



The Town of Hilton Head Island Regular Finance & Administrative Committee Meeting

**Tuesday, March 17, 2015
1:30 p.m. – Conference Room 3**

AGENDA

As a Courtesy to Others Please Turn Off All Cell Phones and Pagers during the Meeting

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Freedom of Information Act Compliance**
Public notification of this meeting has been published, posted, and mailed in compliance with the Freedom of Information Act and the Town of Hilton Head Island requirements.
- 3. Approval of Minutes**
 - a. Finance and Administrative Committee Meeting, February 17, 2015
 - b. Finance and Administrative Committee Meeting, March 3, 2015
- 4. Unfinished Business**
None
- 5. New Business**
 - a. Review of Affiliated Agencies: Island Recreation Association, Shore Beach Services, and Coastal Discovery Museum
 - b. Finalize discussion on ATAX Grant processing
- 6. Adjournment**

Please note that a quorum of Town Council may result if four (4) or more of Town Council members attend this meeting.

**TOWN OF HILTON HEAD ISLAND
FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING**

Date: February 17, 2015 **Time:** 2:00 p.m.
Members Present: John McCann, *Chairman*; Tom Lennox and Bill Harkins, *Council Members*
Members Absent: None
Staff Present: Tom Fultz, *Director of Administrative Services*; Scott Liggett, *Director of Public Projects and Facilities*; Nancy Gasen, *Director of Human Resources*; Susan Simmons, *Director of Finance*; Rene Phillips, *Website Administrator*; Erica Madhere, *Finance Assistant*
Others Present: Kim Likins, *Council Member*; Members of the public
Media: None

1. Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 2:00 p.m.

2. FOIA Compliance:

Public notification of this meeting has been published, posted, and mailed in compliance with the Freedom of Information Act and the Town of Hilton Head Island requirements.

3. Approval of Minutes:

None

4. Unfinished Business:

None

5. New Business:

a. Proposed 2015 Finance & Administrative Committee Meeting Dates

Mr. Harkins moved to approve the proposed 2015 Finance and Administrative Committee Meeting Dates. Mr. Lennox seconded the motion, and the motion passed with a vote of 3-0.

b. Outlining the work of the Committee

Mr. McCann gave the following objectives with deliverable dates:

- Recommendation for modifications to the ATAX procedure, due by March 31, 2015.
- Establishment of performance measurements for the Town Manager, due by April 30, 2015.
- Internal review of vendor contracts, due by May 31, 2015.

Other objectives without a deliverable date at this time include:

- RFP procedure, including how consultants are hired
- Budget analysis
- Review and analysis of the Financial Statements including the Balance Sheet
- Business Licensing Fees
- Philosophy of Town's Debt Cap

Mr. McCann commented that the review process for the Town Manager is being put into place simply because one does not exist at this time.

Regarding reviewing vendor contracts, Mr. McCann commented that one of the items the Committee will look into is why there is not an existing contract between the Town and the Chamber of Commerce and the possibility of drafting a document between the entities. The Committee will also look at other vendor contracts to understand how they are approved, renewed, etc. The purpose of this project is to be able to understand, and then make suggestions on how to improve the process. Mr. Harkins added that the Committee may want to evaluate potential contracts that could have significant island wide impact based on a certain dollar threshold and bring those to Town Council for input.

c. Brief discussion on ATAX Grant processing

During the next few weeks the Committee will be reviewing the state law and Town process, and will look at items such as forward financing of the grants, requirements for recipients of the larger grants, Town procedures for lapsed grants, and ideas to make the process smoother, possibly including an appeal process. Mr. McCann stated the Committee is impressed with the current ATAX Committee as it is thoughtful and very well run. Mr. Lennox added the Committee will be reviewing and insuring compliance with the ATAX regulations, and would also like to implement some sort of performance measures for the grantees on how the grant dollars are being spent.

In order to prepare for the next meeting, Mr. McCann requested a copy of the RFP procedure for vendors, services, etc. Tom Fultz, Director of Administrative Services for the Town, stated he will provide the Town's Standard Operating Procedure for Procurement as it should answer their questions on the requirements and specific dollar amounts.

Susan Simmons, Finance Director for the Town, asked Mr. McCann to clarify how the Committee views a contract vs. a grant, and how the Chamber of Commerce or ATAX recipients would fit into the upcoming review of contracts. Mr. McCann stated the contracts that will be reviewed are primarily the recurring contracts, for example, a contract for ongoing landscape maintenance or consulting services, and how those contracts are renewed and evaluated for performance. The general ATAX grant recipients would not be included in this category; however, the Committee would like to look at the Chamber of Commerce in order to understand the D.M.O. agreement between it and the Town. Ms. Simmons explained the D.M.O. agreement is a part of the Town Code that has been in place for much of the Town's incorporated history. She will ensure the Committee members receive this section of the Town

Code, as well as the State Accommodations Tax law, as these documents explain the specifications and requirements of the D.M.O. fund.

Finally, Mr. Lennox stated the Committee will be looking at two filters for organizations receiving Town money. The first filter will be compliance with regulations set forth, and the second filter will be effective and efficient use of funds. The Committee is concerned that all organizations receiving Town money must be held accountable for the money they receive.

6. Adjournment:

Mr. Harkins made a motion to adjourn and Mr. Lennox seconded. All members voted in favor and the meeting was adjourned at 2:32 p.m.

Approved:

Respectfully submitted:

John McCann, Chairman

Erica Madhere, Secretary

**TOWN OF HILTON HEAD ISLAND
FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING**

Date: March 3, 2015 **Time:** 2:00 p.m.

Members Present: John McCann, *Chairman*; Tom Lennox and Bill Harkins, *Council Members*

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Greg Deloach, *Assistant Town Manager*; Brad Tadlock, *Fire Chief*; Tom Fultz, *Director of Administrative Services*; Scott Liggett, *Director of Public Projects and Facilities*; Nancy Gasen, *Director of Human Resources*; Susan Simmons, *Director of Finance*; Brian Hulbert, *Staff Attorney*; Jill Foster, *Deputy Director of Community Development*; Rene Phillips, *Website Administrator*; Erica Madhere, *Finance Assistant*

Others Present: Lee Edwards, *Council Member*; Dr. John Salazar, *University of South Carolina Beaufort*, Stewart Brown, *Accommodations Tax Advisory Committee Member*; Bud Shay, and Members of the public

Media: Zach Murdock, *Island Packet*

1. Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 2:00 p.m.

2. FOIA Compliance:

Public notification of this meeting has been published, posted, and mailed in compliance with the Freedom of Information Act and the Town of Hilton Head Island requirements.

3. Approval of Minutes:

The Minutes from the Finance and Administrative Committee Meeting of February 17, 2015 were not discussed at this meeting.

