



The Town of Hilton Head Island
**Gullah Geechee Land & Cultural
Preservation Task Force**

Meeting Minutes

May 3, 2021, 9:00 a.m.

VIRTUAL VIA BLUEJEANS

Present from the Task Force: Chairman Lavon Stevens, Todd Theodore; Ibrahim Abdul-Malik; Carolyn McVitty; Shani Green; Palmer Simmons (joined the meeting at 9:10 a.m.)

Absent from the Task Force: Joyce Wright, Martha Davis; Teresa White

Present from Town Council: Alex Brown, Tamara Becker, Bill Harkins

Others Present: Pete Nardi, General Manager, Hilton Head PSD; Barbara Catenaci; Executive Director, Heritage Library; Linda Piekut, Past Executive Director, Heritage Library

Present from Town Staff: Sheryse DuBose, Historic Neighborhoods Preservation Administrator; Brad Tadlock, Fire Chief; Teri Lewis, Deputy Community Development Director; Teresa Haley, Senior Administrative Assistant

1. Call to Order

Chairman Stevens called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

2. FOIA Compliance - Public notification of this meeting has been published, posted, and distributed in compliance with the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act and the requirements of the Town of Hilton Head Island.

3. Roll Call – See as noted above.

4. Approval of Agenda

Chairman Stevens asked for a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Ms. McVitty moved to approve. Mr. Theodore seconded. By way of roll call, the motion passed by a vote of 5-0-0.

5. Approval of Minutes

a. April 5, 2021

Chairman Stevens asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the April 5, 2021 regular meeting. Mr. Abdul-Malik moved to approve. Mr. Theodore seconded. By way of roll call, the motion passed by a vote of 5-0-0.

6. Citizen Comments

Public comments concerning agenda items were to be submitted electronically via the Town's Open Town Hall portal. The portal closed at 4:30 p.m. Friday, April 30, 2021, prior to the scheduled meeting. There were no comments.

Citizens were provided the option to sign up for public comment participation by phone during the meeting. The public comment sign up period closed at Noon on Friday, April 30, 2021, prior to the scheduled meeting. There were no requests.

7. Discussion Items

a. Status of Fire Hydrant Expansion Program

Chief Tadlock stated progress continues on the expansion program. He said there are four hydrants that will be completed this year and they will be reviewing needs for next year. He added they are looking closely at development and the need for additional hydrants in those areas.

Pete Nardi elaborated on the placement of the four additional hydrants and the extensive requirements and work involved in the installation regarding two of them. He stated that after all requirements are met, construction should begin this summer. Mr. Nardi added the other hydrants will probably carry over into next year with an expected wrap-up of 2022. He added that the PSD sent a letter to Town Council in late March requesting fire hydrants under the Corona Virus Local Fiscal Recovery Fund. He said it was his understanding that this would be Federal Funds coming to directly to the Town and can be transferred to special service districts like the PSD and can be used for water and sewer infrastructure. Mr. Nardi stated they have formally requested the Town award money from those funds to the PSD for additional hydrants. He added they also requested funds from the Beaufort County Council. He noted some specifics regarding the funds. Mr. Nardi said ten hydrants have been completed to date and with the four that are scheduled, the total under the expansion program would be fourteen.

Members of the Task Force and the presenters discussed the project at length and the following items were discussed: focus on existing structures that were more than 1000 feet from a hydrant; elimination of deficiencies in the area; continuation of the program in the area; clarification of the fund request; hydrant accessibility and specifications and requirements for installation of hydrants and upsizing the main line.

On behalf of the Task Force, Chairman Stevens thanked Chief Tadlock and Mr. Nardi for their presentation.

b. Genealogy Clinic Presentation

Barbara Catenaci stated the Heritage Library has been in conversation with the Center for Heirs Property for about five years. She said discussion has taken place regarding working the area of heirs property; helping families identify legitimate heirs and work through finding a valid deed. She noted they do not get into the legal end or meet with extended families to discuss the issue because their goal is to make sure that those that need to be involved are included and the deed is valid. Ms. Catenaci stated the Town was contacted to see if Heritage Library could assist the families in any way. She said they have a group of volunteers that assist in the research.

Ms. Piekut added that they are gearing the family research piece towards the process used by the Center for Heirs Property. She stated the clients they assist are not

charged a fee and in the end a packet of the information and proof documents found is provided for them to take to the Center or their own attorney to move further in the process.

Ms. Catenaci informed the Task Force the process is on a referral basis from the Center for Heirs Property or the Town of Hilton Head Island. Ms. Piekut added that they will be utilizing office space for this service at the USCB Campus on Hilton Head Island.

Members of the Task Force and the presenters discussed the project at length and the following items were discussed: potential costs for the project and the plan to provide the service at no cost to the client; the need for the office to be private and access to a conference room for meetings; the benefit of using and creating a data base; the need to maintain privacy for the families involved; having the ability to add to information compiled by Heritage Library when changes take place; concern that the information is not saved for future need; the need to keep the information current and moving forward; consideration of additional office space.

On behalf of the Task Force, Chairman Stevens thanked Ms. Catenaci and Ms. Piekut for their presentation.

8. Staff Report

Dr. DuBose reviewed the progress and upcoming meeting dates regarding the Family Compound and Family Subdivision item.

Dr. DuBose stated that there has been discussion regarding honoring Native Islanders by giving the developers the option to use historic street names from a generated list. She asked the Task Force for direction in terms of deciding where the list is generated from. Dr. DuBose asked if they would like to develop a list based on certain criteria or ask the Community for their input. She said some form of criteria would have to be followed, such as the names would need to be easy to pronounce and no duplicates would be permitted. She asked if the Task Force wanted to generate a list of names or if they would want to open it up to the Community. There was no response.

Dr. DuBose stated the April delinquent tax property list has been sent and there is only one property on the list.

9. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10:29 a.m.

Submitted by: Vicki Pfannenschmidt, Secretary

Approved: August 2, 2021