



Jekyll Island Citizens Association

4/20/23

The Jekyll Island Citizens Association would like to acknowledge and thank Jones Hooks for his dedication to the protection and improvement of Jekyll Island over the last 15 years. In the May 1st, 2008 edition of the Brunswick News, announcing Jones' selection as the new Executive Director of JIA, he said "I'm honored by the opportunity to help manage and preserve one of Georgia's most precious natural resources. I look forward to welcoming more Georgians to enjoy all the wonderful things Jekyll Island has to offer."

Jones came to Jekyll when the Island was in serious need of revitalization to keep it from deteriorating to a point where it would become one of those disappointing destinations that he now refers to from time to time for other locations. The Linger Longer plans that were being evaluated at that time were a cause of grave concern for residents as well as visitors because the plans proposed what many thought was excessive redevelopment. The concern was that this excessive redevelopment would destroy much of those "precious natural resources" that make Jekyll Island special. We are sure there were many reasons why those plans were scaled back, but we feel confident that our concerns were heard by the Jekyll Island State Park Authority Board and the new executive director.

Over the years there have been issues on which the Jekyll Island Citizens Association and Mr. Hooks have disagreed, but Jones has always been very responsive to our inquiries and has listened to our opinions. JICA understands and respects that we are only one of the many stake holders who feel their opinions should carry significant weight regarding the administration of the island and acknowledge that in the end, Jones and his staff must make decisions based on what they feel is best. In addition to Jones' responsiveness to our inquiries, he has also been very accessible, arranging annual meetings with the JICA executive committee for wide-ranging discussions about plans for the coming years. When asked, he was willing to come to our public meetings, even if it was a bit like voluntarily being thrown to the lions on a few occasions.

Jones' stewardship over the last 15 years has balanced needed revitalization with protecting the island's environmental beauty. The convention center, the Beach Village, and new hotels, were built, but so were new parks, a world-renowned turtle center, a Green Space Ordinance, improved bike paths, a health clinic, a new Safety Complex, beautiful landscaping, and a conservation plan that protects exactly those things that make Jekyll Island the Georgia jewel that it is.

In the 2021 Jekyll Island Master Plan Update, Jones mentions the years of revitalization that were necessary but then goes on to say, "Now that most of the original revitalization plan has been completed, the emphasis becomes capacity management to preserve Jekyll's natural

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resources and to assure the island does not become a disappointing destination for visitors and residents alike.” As mentioned above, in 2008 Jones said he was “honored by the opportunity to help manage and preserve one of Georgia’s most precious natural resources”. Now 15 years later the Jekyll Island Citizens Association says, “Thank you Jones for a job well done”.

Craig Patterson
President Jekyll Island Citizens Association

cc: Jones Hooks, JISPA