4. Unfinished Business:

None

5. New Business:

a. Continuation of discussion on ATAX Grant processing

Bud Shay, former Chairman of the Accommodations Tax Advisory Committee, retired lawyer, and longtime Hilton Head Island resident, shared some of his knowledge, ideas, and suggestions for the ATAX Grant process based on his extensive experience. Mr. Shay spoke about the history of the State Accommodations Tax law, and detailed the formula that dictates how the funds must be allocated to the municipality, the Designated Marketing Organization, and the special fund for tourism. He explained the allowable uses within the special fund, which include advertising and promotion of tourism; promotion of the arts and

cultural events; construction, maintenance and operation of facilities for civic and cultural activities, etc. He spoke about some of his observations over the last couple of years, such as the current ATAX Committee's emphasis on requiring tourism numbers and data from the grant applicants, and also the importance of the arts and cultural organizations that provide great amenities for both residents and tourists of Hilton Head Island. Mr. Shay also suggested that Town Council may want to consider devising a method by which better direction can be given to the ATAX Committee before it makes grant recommendations as a means to improve the process.

Mr. Shay then responded to the Committee's questions regarding creating measures to evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of the ATAX grant expenditures, adopting guidelines for grant funding, searching for creative approaches to support the arts, and looking at the applicant's economic benefit as well as other important factors such as quality of life and attracting the affluent traveler. The Committee and Mr. Shay also discussed the concept of grant "Forward Funding", appointing a liaison between Town Council and the ATAX Committee, the idea of an appeal process for ATAX applicants, and the possibility of initiating requirements, such as procurement, for applicants requesting more than a certain dollar threshold. The Committee thanked Mr. Shay for his comments and contributions.

Dr. John Salazar with the University of South Carolina Beaufort approached the Dias to answer questions and speak about the value of economic analysis, the possibility of creating an economic model for public-private partnerships, and figuring the Total Commodity Production of the Town. The Committee thanked Dr. Salazar for his involvement.

Stewart Brown, an At-Large member of the Accommodations Tax Advisory Committee approached the Dias to express his appreciation to the Committee for its interest in providing more direction to the ATAX Committee and for the plan to measure the efficiency and effectiveness of the grant awards.

b. Presentation by Tom Fultz on the Town of Hilton Head Island's Standard Operating Procedure for Procurement

Tom Fultz, Director of Administrative Services, gave the history of how the Town's Standard Operating Procedure for the procurement of supplies and services was created. He explained the different levels of procurement, from small purchases of less than \$5,000, to those in excess of \$25,000, and detailed the procedures for each level. He spoke about the centralized process for Town contracts, as well as utilizing County and State contracts. He detailed the differences between the Invitation for Bid (IFB), Request for Proposal (RFP), and Request for Qualifications (RFQ), and gave examples of the uses for each. He stressed the importance of a well-defined Scope of Work for any contract, in order to be able to effectively measure the contractor's performance. Mr. Fultz answered questions from the Committee regarding the possibility of Town Council's involvement in certain contracts, perhaps those over a particular dollar threshold or with significant Town-wide impact. The Committee thanked Mr. Fultz for his informative presentation.

In conclusion, Mr. McCann first asked for opinions on Forward Funding and advances on ATAX grants, and both Mr. Lennox and Mr. Harkins were opposed to those practices. Mr. McCann next asked for opinions on the Finance and Administrative Committee acting as a liaison between Town Council and the ATAX Committee. Both Mr. Harkins and Mr.

Lennox were in favor of this in order to better inform the ATAX Committee before it deliberates. Finally, Mr. McCann asked for opinions about an appeal process for ATAX grant applicants and both Mr. Lennox and Mr. Harkins would like to continue the discussion on this topic at the next meeting.

Mr. McCann would like the next meeting to be a workshop style and intends to begin discussing the relationships and written agreements between the Affiliated Agencies and the Town, and also briefly overview the Affiliate's budget requests for Fiscal Year 2016. Mr. Harkins made a motion to change the start time of the March 17th and April 7th meetings to 1:30 and Mr. Lennox seconded. The motion passed with a vote of 3-0.

6. Adjournment:

Mr. Harkins made a motion to adjourn and Mr. Lennox seconded. All members voted in favor and the meeting was adjourned at 3:50 p.m.

Approved:

Respectfully submitted:

John McCann, Chairman

Erica Madhere, Secretary

Memorandum

Date: February 23, 2015
TO: Town of Hilton Head Island
FROM: Hilton Head Island Recreation Association Board of Directors
RE: FY 2015-16 Funding Request

The Island Recreation Association presents this funding request with one objective in mind; to provide the highest quality and greatest variety of recreational services to the community. The resources requested from the Town will allow the Association to continue the effective management of recreational facilities, as well as the coordination of recreational programs and community events.

The Association's Board approved an operating budget of \$ 2,079,028 for FY 2016 which is an increase of 4.87% over FY 2015. The general fund support request to the Town is **\$657,748**, which is an increase of \$28,470 from FY 15. This is first request for an increase in three (3) years.

The Association's budget is built on three years of revenue and expense history. We have taken into account the new opportunities which are in front of us with the new parks. The Association estimates additional increases in revenues from programs and events, which will balance out the FY 16 budget.

Town's General Fund Support:

The Town will fund 32% of the Association's overall revenues for the operations budget in FY 16.

	Proposed FY 15-16	Current Budget FY 14-15
GOVERNMENT		
Town - General Fund	\$ 561,369	\$ 537,889
Town-Senior Programs	\$ 96,379	\$ 91,379
Total	<u>\$ 657,748</u>	<u>\$ 629,278</u>

CIP Funding:

The CIP funding request is \$179,500 which is down from \$231,650. Projects in the CIP request take into account the enhancement and expansion of the Recreation Center. This request is in the Town's CIP budget under parks upgrades and the general fund.

County:

The Association's Board continues to work with Hilton Head Island county representatives to increase the level of support to our community. At this time, there is no clear indication from the County as to what level of support we will receive. We have budgeted \$80,000 for program support and \$60,000 for pool operations for a total of \$140,000. There is always a concern this funding could be reduced. The amount of county support will determine the overall impact on the residents of our community and the Association's general services.

Town Support:

The Town's Finance Department prepares, bi-weekly, the Association's payroll and payable checks. The Town supplies us with a monthly financial statement and general ledger report. The Town and the Association work to produce an annual audit. The Town approves capital expenditures reimbursed to the Association. The Association provides annual review of funding and programs to the Town's Parks and Recreation Commission. All financial records are available to the public.

