



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

September 16, 2019 at 1:00 pm  
Benjamin M. Racusin Council Chambers

## **MEETING MINUTES**

**Present From the Committee:** Lavon Stevens, Palmer Simmons, Ibrahim Abdul-Malik, Caroline McVitty, Todd Theodore, Joyce Wright, Theresa White

**Present from Town Staff:** Sheryse DuBose, Jennifer Ray, Josh Gruber, Nicole Dixon, Missy Luick, Taylor Ladd

**Town Council Members Present:** Tamara Becker, Thomas Lennox, David Ames, Marc Grant

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

Chairman Stevens called the meeting to order at 1:05 PM.

### **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. Approval of Minutes**

The agenda for today's meeting and the minutes from the August 26, 2019 meeting were approved by consent.

### **4. Unfinished Business - none**

### **5. New Business**

Josh Gruber presented the draft of the Fire Hydrant Liability Waiver for new-build construction outside 500 feet of a fire hydrant. It was explained that every effort would be made to save the property in case of a fire however, the homeowner would be waiving his/her right to sue the Town of Hilton Head, should their property be destroyed as a result of being outside of 500 feet of a fire hydrant. Josh Gruber will include an automatic sunset of the waiver when the owner meets the state fire code requirements.

Sheryse DuBose presented the list of top priority projects from the Gullah Geechee report recommendations. Chairman Stevens discussed the need to approach some of the projects right away. The Task Force stated concerns with the order of the projects as presented and expressed the desire for the Historic District overlay to be the first priority. The Task Force also believed that some of the projects that were labeled "long term" should be short term projects. Tabling the items was a suggestion with the final decision to present the top priorities to the Town Council as written. Once approved, a work plan would be created to include a time and needed resources to implement the projects.

The Task Force asked that the Delinquent Tax List received from The Town for the purpose of making people aware that they owe property taxes, include the amounts. Staff expressed

concern with freely disseminating information that could be perceived as an invasion of privacy. There was a question concerning with whether or not the amounts were included in the tax information distributed from the Town the previous year. Josh Gruber offered to provide the information for the link to get the needed information. David Ames shared a text from someone with difficulties paying property taxes and commented that the Task Force has the opportunity to resolve these issues.

Sheryse DuBose shared the process of what happens when property owners are delinquent in paying their taxes.

#### **6. Appearance by Citizens on Items Unrelated to Today's Agenda**

Chairman Sevens opened the floor to comments from the public on items unrelated to the agenda. Taiwan Scott commented that he is unable to renew his business license as a result of his property being non-conforming based on Land Management Ordinance guidelines. However, property taxes are still being paid in spite of the fact that the business is not being used.

Alex Brown made comments concerning issues with affordable and workforce housing, and how they can be beneficial to Gullah families.

#### **7. Staff Report**

Staff reminded the Task Force that the Quarterly Report needed to be presented at the September 11<sup>th</sup> Town Council Meeting. The Gullah Geechee Report Recommendations would also be decided at that meeting.

#### **8. Adjournment**

Chairman Stevens adjourned the meeting at 3:30 PM.

**Submitted by:** Sheryse DuBose

**Meeting Date:** September 16, 2019

**Approved:** November 4, 2019