

Gullah-Geechee Land and Cultural Preservation Task Force
Meeting Minutes

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

Task Force Members present: Lavon Stevens (Chairman), Caroline McVitty, Joyce Wright, Theresa White, Shani Green, Palmer Simmons, Todd Theodore, Martha Davis

Community Development Staff present: Jennifer Ray, Eileen Wilson

- Chairman Stevens called the meeting to order at 1:00 PM. The agenda for today's meeting and the minutes from the February 19, 2018 meeting were accepted by general consent.
- Joyce Wright gave an update on the progress regarding a Resource Center for Gullah information at Town Hall. Ms. Wright looked at Conference Room 2 and the Library at Town Hall as possible locations for the Resource Center. She will continue discussions with Jayme Lopko and report back to the Task Force at the next meeting. Jennifer Ray informed the Task Force that RFP is still in the works and there is no update at this time.
- Chairman Stevens introduced Linda Piekut from the Heritage Library. Ms. Piekut informed the Task Force about the mission of the Heritage Library and the programs they offer as well as information they have regarding genealogy, local history, and family records. The Heritage Library offers a membership for a cost that allows access to more information and genealogy research assistance. The Task Force discussed options for making information more accessible and affordable to the Gullah community.
- Chairman Stevens introduced Eric Turpin from the Native Island Business and Community Affairs Association (NIBCAA). Mr. Turpin provided background information on why NIBCAA was formed, their mission, and programs they have offered. Mr. Turpin also provided comments on the success and great attendance of the Heirs Property Seminar and Oyster Roast that NIBCAA partnered on with the Task Force and Volunteers in Medicine (VIM). NIBCAA would like to continue to partner with the Task Force to provide educational opportunities to the community on at least an annual basis.
- Chairman Stevens briefly discussed information regarding the building code bill (#4696) currently in committee with the State and the concerns of the language of the bill. Chairman Stevens also informed the Task Force that he sent a letter to Town Council, on behalf of the Task Force, informing them of the concerns the Task Force has regarding this bill.
- Chairman Stevens opened the meeting for public comment and the following were received: thanked the Task Force for their efforts for the community, concern for what still needs to be done with the community and the Town, Task Force members should review the Town's Vision report, property ownership and use of property becoming a critical issue for people living on the land, continue to engage members of the community, consider having meetings in the community at convenient times, Ranky Tanky redoing old Gullah/Gospel songs and will be at Savannah Music Festival and Spoleto, there are efforts ongoing to bring Ranky Tanky to Hilton Head Island, and Task Force was informed about the Southeast Biking Symposium and invited to attend the event at no cost.
- Chairman Stevens adjourned the meeting at 2:45 PM.

Submitted by: Jayme Lopko
Meeting date: March 5, 2018
Approved March 19, 2018