



Town of Hilton Head Island **TOWN MANAGER UPDATE**

**An Update from Deputy Town Manager Josh Gruber
12/16/2020**

Good afternoon Hilton Head Islanders and Guests,

Here's an update on what's happening around Town:

Town Unveils New Name for Town Hall: the Stephen G. Riley Municipal Complex

This month, Town Manager Steve Riley wraps up 29 years of service to the Hilton Head Island community. As Town Manager for 26 years, he has ushered the Town through years of growth and change. Our Town Council thought it was befitting to recognize Steve's contributions and his legacy by renaming Town Hall as the Stephen G. Riley Municipal Complex. Town Council voted on the renaming at its meeting earlier this month, and unveiled the building sign on yesterday, which was Steve's last official Town Council meeting. We join Town Council in saying thank you to Steve for his leadership at the Town and across the community and region, his guidance and insight, and his friendship to many.

Town Council Meeting Actions

Town Council met Tuesday and took action on several items. The video of the meeting will be available online on our website and can also be viewed on our Facebook page. Here are a few items acted upon at the meeting:

ATAX Funding: Approved the Accommodations Tax Advisory Committee recommendation to award \$4.2 million to 28 organizations. The committee also recommended setting aside some funds to use for out-of-cycle funding requests.

Land Planner for the Stoney Community: Agreed to allow staff to release a Request for Proposal (RFP) for solicitation of a land planning firm to prepare land use plans in conjunction with the South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) U.S. 278 Corridor Improvement Project with emphasis on the Stoney Community. Town Council also recommended that Town staff begin the land planning process with the help of external consultants until a land planner is identified and hired.

The Town and Beaufort County jointly hired HDR Engineering of the Carolinas, Inc. to perform an independent engineering review of the SCDOT's plans as part of the U.S. 278 Corridor Improvement Project. Recognizing the impact the corridor project will have on the Stoney Community, the Town proposed retaining a land planning firm to analyze the land in and around the U.S. Highway 278 corridor and prepare land use plans for the area that will suggest ways to create and sustain mixed use and family oriented neighborhoods and commercial opportunities for those impacted by the U.S. 278 Corridor Improvement Project.



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U.S. 278 Independent Engineering Review Oversight Committee: The following persons were named to U.S. 278 Independent Engineering Review Oversight Committee – Curtis Driessen and Herbert Ford representing the Stoney Community; David Johnson and Risa Prince representing Hilton Head Island; John Taylor, alternate representative for the Hilton Head Island; Mike Garrigan representing Jenkins Island; Jared Fralix representing Beaufort County and Scott Liggett representing the Town of Hilton Head

Local Nonprofits Awarded \$159,612 in COVID-19 Relief Funds

In a fourth round of COVID-19-related grant-making, three local nonprofits received \$159,612. The money comes from \$770,437 in U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Community Development Block Grants the Town of Hilton Head Island received this year. The funds are earmarked to assist low- to moderate-income families affected by COVID-19. The Town partnered with Community Foundation of the Lowcountry to grant these funds to nonprofit organizations assisting Hilton Head Island residents with rent, utilities, mortgage, food, transportation, childcare, education and other needs. To date, they have disbursed \$675,612 of the funds. The three nonprofits receiving grants this week include the Foundation for Educational Excellence (\$61,000); the Children's Center (\$43,612) and Volunteers in Medicine Hilton Head Island (\$55,000).

Additional grants will be distributed in the future. The next grant application deadline is Friday, January 8, 2021. For more information about the grants, guidelines and timelines, visit cf-lowcountry.org or hiltonheadislandsc.gov or call Community Foundation of the Lowcountry at 843.681.9100.

Thank You

We want to take a moment to thank a special group of individuals who provided special services to the Town this year. They are our clergy. In the midst of the challenges we faced, our clergy from different Island congregations offered inspiration that guided us through our Town Council meetings. They always join us for our in-person meetings and when we had to switch to virtual meetings, they accommodated us. For that, we are grateful. As we faced the coronavirus pandemic, our Town Council often had to make tough decisions. During this period, it was important to our Town Council to begin our meeting with a spirit of thanksgiving and cooperation. Our local clergy helped to provide that through their heartfelt invocations. To our clergy, you have our highest gratitude and appreciation for the thoughtful prayers expressed for the Town Council members, for Town employees, for our citizens of Hilton Head Island and for our country.

Rev. Michael Carr, Central Church

Rev. Louis John, Central Oak Grove Missionary Baptist Church

Rev. Dr. Mary Anderson, Christ Lutheran Church

Rabbi Brad Bloom, Congregation Beth Yam



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Rev. Brett Myers and Rev. Brian Parker, First Baptist Church
Rev. Dr. William Robinson, First Presbyterian Church
Rev. Steve Salvas, Grace Community Church
Rev. Todd Cullen, Hilton Head Island Community Church
Rev. Bill McCutchen, Hilton Head Presbyterian Church
Rev. Jeff Dorth, Island Lutheran Church
Rev. Edward Alston, Queen Chapel A.M.E. Church
Rev. Neil M. Yongue Jr., St. Andrew By-the-Sea United Methodist Church
Rev. Greg Kronz, St. Luke's Church

COVID-19 Cases and Vaccine Information

Extensive reporting on county-level information, demographics and more about coronavirus cases is available at scdhec.gov/COVID19. The website is updated **between 1 p.m.-3 p.m. weekdays and 11 a.m.-1 p.m. weekends**. You can also find case data on our website at hiltonheadislandsc.gov/COVID19. Visit scdhec.gov/COVID19vaccine for the latest vaccine information.

COVID-19 Testing

Drive-thru testing for COVID-19 is available from 8 a.m. to noon at Hilton Head Hospital (25 Hospital Center Blvd. on Hilton Head Island) and Coastal Carolina Hospital (1000 Medical Center Drive in Hardeeville). The test is free. No appointment or doctor's order is needed.

Historic Holidays on Hilton Head Island

Although we can't gather this year in the traditional sense, our Island's historic assets came together, under the leadership of the Heritage Library, to share a glimpse of what the holidays looked like on our Island over the course of history in Historic Holidays on Hilton Head. This hour-long docuseries will be airing all month long on WHHI or can be viewed online. It is a uniquely Hilton Head way to celebrate.

Watch Online Here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VRF7Bz6AXp0&feature=youtu.be>