Island Recreation Association
 FY 15-16 Budget
 Summary Page

REVENUES	PROPOSED 15-16	FY 14-15	FY 14-15 Actual 12-31-14	Percentage of Increase
Program Revenue	\$ 935,030	\$ 903,430	\$ 671,098	3.50%
Community Events & Fundraising	\$ 346,250	\$ 310,000	\$ 173,210	11.69%
	\$ 1,281,280	\$ 1,213,430	\$ 844,308	5.59%
Town of HHI Support	\$ 657,748	\$ 629,278	\$ 314,640	4.52%
County Support	\$ 140,000	\$ 140,000	\$ 100,000	0.00%
	\$ 797,748	\$ 769,278	\$ 414,640	3.70%
SUB TOTAL INCOME	\$ 2,079,028	\$ 1,982,708	\$ 1,258,948	4.86%
FY 15-16 CIP BUDGET-REVENUE TOTAL	\$ 179,500	\$ 240,650	\$ 77,651	-25.41%
TOTAL INCOME	\$ 2,258,528	\$ 2,223,358	\$ 1,336,599	1.58%

EXPENSES	PROPOSED Amended 14-15	FY 14-15	FY 14-15 Actual 12-31-14	Percentage of Increase
Program Expenses	\$ 378,725	\$ 365,525	\$ 203,850	3.61%
Community Events & Fundraising	\$ 183,875	\$ 158,708	\$ 113,256	15.86%
Program and Admin Payroll	\$ 916,991	\$ 878,235	\$ 477,382	4.41%
Payroll Taxes and Benefits	\$ 187,487	\$ 178,760	\$ 81,033	4.88%
Gen Admin/Facilities/Marketing	\$ 411,950	\$ 401,200	\$ 180,266	2.68%
SUB TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 2,079,028	\$ 1,982,428	\$ 1,055,787	4.87%
FY 15-16 CIP BUDGET-EXPENSES TOTAL	\$ 179,500	\$ 240,650	\$ 77,651	-25.41%
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 2,258,528	\$ 2,223,078	\$ 1,133,438	1.59%

CIP Budget 2015-16**PROJECT**

Program Utility Vehicle (Truck)	\$	24,000
Replace Education Equipment	\$	10,000
Solar Hot Water System (Rec Center)	\$	7,500
Portable Scoreboards	\$	6,500
Dome Equipment Update	\$	18,000
Pool Heater	\$	10,000
UltraMax Auto. Cleaner	\$	5,000
Back Stroke Flags	\$	1,000
Dome Inflation/heater/generator	\$	50,000
Lane Lines	\$	5,500
Windscreens	\$	10,000
Soccer Goals	\$	15,000
Picnic Tables & Trash Cans	\$	10,000
Tennis Nets	\$	2,000
Wind Screens/Chaplin	\$	5,000

Total	\$	179,500
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SHORE BEACH SERVICE, INC.

HILTON HEAD ISLAND BEACH PATROL

Certified Agency—United States Lifesaving Association
Charter Member—Professional Beach Service Association

116 Arrow Road • Hilton Head, SC 29928
Phone (843)785-3494 • Fax (843)785-2023
sbeach@hargray.com • www.shorebeach.com

February 10, 2015

Ms. Susan Simmons
Director Of Finance
Town Of Hilton Head Island
One Center Court
Hilton Head, SC 29928

Dear Susan,

Our budget request for Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2016 for the Beach Patrol services called for under our existing Services Agreement with the Town of Hilton Head Island totals \$233,322. This is an increase of \$1,257 or 0.5% over our budget for Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2015.

Fixed Amount Services are budgeted to increase by \$5,697 or 3.5%, mostly due to higher vehicle and labor related costs.

The proposed decrease of \$440 in Variable Amount Services primarily reflects lowering the estimated number of recycling dumpsters needed.

Annual Costs are budgeted to decrease by \$4,000 due to a reduction in the rates we will pay for trash dumpsters.

Attached is Discussion Of Fiscal Year 2016 Budget For Beach Patrol Services including three schedules showing this budget with comparisons to the budget for Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2015.

Let me know if there is anything else you need. I am available to discuss at your convenience.

Sincerely,

Ralph A. Wagner
President



SHORE BEACH SERVICE, INC.

HILTON HEAD ISLAND BEACH PATROL

Certified Agency—United States Lifesaving Association
Charter Member—Professional Beach Service Association

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Discussion Of Fiscal Year 2016 Budget For Beach Patrol Services Under Services Agreement With The Town Of Hilton Head Island

Shore Beach Service, Inc. has a Services Agreement with the Town Of Hilton Head Island under which we provide a service generally known as the Beach Patrol.

The Agreement provides that services will be billed in two ways:

- 1) Fixed Amount Services, with the fee amounts to be determined during the annual budget process, and
- 2) Variable Amount Services with the fee amounts based on monthly time spent and materials & equipment used, with the hourly rates to be determined during the annual budget process.

Our total request for the Fiscal Year 2016 budget equals \$233,322 compared to \$232,065 for Fiscal Year 2015, which is an increase of \$1,257 or 0.5%.

We are requesting a budget for Fixed Amount Services of \$168,802 for Fiscal Year 2016, which is an increase of \$5,697 or 3.5%, about half of which is due to higher auto insurance and repairs. The remainder is due primarily to higher labor related costs including rates, employee benefits, and providing certain services for a longer period as Labor Day will be 6 days later this year than last.

Our budget request for Variable Amount Services is \$30,520 for Fiscal Year 2016, which is a decrease of \$440. The decrease results from lowering the estimated number of recycling dumpsters to be used, partially offset by an increase in the number of recycling bags used.

The budget for Variable Amount Services reflects our request to increase hourly labor rates from last year's range of \$11.63 to \$23.34 to a range of \$11.98 to \$24.04 for Fiscal Year 2016.

Our rate for Fiscal Year 2016 for equipment used, primarily our tractor used for maintenance of beach matting, remains unchanged at \$30.00 per hour.

Annual Costs, primarily for the cost of waste dumpsters used for the disposal of trash removed from the beach, are budgeted to decrease by \$4,000 due to a reduction in the rates we will pay. We are reimbursed annually for the actual costs we incur throughout the year.

We have attached three schedules summarizing our budget requests.

Schedule 1 shows our proposed annual Budget For Beach Patrol Services with comparisons to our Fiscal Year 2015 Budget.

Schedule 2 shows our proposed monthly budget for Fixed Amount Services with comparisons to our Fiscal Year 2015 Budget.

Schedule 3 shows our proposed monthly budget for Variable Amount Services with comparisons to our Fiscal Year 2015 Budget.

Fixed Amount Services performed by the Beach Patrol currently include:

- Patrolling over thirteen miles of beach front (from Braddock Cove to Fish Haul Creek) in marked vehicles for the purpose of rendering assistance to members of the public in need of assistance in the water or on the beach.
- Assisting in off shore rescue, maintaining buoys in designating swimming areas, effecting contact with private boat operators to keep clear of swimming areas and assisting in beach ordinance enforcement. Two personal watercraft ("PWC") are provided for this purpose and a third PWC is used as backup.
- Placing trash collection barrels on the beach, collecting trash and debris from these barrels, and picking up loose trash and debris.
- Advising beachgoers of beach ordinance violations.
- Notifying and coordinating with law enforcement authorities regarding any continuing unlawful activities on the beach.
- Administering first aid to beachgoers who sustain injuries on the beach.
- Notifying and cooperating with EMS when emergency medical services are required on the beach.
- Providing a program for animal control.

