach Harris  
Alexa Hawkins  
Michelle Kaylor  
Yank Moore  
Tom Alexander

**Invited Presenter:**

Alkesh Patel, Senior Assistant Attorney General

**Work Session:**

The following items were presented to the Board for discussion. No action was taken:

- A. Open Records and Open Meetings
- B. Governor’s Ethics Orders
- C. Annual Ethics Affidavit Submissions
- D. DCA Rural Innovation Grant Status
- E. Golf Course Improvement Plan Update
- F. Review of FY23 Strategic Plan
- G. Projects Update
- H. Georgia Sea Turtle Center Expansion