



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

Monday, December 17, 2018 - 1:00p.m.

Benjamin M. Racusin Council Chambers

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 Agenda**
- 4. Acceptance of Meeting Minutes** – November 5, 2018 & November 16, 2018 Meetings
- 5. Unfinished Business**
 - a) Resource Center Update
 - b) Heirs' Property Identification Progress
 - c) Gullah Geechee Culture Preservation Project Update
 - d) Historic Neighborhoods Preservation Administrator Update
 - e) 2019 Meeting Schedule
- 6. New Business**
 - a) January 26, 2019 - Beaufort County Tax Workshop Information
- 7. Appearance by Citizens on Items Unrelated to Today's Agenda**
- 8. Adjournment**

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

Please note that a quorum of Planning Commission may result if five or more of their members attend this meeting.

Gullah Geechee Land and Cultural Preservation Task Force
Meeting Minutes

November 5, 2018 – 1:00 PM
Council Chambers – Town Hall

Task Force Members present: Lavon Stevens, Shani Green, Joyce Wright, Todd Theodore, Palmer Simmons

Town Council present: None

Town Staff present: Jayme Lopko, Jennifer Ray, Carolyn Grant, Shawn Colin, Josh Gruber

- Chairman Stevens called the meeting to order at 1:10 PM.
- The agenda for today's meeting and the minutes from the September 25, 2018 special meeting and October 1, 2018 meeting were approved by consent.
- Joyce Wright gave an update on the Gullah Resource Center. Ms. Wright is working with Carolyn Grant on content and making sure everything is in line with legal requirements. The web content should be live in 45 to 60 days.
- Jayme Lopko gave an update on the heirs' property identification. There has been no progress on this item. A process and identification of roles to accomplish this project will need to be discussed. This should be something that the Historic Neighborhoods Preservation Administrator should maintain.
- Jayme Lopko gave an update on the progress of the Gullah Geechee Culture Preservation Project. The consultant's next visit will be November 14-16. There will be a Strategy Building Workshop Wednesday November 16th at 5:30pm at The Northridge Event Venue. Conceptual strategies from research and the workshop will be presented to the Task Force at their November 16th meeting at 1pm. The Task Force requested that information from the consultant be made available on the Town's website.
- Shawn Colin gave an update on the Historic Neighborhoods Preservation Administrator position. Mr. Colin stated that the Town received 49 applications for the position, 26 from South Carolina, and 12 from Hilton Head Island. The selection process will include 3-5 on-site interviews and a couple members of the Task Force will be involved with the interview of the top candidates.
- Jayme Lopko discussed a possible 2019 meeting schedule. The Task Force decided that at this time no schedule would be adopted for 2019 but will be discussed further at the next meeting.
- Chairman Stevens opened the meeting for public comment on items unrelated to today's agenda and the following was received:
 - Shawn Colin informed the Task Force that Tom Barnwell and Louise Cohen presented an educational session to Town staff on the Gullah culture that was very well received. The hope is to repeat this for other Town staff.
- Chairman Stevens adjourned the meeting at 2:35 PM.

Submitted by: Jayme Lopko
Meeting date: November 5, 2018

Gullah-Geechee Land and Cultural Preservation Task Force
Meeting Minutes

November 16, 2018 – 1:00 PM
Council Chambers – Town Hall

Task Force Members present: Lavon Stevens, Shani Green, Joyce Wright, Caroline McVitty, Theresa White

Town Council present: None

Town Staff present: Jennifer Ray, Carolyn Grant, Shawn Colin, Charles Cousins

- Chairman Stevens called the meeting to order at 1:05 PM.
- The agenda for today's meeting was approved by consent.
- Chairman Stevens gave opening remarks on the purpose of the meeting and then turned things over to Phil Walker of The Walker Collaborative. Mr. Walker discussed items that have been accomplished, conceptual strategies to address concerns, and the schedule of this project moving forward.
- Following his presentation, the Task Force members were given an opportunity to comment on the conceptual strategies presented and the following were received: other organizations promote Gullah businesses year round but are not well known (Black Chamber), property taxes area a County-wide issue, community re-investment act – is there more they can do?, Mitchelville is on the National Register, Section 106 review may not save historic resources, transfer of development rights (TDR) may be tough on the island other than through a PD-2, we need to be careful to not isolate Gullah culture – we should partner with other organizations and help the culture survive, cemetery access should be addressed especially for cemeteries within gated communities, suggest a field or satellite office closer to the island for the Center for Heirs Property, another visit with Victoria Smalls here would be helpful, and the 278 expansion needs to be reviewed for the potential loss of Gullah lands.
- Chairman Stevens opened the meeting for public comment and the following were received: cultural preservation - we need more to promote Gullah culture, we made several mistakes along the way – Gullah businesses could have promoted but have now gone away, we are at a point where we are trying to go back and fix things and that is difficult, the Chamber's role is not just promotion – Hilton Head has resources and programming - Black Chamber has programming but not resources – those two should work together, authenticity of culture particularly with food – USCB hospitality campus could play a role, public policy – TDR something we need to consider, property tax delinquency is a hardship – Town/County should lobby at state level but can get local help as well similar to Community Foundation's SAFE Program (grants), addressing heirs property is a need not a want, deeding property to family important – process needs to be simplified and regulations/implications should not be a deterrent, LLC can be a useful tool but not unless you have cleared up heirs property issues, and business may not be seen off highway – without a sign people may not know they are there.
- Chairman Stevens adjourned the meeting at 2:39 PM.

Submitted by: Jayme Lopko

Meeting date: November 16, 2018