Variable Amount Services performed by the Beach Patrol currently include:

- Installing and maintaining beach matting on public beach areas as designated by the Town (now at five locations).
- Installing and maintaining dog litterbag stations on public beach areas as designated by the Town (now at forty-five locations).
- Providing a program for recycling on public beach areas as designated by the Town.

Ralph A. Wagner
Beach Patrol Director
February 10, 2015

Shore Beach Service, Inc.				Schedule 1	
Budget For Beach Patrol Services					
	Fiscal Year Ending June 30		Over (Under) Fiscal		
	2015	2016	Year 2015 Budget		
Fixed Amount Services	\$ 163,105	\$ 168,802	\$ 5,697	3.5%	
Variable Amount Services					
Beach Matting	5,500	5,995	495	9.0%	
Dog Litterbag Stations	660	725	65	9.8%	
Recycling On The Beach	24,800	23,800	(1,000)	-4.0%	
Total Variable Amounts	30,960	30,520	(440)	-1.4%	
Annual Costs	38,000	34,000	(4,000)	-10.5%	
Total	\$ 232,065	\$ 233,322	\$ 1,257	0.5%	

Fees for Fixed Amount Services are set as part of the annual budget process.

Fees for installation and maintenance of Beach Matting, Dog Litterbag Stations, and Recycling On The Beach are determined monthly based on time spent, equipment used and materials purchased.

Labor rates per hour for Fiscal Year 2016 Variable Amounts Budget range from \$11.98 to \$24.04 while these rates used in Fiscal Year 2015 were \$11.63 to \$23.34.

Equipment rate per hour for Fiscal Year 2016 is \$30.00 which is the same rate used in Fiscal Year 2015.

Fees for annual costs, primarily for dumpsters for trash disposal, are actual costs incurred.

Schedule 2							
Shore Beach Service, Inc. Budget For Beach Patrol Services Fixed Amounts Budget							
Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2015 Fixed Amounts			Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2016 Fixed Amounts			Over (Under) Fiscal Year 2015 Budget	
Year	Month	Total	Year	Month	Total	Amount	%
2014	July	\$ 27,866	2015	July	\$ 28,573	\$ 707	2.5%
2014	August	27,866	2015	August	28,573	707	2.5%
2014	September	17,185	2015	September	20,121	2,936	17.1%
2014	October	3,621	2015	October	3,063	(558)	-15.4%
2014	November	3,506	2015	November	2,968	(538)	-15.3%
2014	December	3,621	2015	December	3,063	(558)	-15.4%
2015	January	2,667	2016	January	2,883	216	8.1%
2015	February	2,416	2016	February	2,610	194	8.0%
2015	March	2,668	2016	March	2,883	215	8.1%
2015	April	16,848	2016	April	17,821	973	5.8%
2015	May	27,515	2016	May	28,199	684	2.5%
2015	June	27,326	2016	June	28,045	719	2.6%
Total For Year		\$ 163,105	Total For Year		\$ 168,802	\$ 5,697	3.5%

Fees for Fixed Amount Services are set as part of the annual budget process.

**Shore Beach Service, Inc.
Budget For Beach Patrol Services
Variable Amounts Budget**

Fiscal Year 2015 Variable Amounts						Fiscal Year 2016 Variable Amounts						Over (Under) Fiscal Year 2015 Budget	
Year	Month	Beach Matting	Dog Litterbag Stations	Recycling On The Beach	Total	Year	Month	Beach Matting	Dog Litterbag Stations	Recycling On The Beach	Total	Amount	%
2014	July	\$ 600	\$ 40	\$ 4,100	\$ 4,740	2015	July	\$ 770	\$ 45	\$ 4,100	\$ 4,915	\$ 175	3.7%
2014	August	450	45	3,600	4,095	2015	August	455	50	3,400	3,905	(190)	-4.6%
2014	September	420	45	2,200	2,665	2015	September	400	45	1,700	2,145	(520)	-19.5%
2014	October	425	50	1,100	1,575	2015	October	500	50	1,400	1,950	375	23.8%
2014	November	360	55	900	1,315	2015	November	385	55	700	1,140	(175)	-13.3%
2014	December	300	45	800	1,145	2015	December	350	60	700	1,110	(35)	-3.1%
2015	January	225	50	800	1,075	2016	January	325	60	700	1,085	10	0.9%
2015	February	330	80	800	1,210	2016	February	360	80	700	1,140	(70)	-5.8%
2015	March	500	80	1,100	1,680	2016	March	485	90	900	1,475	(205)	-12.2%
2015	April	600	60	2,400	3,060	2016	April	620	80	2,500	3,200	140	4.6%
2015	May	530	60	3,200	3,790	2016	May	585	60	3,000	3,645	(145)	-3.8%
2015	June	760	50	3,800	4,610	2016	June	760	50	4,000	4,810	200	4.3%
Total For Year		\$ 5,500	\$ 660	\$ 24,800	\$ 30,960	Total For Year		\$ 5,995	\$ 725	\$ 23,800	\$ 30,520	\$ (440)	-1.4%

Fees for installation and maintenance of Beach Matting, Dog Litterbag Stations, and Recycling On The Beach are determined monthly based on time spent, equipment used and materials purchased.

Hourly rates for labor and equipment are set during the annual budget process.

The proposed hourly labor rates for Fiscal Year 2016 range from \$11.68 to \$24.04 as compared to a range of \$11.63 to \$23.34 used in Fiscal Year 2015.

The proposed hourly equipment rate for Fiscal Year 2016 is \$30.00 which is the same rate used in Fiscal Year 2015.

Fiscal Year 2016 Variable Amounts Budgets are estimated based on past experience.



COASTAL DISCOVERY MUSEUM

Experience The Lowcountry Up Close

MEMO

To: Steve Riley

From: Rex Garniewicz

Re: General Fund Budget Request

Date: February 23, 2015

Please find attached Coastal Discovery Museum's Five (5) Year Property Maintenance Program spreadsheet indicating property maintenance needs. The FY 16 *General Fund Budget* request is for \$62,700, a 7.4% decrease over the previous FY 15 grant. This reduction follows a 12% decrease the previous year and reflects the museum's increased ability to finance property maintenance through other revenue sources. Further cost savings has been made possible through the dedicated work of a core of volunteers who perform minor repair and maintenance at the property, as well as in-kind donations from local area businesses, including lumber, paint, and labor.

Currently the Museum is actively utilizing 9 of the 10 structures on the Honey Horn property. Funding from a variety of public and private sources, including ATAX money allocated by the Town, will allow us to completely renovate the 10th building (the Supervisor's House/Discovery Lab) outside of our normal property maintenance program and open this space to the public in FY 16.

In eight years of major property improvements at Honey Horn, the Museum has invested nearly five million dollars in assets that are owned by the Town and leased to the museum. The Coastal Discovery Museum wants to be a good steward of these assets for the Town and is grateful for the Town's support of the major maintenance activities on the property.



