

ACTION PLAN TO CREATE A “KEEP HORRY COUNTY BEAUTIFUL” CHAPTER

HISTORY

Earlier this year Horry County government placed litter control under the purview of the Sheriff’s Beach Services, in part due to questions from the State regarding use of Accommodation Tax revenues to fund such programs. However, the lack of dedicated funding combined with a restructuring of the correctional system resulting in a shortage of labor for roadside pickups, have stymied the litter control program in Horry County.

The mission of the Horry County Parks and Open Space Board is to promote Horry County as a naturally beautiful place to live, work and play. Thus on January 25, 2010 the Parks and Open Space Board invited Paul Whitten, Horry County Public Safety Director, and Lieutenant Stewart to their meeting to discuss litter control in Horry County. Also present at that meeting were members of a “Keep North Myrtle Beach Beautiful” group who described that group’s efforts at litter prevention, beautification, outreach and education.

Planning Staff present at that meeting suggested drafting an Action Plan for the possible creation of a “Keep Horry County Beautiful” chapter which would function under the auspices of the Horry County Parks and Open Space Board and would promote, coordinate, and organize a County wide litter control program.

ORGANIZATION

In keeping with the mission of the Parks and Open Space Board to protect and preserve the natural beauty of the County, the proposed “Keep Horry County Beautiful” Chapter would be established and administered by the Horry County Parks and Open Space Board with support from the Horry County Planning Department.

The mission of the “Keep Horry County Beautiful” chapter will be to involve, educate and empower the citizens of Horry County to maintain the beauty of our natural environment by engaging in litter control, environmental education and outreach.

Activities would include:

- Coordination of litter prevention and litter pick up efforts throughout the County
- Environmental Education & Outreach – working through schools, educational institutions and the Solid Waste Authority
- Promotion of Adopt-a-Highway, Adopt-a-Beach, and Adopt-a-Park programs.

The Horry County parks and Open Space Board (P&OSB) shall function as the parent organization to the proposed Keep Horry County Beautiful (KHCB) group. In the beginning the P&OSB will nominate members and a chairperson to lead the KHCB group. And the P&OSB will draft both a set of by-laws and a resolution to create the KHCB through County Council approval.

Administrative and technical assistance to both the P&OSB and the KHCB shall be provided by the same staff liaison person from the Horry County Planning Department. Technical and administrative assistance in organizing and conducting regular meetings as well as facilitating communication between the parent and the affiliated board, and between the KHCB group and its potential area subchapters shall also be handled by the Staff liaison person from the Horry County Planning Department.

KHCB will have eleven seats as this would create consistency with both the amount of P&OSB chairs and County Council districts. The KHCB group will have its own set of by-laws, rules of procedure, meetings, staff support, attendance, qualifications, purposes and objectives, as well as defined powers and duties.

Prospective members to the KHCB chapter may consist of Parks and Open Space Board members, representing their specific resident council districts or volunteer citizens recruited by the P&OSB. The first chairperson shall be nominated and elected by the P&OSB, yet after the expiration of a first term shall be elected by the members of the KHCB chapter.

In order to coordinate litter control and prevention and to promote environmental education and outreach, it is recommended that the KHCB group work with representatives of other governmental institutions, such as Public Safety/Sherriff's Department, Beach Services/litter Control; Horry County Solid Waste Authority, Recycling & Outreach Coordinator; and Horry County School Board, Environmental Education Coordinator. This can be attained by either incorporating these positions as permanent members on the KHCB committee or by regularly communicating with each and by attendance of representatives of these institutions at KHCB meetings.

PURPOSES AND OBJECTIVES

The proposed KHCB group shall have the following purposes and objectives:

- To coordinate with organizations in Horry County to organize litter cleanup events (sweeps);
- To collaborate with area gardening organizations, municipalities and State agencies and Horry County Council to beautify prominent gateways and main thoroughfares;
- To collaborate with local schools, educational institutions and the Solid Waste Authority to teach litter prevention and recycling at Horry County schools and throughout the County;
- To work to promote Adopt-a-Highway, Adopt-a-Beach, Adopt-a-Park... programs.

BUDGET/STAFF TIME

The KHCB chapter shall be established with available awareness grant funding through Palmetto Pride and Keep America Beautiful once County Council approves its establishment. To qualify for most specific grant funding, the proposed chapter must participate in the "Great American Cleanup" between March 1 and May 31 of every year and must regularly report the amount of trash collected and the number of volunteers who participated. Certification as an official KAB chapter is a prerequisite for KAB grants.

To attain certification, the only other locally active KAB chapter in North Myrtle Beach has promised to offer support by helping out with materials (litter bags, safety vests, etc) and scheduling cleanup events.

By collaborating with Horry County Public Safety and parks and Recreation, the proposed KHCB chapter may receive co-funding and sponsoring for specific projects, such as litter cleanups, park adoptions, environmental education and other projects.

Staffing will be provided by the same staff liaison person who is currently serving the Horry County Parks and Open Space Board, who is a senior planner with the Horry County Planning and Zoning Department. Further administrative assistance may be provided through the Planning Department should staffing availability and timing be secured.

GOALS AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

The following goals and implementation strategies are examples based on the main purpose and objective of the proposed “Keep Horry County Beautiful” chapter.

1. GOAL: Establish a “Keep Horry County Beautiful” chapter that can successfully alleviate the litter problems in Horry County.

STRATEGY: Create a KHCB chapter by County Council resolution as a subcommittee of the Parks and Open Space Board that not only coordinates with Horry County Government, but also actively works with civic groups and volunteers from all eleven council districts.

STRATEGY: Establish local KHCB subchapters wither within the eleven council districts or within specific geographical areas to better address collaboration potentials with local civic institutions and organizations.

2. GOAL: Function as Horry County’s main coordinator for litter cleanup events.

STRATEGY: Promote Adopt-a-Highway, Adopt-a-Beach, Adopt-a-Park, Adopt-a-Landing stewardship programs, shifting litter pick-up and beautification responsibilities to civic organizations or volunteers.

STRATEGY: Collaborate with the already existing “Keep North Myrtle Beach Beautiful” chapter to organize joint ventures as well as share organizational knowledge and materials.

3. GOAL: Collaborate with local master Gardener and other civic landscaping organizations/groups to enhance beautification efforts in Horry County.

STRATEGY: Apply for funding grants with the SC Department of Transportation’s roadside beautification program.

STRATEGY: Promote and coordinate beautification planning and planting efforts throughout Horry County with all interested civic and governmental organizations.

4. GOAL: Work with existing environmental education stakeholders, such as Solid Waste Authority, Horry County Schools and other civic organizations to promote outreach regarding litter prevention and control, recycling and other environmental issues.

STRATEGY: Promote environmental education projects and establish partnerships between and among existing environmental service groups

STRATEGY: Create “Keep Horry County Beautiful” kids groups at interested schools to involve school children and their curriculum in litter prevention and control.