



Town of Hilton Head Island TOWN COUNCIL MEETING Tuesday, July 15, 2025, 3:00 PM Minutes

Call to Order

Mayor Perry called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

Council Members present: Alan Perry, Mayor; Alex Brown, Ward 1, Mayor Pro-Tempore; Patsy Brison, Ward 2; Steve DeSimone, Ward 3; Tammy Becker, Ward 4; Steve Alfred, Ward 5; Melinda Tunner, Ward 6

Others Present: Marc Orlando, Town Manager; Curtis Coltrane, Town Attorney; Kim Gammon, Town Clerk

Invocation – Reverend Jacob A. Rogers, St. Luke's Anglican Church

Reverend Rogers delivered the invocation.

Adoption of the Agenda

Mr. Alfred moved to approve. Ms. Becker seconded. Motion carried 7-0.

Approval of the Minutes

Budget Workshop Meeting Minutes of May 13, 2025

Ms. Brison moved to approve. Mr. Alfred seconded. Motion carried 7-0.

Regular Meeting Minutes of May 20, 2025

Ms. Brison moved to approve. Mr. Alfred seconded. Motion carried 7-0.

Regular Meeting Minutes of June 3, 2025

Ms. Brison moved to approve. Mr. Alfred seconded. Motion carried 7-0.

Regular Meeting Minutes of June 17, 2025

Ms. Brison moved to table. Mr. Alfred seconded. Motion carried 7-0.

Strategic Plan Workshop Meeting Minutes of June 24, 2025

Ms. Brison moved to approve. Mr. Alfred seconded. Motion carried 7-0.

Presentations and Recognitions

Report of the Town Manager

Mr. Orlando reported on the following items:

Community Code Enforcement Officer, Morgan Thompson, attended and graduated Leadership Hilton Head Island-Bluffton in June 2025

Fire Rescue: Hilton Head Island Fire Rescue has been awarded the American Heart Association's ***Mission: Lifeline® EMS Gold Achievement Award for 2025.***

CIP Project Updates

1. Beach Renourishment Project (will need to be updated as we are coordinating a press release)
 1. The Town has received the permit for the Pine Island breakwaters. Construction plans are now being finalized, and bid will be released in early August.
 2. The temporary access road at Islanders Beach Park is complete.
 3. Town Staff is preparing a press release to share the initial schedule and locations of the project.
 4. Once construction gets started, weekly updates will be provided.
 5. Additionally, the map found on the project page on the Town's website will be updated regularly to show the current work zone.
2. William Hilton Parkway Segment 3
 1. The pedestrian safety improvements on William Hilton Parkway between Dillon and Beach City Roads are substantially complete.
 2. Improvements included – new landscaping, pathway resurfacing, new bike kiosk at Beach City road, pedestrian safety striping, new flashing beacons to assist pedestrians crossing the parkway, and pathway and landscape lighting at key crosswalks to improve awareness of pedestrians.
 3. Town staff are punchlisting any final items that need to be adjusted or corrected prior to close out.
 4. Additionally, Town staff are exploring opportunities to complete additional striping replacement in the corridor to create a more consistent appearance and further enhance vehicular and pedestrian safety.
3. Coligny Circle Quadrant Pocket Park
 1. The Coligny Circle Pocket Park is currently out to bid.
 2. The project includes improvements to stormwater system, landscaping, and pedestrian safety to create a public amenity at a key intersection in Coligny beach area.
 3. With a successful bid, construction will begin this fall.
4. The Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) Dashboard is live on the Town's website and provides an interactive, real-time view of the Town's active FY26 capital projects, including status updates, locations, budgets, and timelines. It supports transparency,

strategic planning, and better communication with both users and the public. Users can explore projects by type or phase and monitor progress throughout the fiscal year. Updates, when necessary, will be provided monthly.

Parks and Recreation Month Proclamation - Mayor Alan Perry

Mayor Perry read the proclamation and presented it to John Parsons, Parks and Recreation Commission, Frank Soule and Leah Arnold, Executive Directors, Island Recreation Association and Kristin Keller, Board President, Island Recreation Association; members of Facilities Management staff and students that participate at the recreation center were also recognized.

Gullah Geechee Land & Cultural Preservation Task Force Annual Report - Lavon Stevens, Board Chair

Mr. Stevens stated that in the calendar year of 2024, the Gullah Geechee Land and Cultural Preservation Task Force held six meetings. He provided a detailed summary of the items addressed at the meetings.