COASTAL DISCOVERY MUSEUM
Experience The Lowcountry Up Close

MEMO

To: Steve Riley
Town Manager

From: Rex Garniewicz

Re: 2015-16 Management Fee Budget Request

Date: February 23, 2015

The Coastal Discovery Museum Board of Directors, Staff, Members, and Volunteers are grateful for the continued commitment of the Town of Hilton Head Island in providing support to the operations and maintenance of the Honey Horn property.

Since opening the property to the public in 2007, attendance has remained strong. Last fiscal year we served 98,691 individuals and in the first six months of this fiscal year, attendance is up by 25%. If our numbers hold, we expect our total attendance this fiscal year to be at 116,000. This will be the largest attendance total in our history at Honey Horn.

One area where our performance has been extremely strong is in our mission-based programming. Year-to-date cumulative attendance for our Walks, Talks, and Tours is outpacing the FY 14 results by 70%. This indicates that we are reaching more people through our mission and that we have more people using our museum facility, outdoor theatre, pavilion, and grounds.

We are pleased to serve the community through a number of events including: The Gullah Celebration; Symphony under the Stars; Kiwanis Enchanted Forest; Chili Cookoff; Italian Festival; St. Francis Picnic, Relay for Life, and Kiwanis Rib Burnoff. Support from the Town allows us to offer reduced property rental fees to not-for-profit organizations. We assist with other events on the island, such as Heritage RBC and Concours D'Elegance, by providing parking. In September, we served as the location for the Town's dedication of the Charlie Simmons Bridge 9/24/14, and we would like to be considered as a venue for other Town events.

Other important accomplishments in the past year include:

- **Education** – 422 school programs, reaching 5,850 individual students, many of whom participated in multiple programs.

- **Public Programs** – The Museum offered 1,481 separate programs for visitors and residents during the past 12 months.
- **Property Improvements** – Upgrades to the public bathrooms located in the Farmhouse, landscaping of Discovery House.
- **New Property Installations** – Through generous funding from the Town of Hilton Head Island (ATAX), The VanLandingham Rotary, the Community Foundation of the Lowcountry, and over 120 individual donors; the museum has started the process of building our new Discovery Lab!

The museum is proud to be the site of the *Hilton Head Island Hall of Fame*, sponsored by the Rotary Club of Hilton Head Island. Thus far, seven (7) prominent Hilton Head Island residents have been enshrined at Honey Horn with bronze plaques highlighting their service to this community.

The Birds-Eye View Theater, has opened, providing a unique outdoor learning space for youth and adult programs, including Lowcountry Critters with Joe Maffo.

Access to and from the property has improved with the addition of a bicycle pathway, and work starting in March to repave the exit road out to U.S. Route 278. This project will improve site use for larger events, such as parking or the Heritage RBC and Councours D'Elegance events.

Thanks in part to the continued support of the Town of Hilton Head Island, the finances for the Museum remain stable. Over the past few years, earned revenue opportunities for the Museum experienced a slight increase each year while contributed dollars have decreased a slightly. One of my presidents efforts moving forward will be to increase private donations to the museum. Much of the continued success of this Museum is due to the support of a large volunteer force numbering some 150 residents. This dedicated team has helped to reduce/stabilize the annual operating costs of the Museum through their service. And finally, there are a number of Lowcountry businesses that have provided free and/or reduced fees for services rendered to the Museum.

Through the efforts of a diversified group of supporters and funders, the Coastal Discovery Museum has been able to sustain its goal of being a premier cultural attraction for Hilton Head Island. Of all the things to do on Hilton Head Island, it is ranked #6 with a 92% positive rating (<http://www.tripadvisor.com>). The Town's elected officials and staff have played a significant role in this accomplishment.

As to the Fiscal Year 2016 Budget, the Museum Board and Staff respectfully seek a Management Fee in the amount of \$75,000. This request is at level funding for the sixth (6th) consecutive year.



COASTAL DISCOVERY MUSEUM
Experience The Lowcountry Up Close

2015-2016 Requested Sea Turtle Protection Project Budget

Sea Turtle Season – May 1 Through October 30

Staff Salaries		\$25,500
Museum Administration		5,500
Staff Training	Uniforms	500
Vehicle Maintenance	General maintenance, parts, fuel	1,800
Supplies	Gloves, poles, flagging tape, probes, etc.	500
Equipment	Verizon wireless, tools	600
Vehicle Purchase	John Deere Gator 4x2 TX	7,750
Insurance		300
	Grand Total	\$42,450



COASTAL DISCOVERY MUSEUM
Experience The Lowcountry Up Close

MEMO

To: Steve Riley
Town Manager

From: Rex Garnieiwcz

Re: Sea Turtle Protection Budget FY 2015-16

Date: February 23, 2015

The Hilton Head Island Sea Turtle Protection Project provides professional monitoring and protection of sea turtle nests and hatching activity on Hilton Head Island. I have included a 2014 summary report that demonstrates the high success rate of our Sea Turtle Protection Project which ensures that there is no negative impact of Hilton Head Island's beach renourishment projects on sea turtle hatchling success. Nests relocated by the Sea Turtle Protection Project have increased survivorship when compared to in-situ nests, and overall high hatching and emerging rates suggest that renourishment on Hilton Head Island, when combined with the effort of the Sea Turtle Protection Project, has improved the nesting success rates of loggerhead turtles.

It is with this letter that we request funding for the 2015-2016 sea turtle season in the amount of \$42,450. Although this represents an increase of \$5,400 over the previous year's \$37,050. The total includes the replacement of what will then be a five year old John Deere Gator at a cost of \$7,750 and savings in other areas to partially balance this cost.

The total increase is due to the following budget changes:

1. Vehicle Maintenance: This category has seen an increase of \$50, the bulk of the \$1,800 total is a predicted fuel cost of \$1,440; the remaining \$360 is reserved for minor vehicle repairs.
2. Supplies: This category has seen a decrease of \$1,500. We had a record nesting season in 2013 (339 nests). In 2014, we were expecting to exceed these numbers, but instead experienced a 61.3% decrease in nesting density. We were prepared for more nests by purchasing additional supplies, most of which we have left over for use in 2015.

3. Equipment: This category has seen a decrease of \$900. There were some additional expenses when we moved to entering data on iPads so we could have live updates; now we only have a service charge of \$40/month for both iPads for 6 months (\$240). The remaining expense covers miscellaneous equipment such as a jack for tire changing and new measuring tapes. This budget item may increase in the future when we need to replace our iPads.
4. Vehicle Purchase. Although we were on a schedule to replace one of our two vehicles every two years, we were able to make it an extra year by carefully maintaining and rust-proofing our vehicles. Unfortunately even with careful maintenance and cleaning the beach environment takes a toll on these vehicles and we will need to plan on purchasing a new Gator TX 4x2 for FY16. Current MSRP for the base model is \$8,199, and rust proof treatment adds another \$250. As we did last time, we would like to make this purchase through the town so that we can qualify for a municipal discount. This should bring the total cost down to \$7,750. The success rate of this project and the safety of our staff require dependable vehicles.

