



Town of Hilton Head Island  
**U.S. 278 Gateway Corridor Committee**

Wednesday, May 8, 2019 at 3:00 pm  
Benjamin M. Racusin Council Chambers

## **MEETING MINUTES**

**Present From the Committee:** David Johnson, *Chairman*; Frank Babel, Alex Brown, Tom Crews, Craig Forrest, Hannah Horne, David Lunka, Brenden Reilly, John Taylor, Sarah Stewart, *Members* Palmer Simmons, *First Alternate*; Dan Wood, *Bluffton Liaison*; Larry McElynn, *County Liaison*

**Absent from Committee:** Jerry Cutrer, Tom Peeples, Kyle Theodore, *Members*; Marc Grant, *Hilton Head Island Liaison*

**Present from Town Staff:** Charles Cousins, *Assistant to the Town Manager*, Anne Cyran, *Senior Planner*; Rocky Browder, *Environmental Planner*; Krista Wiedmeyer, *Executive Assistant/Town Clerk*

---

### **1. Call to Order**

Chairman Johnson called the meeting to order at 3:03 p.m.

### **2. FOIA 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. Committee Roll Call**

### **4. Approval of Minutes**

#### **a. Committee Meeting from April 24, 2019**

Mr. Crews moved to approve the Committee meeting minutes from April 24, 2019. Ms. Stewart seconded. The motion was approved by a vote of 10-0.

### **5. Unfinished Business - None**

### **6. New Business**

#### **a. Update on SCDOT Commends & Schedule**

Chairman Johnson stated that with the help of Town staff, the information and the alternatives presented by the workgroups during the April 10<sup>th</sup> meeting were successfully submitted. He reported that at least one of the alternatives submitted may have been selected by the SCDOT as an alternative of consideration. Chairman Johnson further reported that the SCDOT would be speaking to the stakeholders more about the methodology instead of making the announcement of the different alternatives they have chosen. He said that this would be the same discussion they would also have with the Committee too. Chairman Johnson also reported that he and Mr. Cousins would be heading to Columbia on May 22<sup>nd</sup> to meet with the SCDOT. He stated that after this meeting, there would be a better understanding of how to introduce and pull other members of the Committee into meetings such as these in Columbia.

**b. Potential Environmental Impacts of Corridor Improvements**

- i. Rocky Browder – Environmental Planner, Town of Hilton Head Island**
- ii. Rikki Parker – South Carolina Coastal Conservation League**

Rocky Browder, the Town’s Environmental Planner, and Ms. Rikki Parker, with the South Carolina Coastal Conservation League discussed the impact the 278 Project would be on the environment within the study area. They discussed what the potential positive and negative consequences to the wetlands could be. Ms. Parker discussed the mitigation bank and the generation of mitigation credits. She explained that a mitigation bank generates credits for the amount and quality of habitat that is improved. The credits are units of exchange defined as the ecological value associated with converting a naturally occurring wetland or other specific habitat type, for economic purposes, such as the 278 Project. Both Mr. Browder and Ms. Parker provided a good overview the different ecological impacts.

**c. Discussion of Committee’s Next Tasks**

- i. Scoring – Methodology to Evaluate SCDOT’s Corridor Alternatives**

Chairman Johnson reported that Mr. Forrest and Mr. Taylor had volunteered to review and explore the traffic data that has or will become available as a result of traffic studies completed in the project area. Mr. Taylor stated that he would like to better understand what the modeling is for the traffic study. Another question raised was about not just looking at the one individual traffic study, but any traffic study. Mr. Brown asked about funding for the Committee to provide a work-up or proper analysis of the data once it is captured. He referred to other Town committees that had a small budget for such projects. Mr. Brown noted that once the data is received, how does the Committee simplify the information to properly present the information back out to the community. During this discussion, other questions were raised about the Town or County utilizing their resources or consultant to assist with proper dissemination of information once received. Chairman Johnson stated that Mr. Taylor and Mr. Forrest would be meeting with Town staff to begin the research and from there begin to report back.

Mr. Babel reviewed a scoring model/methodology developed by his workgroup. After review of the scoring model and discussion from the Committee as a whole, many questions were raised. It was pointed out that the Committee does not have a financial budget to develop a scoring model of this nature, and as such, why change a process that the SCDOT already has in place. Upon further discussion, it was decided that something like the model presented might be helpful as a companion to what the SCDOT already has, but not as a replacement.

- ii. Communications Strategy**

During the Committee’s discussion about the methodology to evaluate the SCDOT’s Corridor Alternatives, a lot of discussion was had about how to communicate with the general public. Specifically utilizing different tools already provided by the Town of Hilton Head Island through staff and maybe also utilizing the consultant that has been contracted by the County and the Town. The final consensus among the Committee was that communicating to the public is essential. The question was raised about holding different public meetings with specific public groups. Chairman Johnson noted that they certainly could have meetings that were specific to community groups such as Windmill Harbour and the Stoney community.

- iii. Aesthetics Considerations and Treatments**

This item was not discussed.

## **6. New Business (cont.)**

### **iv. Meeting Schedule**

Chairman Johnson polled the Committee about when they would like to meet again. It was unanimously decided that the next two meetings would take place on May 30, 2019 and June 20, 2019 both at 4:00 p.m.

## **7. Adjournment**

With no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 4:52 p.m.

**Submitted by:** Krista M. Wiedmeyer, Executive Assistant/Town Clerk

**Approved:** May 30, 2019