Gullah Geechee Historic Neighborhoods Community Development Corporation Annual Report - Shirley Peterson, Board Chair

Ms. Peterson stated the Gullah Geechee Historic Neighborhood Community Development Corporation (CDC) commenced operations in November of 2023. Over the course of the 2025 fiscal year the Gullah Geechee Historic Neighborhoods Community Development Corporation held 9 board meetings. She conducted a presentation regarding the items addressed at the meetings and accomplishments of the CDC.

Office of Cultural Affairs Update - Natalie Harvey, Director of Cultural Affairs

Ms. Harvey conducted a presentation covering events, projects and outreach and community engagement efforts of the office.

Reports from Members of Town Council

General Reports from Town Council

Ms. Becker stated the Hilton Head Humane Association animal shelter is at full capacity and encouraged all to consider adopting or fostering an animal from the shelter.

Mayor Perry extended condolences to the family of Joe Monmonier, Athletic Director for Hilton Head High School.

Report of the Lowcountry Area Transportation Study – Councilmember Tamara Becker

No report.

Report of the Lowcountry Council of Governments – Councilmember Steve Alfred

Mr. Alfred reported that at the last meeting there was discussion regarding redesigning the intersection of US HWY 278 and Interstate 95.

Report of the Beaufort County Airports Board – Councilmember Melinda Tunner

Ms. Tunner stated that passenger arrivals through June at the Hilton Head Island Airport have increased by 11% from the previous year. She added that she has been chosen to represent the Town and residents as a member of an ALP Airport Plan Stakeholder Group and the first meeting is July 30.

Report of the Southern Lowcountry Regional Board – Councilmember Patsy Brison

Ms. Brison stated that neither she or Mayor Perry could attend the meeting held on June 24, due to Council's attendance at the Town's Strategic Planning Workshop, however staff attended to represent the Town of Hilton Head Island. She stated the main topic of the meeting was hurricane preparedness and emergency response and a presentation was given regarding such.

Report of the Island Recreation Association Board – Mayor ProTempore Alex Brown

Mr. Brown reported that many of the summer programs are coming to a close and the Recreation Center is gearing up for the fall programs. He also reviewed the newly elected officers of the Board.

Report of the Beaufort County Economic Development Corporation - Mayor Alan Perry

Mayor Perry reported the EDC meeting on June 26 and received a presentation from Selma Davis on New Leaf Produce Development where she grows hydroponic food. Also discussed was the proposal and approval for an accounting firm and annual audit. He added that there will be an outreach to municipalities regarding economic development.

Report of the Gullah Geechee Historic Neighborhoods Community Development Corporation - Mayor ProTempore Alex Brown

Mr. Brown stated the CDC would be meeting July 16 at 6:00 p.m. He reviewed the agenda items for the meeting.

Report of the Community Services and Public Safety Committee – Councilmember Tamara Becker

Ms. Becker stated the next meeting for the Committee will be on July 21st. She reviewed items that will be addressed.

Report of the Finance and Administrative Committee – Mayor ProTempore Alex Brown

Mr. Brown stated the Committee would be meeting on July 29 and reviewed the items to be discussed.

Unfinished Business

Consideration of an Ordinance of the Town Council of the Town of Hilton Head Island amending Municipal Code Section 2-5-60 Committees of Council - Second Reading - Shawn Colin, Assistant Town Manager

Mr. Colin conducted a presentation and stated that there have been no changes since First Reading. After discussion and review by Council, it was decided to amend Exhibit A of the Ordinance by deleting the final sentence on page 2. ("Following receipt of the Staff Report, Town Council may request additional changes prior to the item being placed on an agenda for Town Council action.")

Mr. Brown moved to approve. Ms. Becker seconded.

John Zmarzly addressed Council regarding the South Carolina Ethics Act 1991 stating Hilton Head Island should do the same for all Committee members.

Motion carried 7-0.