Notes for FY16

The planned beach renourishment program from Oct. 1, 2015 to April 30, 2016 involves placing 2 million cubic yards of sand along 40,000 feet of shoreline on Hilton Head Island. We feel that it is important that the Sea Turtle Protection Project has a high success rate both before and after this project. Funding at the level requested will ensure that we have a high nesting success rate even if we have numbers similar to the 2013 sea turtle season. In that year Hilton Head Island documented record breaking 339 sea turtle nests, the second consecutive 300+ nest season on record.

In FY17, we will not need to purchase a new vehicle and we expect the total project budget to be at or below the \$37,050 level of FY15.

The Coastal Discovery Museum appreciates the support from the Town of Hilton Head Island in funding the Sea Turtle Protection Project. It is a highly visible conservation effort that constantly receives positive feedback from both residents and tourists. Furthermore, the Hilton Head Island Sea Turtle Protection Project is recognized as one of the most successful programs on the East Coast.

Attachments: (1) – Budget Request Itemization
(2) – Final Sea Turtle Summary Report for 2014



EST. 1985

**HILTON HEAD ISLAND
SEA TURTLE PROTECTION PROJECT
SUMMARY REPORT 2014**

Introduction

The Hilton Head Island Sea Turtle Protection Project is managed by the Coastal Discovery Museum on Hilton Head Island and funded by the Town of Hilton Head Island. This project operates under the guidance and authorization of the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR), with the objectives of monitoring sea turtle nesting activity on Hilton Head Island, relocating sea turtle nests according to the guidelines set forth by the SCDNR, conducting nest inventories to determine the nest and emergence success of nests laid on Hilton Head Island, and reporting sea turtle stranding activity within Hilton Head Island/Bluffton area.

The Hilton Head Island Sea Turtle Protection Project was funded in 2014 by a generous grant from the Town of Hilton Head Island. The Project and Museum are extremely thankful for the continued support of the Town, without which the Project would not exist.

I. Project Summary Report

Survey S or W Boundary	Mile marker 1 at the south end of Hilton Head Island - the entrance to South Beach Marina		
Survey N or E Boundary	Mile marker 134 at the north end of Hilton Head Island (in Port Royal Plantation); Mitchelville Beach Park, Hilton Head Plantation		
Length of Daily Survey (km) <i>km = miles x 1.6</i>	21.44	Total Kilometers Surveyed	3408.96
Total Days Surveyed	159	Days per Week Surveyed	7
Time of Day Surveyed	5:00 AM	Number of Participants	7
Date Surveys Begin	2014-05-1	Date Surveys End	2014-10-06
Date of First Crawl	2014-05-20	Date of Last Crawl	2014-08-04
Date of First Nest	2014-05-20	Date of Last Nest	2014-08-04
Total Nests	131	Nesting Density (nests/km)	6.11
<i>In Situ</i>	76	Undetected	1
Relocated	55 (41.9%)	Disoriented/Misoriented	10
Hatchery	0	Washed Away Tide/Storm	0
False Crawls	70	Depredated	6
		Unknown	7

Mean Clutch Count	108.9	Incubation Duration (All)	58.9
Hatchlings Produced	9891	Incubation Duration (<i>In situ</i>)	59.4
Hatchlings Emerged	9133	Incubation Duration (Relocated)	58.4

MEAN HATCH SUCCESS		MEAN EMERGENCE SUCCESS		NEST SUCCESS		BEACH SUCCESS	
67.4%		62.4%		84.7%		65.1%	
59.3%	78.6%	55.5%	72.1%	80.2%	90.9%	131	201
<i>IN SITU</i>		<i>RELOCATED</i>		<i>IN SITU</i>		<i>RELOCATED</i>	
						TOTAL NESTS	TOTAL CRAWLS

Eggs Lost (Total Eggs Lost = 176)

Research	100	Standing Water	0
Dog	17	Shallow Nest	7
Probing	22	Broken eggs	12
Ghost Crab	14	Other	1
Finger	4		
Other	Tide/Storm		

Hatchling Loss (Total Hatchling Loss = 3)

Misorientation	5	Fire Ants	1
Disorientation	0 (1 live)	Ghost Crab	1
Other			

Comments	Hatchling tracks were usually the only indicator of the Misorientation/Disorientation. Rarely were live hatchlings recovered.
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II. Nesting

A. Coverage

The Hilton Head Island Sea Turtle Protection Project monitors marine turtle nesting activity on the 13.4 mile stretch of Atlantic-facing beach on Hilton Head Island. Mitchelville Beach Park and Pine Island (Hilton Head Plantation) are not monitored, but staff responds to calls from the public for sea turtle crawls. The 13.4 mile beach of Hilton Head Island is divided into intervals by beach marker posts placed in the primary or secondary

dunes approximately one-tenth of a mile apart. Each post is marked with a number ascending from the southern end to the northern end of the Island. These beach markers are used to decipher the locations of sea turtle nests found along the coast of Hilton Head Island.

Daily patrols monitoring sea turtle nesting activity (May-August) and hatchling activity (June – October) on Hilton Head Island, began at approximately 5:00 a.m. during the 2014 season. Patrols were led by two project staff members who navigated the beach just above the high tide line, using a John Deer Gator vehicle. Patrols began when there was sufficient daylight to observe nesting activity and avoid interfering with nesting turtles. This start time also allowed project staff to identify nest and false crawl activity before field signs were lost due to heavy beach use and in most cases, allowed project members to relocate nests, if necessary, within a twelve-hour period after the eggs were laid.

All staff members were responsible for identifying nests and false crawls, marking nests, relocating nests if necessary, and entering the data digitally onto seaturtle.org using a Verizon wireless enabled iPad. During the hatching season, these duties increased to daily checks for hatchling activity, inventorying nests, and completing data entry. The Hilton Head Island Sea Turtle Protection Project began daily monitoring for sea turtle nesting activity on May 1st. The first three nests of the season were found on May 20, 2014. Patrols ran daily from the 1st of May to the 1st of October. One nest continued to incubate on the beach after October 11th. This nest was monitored every other day for hatchling activity until it (# 126) was inventoried on October 7th.

B. Locating/Relocating Nests

All possible nest crawls identified by project members were probed in an attempt to verify the presence of eggs for an accurate determination of nests and false crawls. A total of 22 eggs were lost to probing efforts during the 2014 season. Using field signs, staff members identified the incoming crawl and probed the body pit until a soft spot was detected. When this spot was located, project members carefully dug through the sand with their hands to verify the presence of eggs and position of the egg chamber. Nests were marked with three PVC stakes and orange flagging. Sea turtle nests were screened on the south end of the island, between Mile Marker 1 and Mile Marker 50 (5 miles) in Sea Pines as coyote predation was a problem in that area toward the end of the 2013 season. The 2014 season resulted in no instances of coyote predation. In the future, nests in this area will continue to be screened when they are located as a precautionary measure.

