

Surfriders Outline Local Efforts

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OCEAN CITY — Due to the member efforts of the local chapter of a nationally recognized non-profit organization, the local surf scene is expected to take a significant turn for the better within the next five years.

Commencing a campaign titled "Leave Your Footprints Only," members of Ocean City's non-profit environmental Surfrider Foundation, which aims to preserve oceans, waves and beaches on every coast of the United States, presented a plan to town officials last week outlining a variety of tasks it wants to carry out that are expected to help clean up area beaches within the next five years.

"The reason we are here is because we are concerned about the state of the beach," said Surfriders Vice President Terry Steimer at last Tuesday's Mayor and Council meeting. "The concern we are starting to have is the tourist mind-set. We want to promote this to tourists."

Amongst the tasks planned is the posting of signs on beach trash cans with phrases like "Please Leave Only Your Footprints," which aims to help encourage people to throw away their waste instead of leaving it to pollute the beach and the availability of disposable ashtrays for beach-going smokers in order to prevent the shedding of cigarette butts

on the sand.

The group would ideally like to have the trash cans painted by the end of this first year of the campaign's launch, while it plans to design and put up aerial advertisements, billboards and boat ads to promote clean beach etiquette by the end of the second year.

According to Steimer, the Surfriders are planning to implement the plan without any fiscal help from the town. "We aren't asking for any money, we are doing this ourselves," he said.

Although the group did not seek any finances from the town, it did, in fact, ask for the City Council's overall endorsement and support for the cause, and hope to start trying to meet the goals as soon as possible.

"We are really going to start pushing this," said Surfrider President Mike Brian. "We would like the city to join us."

Consequently, town officials did not have any opposition to supporting the project and ultimately endorsed the project in a unanimous vote.

According to Steimer, since the project is currently in its first stages, there is also plenty of room for alteration as it carries out, and the group is keeping the floor open for suggestions throughout the process.

"The five-year plan is not written in stone. It can be changed as we go along," he said.