New Business

Consideration of a Resolution of the Town Council of the Town of Hilton Head Island to Adopt the Fiscal Year 2026 - Fiscal Year 2028 Strategic Action Plan for the Town of Hilton Head Island - Shawn Colin, Assistant Town Manager

Mr. Colin conducted a detailed presentation reviewing suggested changes by Council members. After lengthy discussion and suggestions for minor edits, Council was in consensus on the following:

- **Adopt the Town of Hilton Head Island Strategic Action Plan for Fiscal Years 2026 - 2028**, which includes goals, strategies, action items and key performance indicators. The ten goals included within the plan are:
 - Protect Island Character through Managing Growth.
 - Invest in Stormwater Management Infrastructure.
 - Enhance Major Corridors and Streets.
 - Enhance Public Safety Readiness and Facilities.
 - Support Economic Development and Business Recruitment.
 - Reinforce Island Resilience.
 - Preserve, Protect and Celebrate Gullah Geechee Culture and Heritage.
 - Advance Workforce Housing Opportunities.
 - Protect and Enhance Environmental Sustainability.
 - Enhance Community Well-being through Implementation of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan and Program Enhancement

Ms. Brison moved to approve as amended. Ms. Becker seconded.

Richard Bisi addressed Council stating his support for a moratorium limited to timeshares, short-

term rentals and major subdivisions.

Steve Birdwell addressed Council in support of the plan to enhance the Gateway Corridor and in opposition to a possible moratorium limited to timeshares, short-term rentals and major subdivisions.

Dru Brown addressed Council stating his opposition to a possible moratorium limited to timeshares, short-term rentals and major subdivisions.

Beth Petro addressed Council stating her opposition to a possible moratorium limited to timeshares, short-term rentals and major subdivisions.

Motion carried 7-0.

Consideration of a Resolution to Adopt an Accommodations Tax (ATAX) Grant Policy, Process Update, and Allocation of Funds Procedures - Shawn Colin, Assistant Town Manager

Mr. Colin conducted a presentation regarding the Resolution to Adopt an Accommodations Tax (ATAX) Grant Policy, Process Update, and Allocation of Funds Procedures. Members of Council held discussion, made comments and asked questions. Clarification was provided regarding certain procedures and policies that are required by State law and upon approval of the resolution, Staff will meet with the Accommodations Tax Advisory Committee to review the policy, process update and allocation of funds procedures.

Blaine Lotz addressed Council regarding his support of utilizing the full 15% of ATAX funds allowed for workforce housing.

Renee Roth addressed Council regarding the need to make it affordable for people to live here.

John Zmarzly addressed Council regarding a suggestion to make ATAX funding for workforce housing part of the ATAX Committee process.

Risa Prince addressed Council regarding the need for public workforce housing support and encouraged Council to vote to allocate ATAX funds for workforce housing.

Margaret Johnson addressed Council regarding the fact that she was able to live and remain on Hilton Head Island due to affordable housing provided when she arrived. She spoke in support of allocating ATX funds for workforce housing.

Steve Birdwell addressed Council regarding the support from Sea Pines Resort for Council to allocate 5% of the ATAX funds for workforce housing and stated that they don't want the allocation to reduce the funding awarded to non-profits.

Tracy Sklarin addressed Council regarding the need for the ATAX funds to be allocated to workforce housing to alleviate the financial burden on residents who live and work on the Island.

Lou Befano addressed Council regarding his support of utilizing ATAX funds and any other Town funds to support workforce housing.

Xiaodan Li addressed Council stating the need to stop using ATAX funds to sustain unsustainable growth.

Joan Campbell addressed Council regarding the need to provide funds for workforce housing.

Carlton Dallas addressed Council regarding the need to make wages for people that work here commensurate with the increase in net worth here on the Island.

Lyn Pinko Bullard addressed Council regarding her concern of appropriating funds without defined regulations.

Claude Hicks addressed Council regarding the proposed 5% allocation and recommended Council consider 15%.

Dee Anthony addressed Council regarding the need to take care of existing workers on the Island and the need to address the root cause, which is short-term rentals.

Thomas Curtis Barnwell III addressed Council regarding his support for utilizing ATAX funds for workforce housing.

Linda Harrington addressed Council regarding a post she saw on Facebook stating opposition to utilizing the ATAX funds for workforce housing. She proceeded to read comments sent to her from other Island residents in opposition to utilizing ATAX funds for workforce housing.

Mike Christensen addressed Council regarding his support for the use of ATAX funds for workforce housing noting the needs of our workforce.

Mr. Alfred motioned to approve and allocate 5% of the Accommodations Tax (ATAX) funds toward workforce housing. Mr. Brown seconded.

Ms. Brison moved to amend the motion approve and allocate 8% of the Accommodations Tax (ATAX) funds toward workforce housing. Motion died for lack of a second.