During the 2014 season, 130 loggerhead sea turtle nests and 1 green sea turtle nest were recorded on Hilton Head Island (0 nests were found at Mitcheville Beach Park; 5 nests in Hilton Head Plantation). There were 70 false crawls recorded. Of the 131 total nests, 41.9 % were relocated due to their precarious position on the beach. Most relocated nests were those that were found at the base of escarpments where tidal inundation threatened egg survival, below the spring high tide line, or in areas along the beach where there is standing water. If at all possible, these nests were relocated directly landward of their original position, or if necessary, transported to the nearest suitable location. A location was determined to be suitable if it was above the spring high tide line and free of vegetation.

C. Methods of Marking Nests

Nests identified by project staff were marked with 3/4" PVC stakes in a triangular arrangement; 1 foot landward of nest chamber (noted M-3) and 2 feet seaward of the nest chamber, split 1 foot south and north of the midline (noted M-1 and M-2, respectively). A fourth stake (noted M-4) was placed in the primary dune in line with the nest and M-3. The distance from the M-3 to M-4 stakes, as well as the distance between the nest and the closest beach marker was recorded. The nest location included the direction north (N) or south (S) to the nearest beach marker and the distance in feet from the nest to beach marker (Example: 30N025 indicated that the nest was found 25 feet north of beach marker 30). Both the original and relocated positions were recorded in the seaturtle.org database. A GPS location was determined using a handheld Garmin GPS.

Information on the PVC stakes included a sticker identifying the marked area as a sea turtle nest, the nest number, stake number (e.g. M-1), the Coastal Discovery Museum website, and a statement that the stake and nest contents were protected and not to be disturbed. Additionally, nests were marked with an orange "SCDNR Loggerhead Turtle Nesting Area" sign attached to the M3 stake. Information regarding the date the nest was laid was not included on the PVC stakes.

D. Nest Monitoring Methods

Sea turtle nests were monitored on a continual basis (one time per week days 1-45; everyday after 45 days of incubation) throughout incubation to check for removal of stakes, signs of predation, and indications of human disturbance. When applicable depredation, misorientation/disorientation, and overwash events were noted directly into seaturtle.org using the iPad.

All nesting information and false crawl activities were recorded directly onto the iPad accessing seaturtle.org. The 2014 season was the first season using the iPad technology during patrol. It was very successful.

III. Hatching

A. Determining Emergence Activity

In an attempt to determine the first date of emergence, each nest was monitored daily beginning at 45 days of incubation. When nests reached 45 days of incubation, a green flag was placed on the M1 or M2 stake and the crust of hard sand created by rain was broken to facilitate the exit of hatchlings and prevent doming.

Daily nest checks allowed project members to make note of field evidence indicating hatch or emergence activity. Field evidence of emergence activity was determined by the presence of a crater-like emergence hole or depression, and/or hatchling tracks.

B. Methods Used to Inventory Nests

All sea turtle nests were inventoried three or more days after the first signs of a nest emergence or after 75 days of incubation if no emergence activity was detected. During a nest inventory, the contents of the nest were excavated and sorted appropriately. Data recorded at the time of inventory included the number of empty shells, the number of unhatched or pipped eggs, the number of dead hatchlings and the number of live

hatchlings found in the nest. If viable eggs or hatchlings with yolk sacs were found, those were re-buried and checked in 5-7 day intervals, and then placed into one of the above categories. If live hatchlings were first encountered when excavating the nest, project staff carefully covered the nest and waited for subsequent emergence activity. Inventory data was entered directly into seaturtle.org using the iPad.

C. Time of Day Inventories were Performed

Nest inventories were conducted by project members in the early morning or late evening in the event that live hatchlings were within the nest chamber.

IV. PROBLEMS

A. Predators

Hilton Head has been fortunate to have few instances of terrestrial mammal nest predation prior to the 2013 season (9 nests lost to coyotes) and none in 2014. During the 2014 season, egg predation by dog was observed only once and assumed to be a curious domestic dog. We will continue to expect the coyotes to return and take preventative measures.

Fire ant activity within the nest chamber or in the vicinity of the nest was once again evident this year, particularly between beach markers 30-50 in the Sea Pines Plantation. Fire ants did not pose a significant threat the nests this year and no action was taken to control fire ants.

B. Poaching Activity

The HHI Sea Turtle Protection Project worked with South Carolina Department of Natural Resources Law Enforcement during the 2011 season in an effort to eliminate poaching incidents on Hilton Head Island. There were no nests poached in 2012 or 2013 on Hilton Head Beach. One nest (#336) was poached on Mitchellville Beach in 2013. As this beach is not monitored daily, the incident was not discovered until its 75 day inventory on 8/16/2013. SCDNR Law Enforcement was notified after the fact as the nesting season was coming to a close. No action was necessary. The 2014 nesting season resulted in no known poaching.

C. Artificial Lighting

Ten disorientation/misorientation events were documented during the 2014 season as determined by tracks going the wrong direction, by the presence of live and/or dead hatchlings in the dunes, or by both determining factors. All dis/misorientation events were documented and the Town Code Enforcement Officer, Jonathan Garcia, was notified so that additional monitoring in the problematic areas could be implemented.

D. Over-wash and Erosion

Some nests experienced overwash events during the 2014 sea turtle season. Over-wash events were monitored daily throughout the tidal cycle and documented. No nests were "lost/Final Status Unknown" as a result of extremely high tides or storm surge.

E. Crowd Management

Crowd control, management, and education are all responsibilities of project members. Common encounters with the public include addressing sea turtle related questions and explaining nesting behavior, emergence

activity, and the inventory process. All staff are trained to accurately answer questions related to marine turtle nesting on Hilton Head Island. Staff members work together to answer questions as well as complete project responsibilities while on patrol. Additionally, project members are encouraged to distribute educational brochures focusing on the biology and behavior of loggerhead sea turtles found off the South Carolina coast. These brochures provide the public with more in-depth information regarding sea turtles nesting on Hilton Head, the Hilton Head Island Sea Turtle Protection Project, and ways that individuals can work to protect marine turtles.

When possible inventories are conducted in the early morning hours when there are few visitors to the beach. Typically crowds are not present during inventories, however on occasion members of the public observe nest inventories. In such circumstances, one project staff member educates the public while the other staff member conducts the nest inventory. Project staff do not watch soon-to-hatch nests at night.

F. Beach Obstructions

The Town of Hilton Head Island does not permit tents, lounge furniture, or other structures to remain on the beach overnight. However, due to the high number of people that visit Hilton Head Island during the summer months, such structures are occasionally left on the beach. Sea turtle interactions with beach obstructions were not observed during the 2014 season. Holes do continue to be a challenge on Hilton Head Beach. In partnership with Shore Beach Services, we continue to educate visitors to the island about the detrimental impacts sand holes can have on both hatchling and adult sea turtles.

V. EDUCATION

A. Types of Educational Programs

Sea Turtle educational programs were conducted through the Coastal Discovery Museum. Staff-led Power Point presentations featuring sea turtle pictures and videos, preserved specimens (dead hatchlings, unhatched eggs) and other marine turtle artifacts (skull, carapace, scutes) were used to disseminate information to participants. Evening educational turtle walks were conducted on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday evenings during the months of June, July, and August. Additionally, several sea turtle presentations were given to diverse civic groups and local youth groups including schools and scout groups.

B. Printed Materials

The Coastal Discovery Museum and the Town of Hilton Head Island continues to provide educational sea turtle brochures for distribution to the public. The brochures include information about the biology and behavior of loggerhead sea turtles, local protection efforts, light ordinance information, emergency contact information, and actions that individuals can take to protect sea turtles. Brochures were provided to all educational program participants as well as to some beachfront resorts and rental agencies to distribute to guests upon arrival to the island. Additionally, patrol staff readily distributed brochures to the general public during morning patrols.

C. Media Articles and TV

Apparently, the local papers and media were not interested in the preservation or status of the nesting sea turtles on Hilton Head Island in 2014 as there were no requests or reports published. This was not due to a lack of request for publication by the Hilton Head Island Sea Turtle Protection Project Manager. An article outlining

the participation of the USCB (University of South Carolina Beaufort) student intern and the research project that she was conducting was submitted, but not utilized.

D. Public Awareness Turtle Walks

The Coastal Discovery Museum conducted 45 evening Turtle Talk & Walk programs for the general public during the months of June, July, and August. Trained staff from the Hilton Head Island Sea Turtle Protection Project led the sea turtle talk and walk presentations. The evening programs included a 45-minute Power Point lecture focusing on the biology and behavior of sea turtle species and the conservation efforts in place to protect them. After the lecture, participants were taken to the beach to observe nest sites.

The Turtle Talk & Walk programs were offered Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings from 7:30pm to 9:30 pm at The Sonesta Resort in Shipyard Plantation, HHI.

VI. HHI SEA TURTLE PROTECTION PROJECT INTERN

University of South Carolina Beaufort (USCB) student, Rebecca Persons was selected as the HHI Sea Turtle Protection Project Intern for the 2014 sea turtle nesting season. This program had been dormant for several years. Duties included weekly patrol and organization of yolk collection for an independent study research project offered by USCB. A request for SCDNR permitting to collect and analyze yolk samples associated with the egg shell collected for research conducted by University of Georgia was approved for the 2014 nesting season on Hilton Head Island. The results of this project: *Seasonal Differences in Highly Unsaturated Fatty Acids (HUFAs) in broods of Caretta caretta (Loggerhead Sea Turtle) on Hilton Head Island, South Carolina*, will be revealed following the completion of the 2014 fall semester independent research credit with Dr. Stephen Borgianini, Ph.D.

VII. PROJECT ORGANIZATON

Amber Kuehn, Hilton Head Island Sea Turtle Protection Project Manager, holds the permit for the Hilton Head Island Sea Turtle Protection Project and acts as the coordinator for the overall direction and day to day activities of the Hilton Head Island Sea Turtle Protection Project. In addition to monitoring nest and emergence activity on Hilton Head Island, duties include training project staff, creating and managing patrol and turtle presentation schedules, organizing and analyzing collected data, generating and preparing project reports, working as the liaison between SCDNR and project staff, and overseeing challenges that arise during the sea turtle season. The 2014 Hilton Head Island Sea Turtle Protection Project was fortunate to have a staff of seven employees. Excluding the intern, all staff had at least one season of patrol experience. Levels of experience amongst project members ranged between 0-16 years of sea turtle field experience. One intern was trained during the 2014 nesting season.

All members of the Hilton Head Island Sea Turtle Protection Project are trained to identify crawls, distinguish between nest and false crawl activity, locate and mark nests using field signs and a wooden probe, relocate nests when necessary, inventory sea turtle nests, and respond to stranded sea turtles. Project Manager, Amber

Kuehn, received the SCDNR 2014 appreciation award for her “dedication and efforts with Sea Turtle Stranding Response”.

Open communication between project staff is encouraged. In addition to full staff meetings, email communication, text messaging, and phone calls have been effective methods for delivery of important and/or time sensitive information. All data is available to project staff 24 hours a day via seaturtle.org.

VIII. CONCERNS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The beaches of Hilton Head Island should continue to be monitored for sea turtle nesting activity.

The Town of Hilton Head Island’s sea turtle brochure should continue to be produced and distributed to educate the public, particularly in regards to beachfront lighting. Currently, a digital version is emailed to beachfront real estate companies on Hilton Head Island for review and redistribution. This is not an effective method.

Conducting educational programs for the public is necessary as Hilton Head Island continues to be a prime tourist destination. The Coastal Discovery Museum will continue this effort as well as the production of its own brochure to distribute at public programs and on the beach during patrol.

Light violation patrols by the Town Codes Enforcement Officer continue to play an integral role in reducing beachfront light incidences and should continue during the 2015 sea turtle season.

Ongoing training for the staff is important as well. The staff is encouraged to attend regional sea turtle conferences/training sessions and the International Sea Turtle Symposium when possible.

Genetic sampling continues to provide extremely important information related to nest site fidelity and female fecundity.

An internship should continue to be offered to encourage more students to become involved in the field of wildlife conservation.

IX. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This project would not have been possible without the financial support received from the Town of Hilton Head Island.

Staff members who devoted time to monitor the beach for sea turtles activity included: Kym Castillo, Jayme Lopko, Dawn Brut, Leigh West Brown, Carrell Cranswick, Rebecca Persons, and Amber Kuehn - Thank you to everyone for your dedicated hard work and ongoing enthusiasm.

A special thank you to Holley Martin Miles for her efforts with seaturtle.org database to monitor data entry on the iPads for errors. This was a great help and contributed to the success of the electronic data entry trial.

Thank you to the Coastal Discovery Museum staff for their continued efforts in support of the Hilton Head Island Sea Turtle Protection Project. Several volunteers helped with the organization of evening Turtle Talks and Walks.

Thank you to the dedicated staff from the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources, especially, Jennifer Cormany and Charlotte Hope who shared their knowledge, provided guidance and supported the Hilton Head Island Sea Turtle Protection Project.

Thank you Jonathan Garcia (Town Codes Enforcement Officer), Sally Krebs (Town Natural Resources Administrator) and Jayme Lopko (Town Planner) who dedicated many hours to effectively monitor and enforce the Town Light Ordinance.

A special thank you to South Carolina Department of Natural Resources Law Enforcement Officers, specifically Sgt. Michael Paul Thomas for always being just a phone call away.