Ms. Becker moved to amend the motion and allocate 0% of Accommodations Tax (ATAX) funds toward workforce housing. Ms. Tunner seconded. Motion failed 3-4. (Brison, Alfred, Perry and Brown opposed.)

The original motion by Mr. Alfred was called by Ms. Brison. Motion carried 4-3. (DeSimone, Becker and Tunner opposed).

Consideration of an Ordinance of the Town of Hilton Head Island to Amend Chapter 16 of the Municipal Code, the Land Management Ordinance, to Amend the Current Regulations for Tree Protection to Include Sections: 16-5-115, 16-6-104 and Appendix C for the Town of Hilton Head Island, South Carolina and Providing for Severability and an Effective Date - First Reading - Shawn Leininger, Assistant Town Manager

Mr. Brown moved to approve. Ms. Brison seconded.

There was no public comment.

Motion carried 7-0.

Consideration of an Ordinance of the Town of Hilton Head Island to Amend Title 16 of the Municipal Code, the Land Management Ordinance, to Amend the Current Design Regulations and Requirements for Open Space and Pathways in Major Subdivisions to Include Sections: 16-3-104, 16-3-105, 16-4-104, 16-5-103, 16-5-104, 16-5-107, 16-5-115, 16-6-102, 16-10-102, 16-10-105, and Appendices A & D for the Town of Hilton Head Island, South Carolina and Providing for Severability and an Effective Date - First Reading - Shawn Leininger, Assistant Town Manager

Mr. Brown moved to approve. Ms. Brison seconded.

There was no public comment.

Motion carried 7-0.

Consideration of an Ordinance of the Town of Hilton Head Island to Amend Title 16 of the Municipal Code, the Land Management Ordinance, to Amend the Procedures for Development Plan Reviews and Major Subdivision Plan Reviews to Include the Following Sections: 16-2-101, 16-2-102, and 16-2-103 for the Town of Hilton Head Island, South Carolina and Providing for Severability and an Effective Date - First Reading - Shawn Leininger, Assistant Town Manager

Mr. Leininger answered questions from Council and provided clarification that minor (less than 5 lots) subdivisions are exempt from this ordinance as it currently is and that the Planning Commission would review proposed changes and provide comments.

Mr. Brown moved to approve. Ms. Brison seconded.

There was no public comment.

Motion carried 7-0.

Consideration of an Ordinance of the Town of Hilton Head Island to Amend Title 16 of the Municipal Code, the Land Management Ordinance, to Amend Chapter 16-5, Development and Design Standards, to Add a New Section 16-5-117 Construction Management Standards for

the Town of Hilton Head Island, South Carolina and Providing for Severability and an Effective Date - First Reading - Shawn Leininger, Assistant Town Manager

Mr. Brown moved to approve. Ms. Brison seconded. There was no public comment.

Mr. Orlando provided the following summary:

1. Progress on Code Amendments:

- Last year, 12 land management ordinance amendments were completed.
- This year, the pace is slower, with about 7 expected to be completed by year's end.
- The code is largely written, and staff are making steady progress.

2. Importance of Code Changes:

- A key concern is whether these amendments are making a tangible difference in shaping development.
- The goal is to use planning tools (like code amendments) to influence site layout, open space functionality, and road alignment to achieve higher-quality developments.

3. Planning Commission's Role and Limitations:

- While the Planning Commission can make recommendations, their authority has limits, particularly when a development complies with existing zoning (e.g., lot counts based on acreage).
- Legal constraints may prevent denying developments that technically meet the requirements.

4. Setting Realistic Expectations:

- It's important not to create false expectations—for example, if zoning allows 75 feet in height, the Planning Commission can't enforce a 3-story limit without a change to the code.

5. Call for Higher Quality Development:

- There's a shared concern that too many developments result in “streets lined with houses” rather than true neighborhoods.
- There's a desire for more thoughtful planning, particularly outside gated communities, where quality control is weaker and more dependent on the commission's approvals.

6. Accountability and Improvement:

- Mr. Orlando acknowledged that both staff and the commission sometimes fall short.
- There is hope that the time and effort put into these processes will translate into

meaningful improvements and better-designed communities.

Motion carried 7-0.

Consideration of a Resolution of the Town Council of the Town of Hilton Head Island to Oppose the Inclusion of South Carolina in the Proposed Bureau of Ocean Energy Management 11th National Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Program - Angie Stone, Assistant Town Manager

Ms. Stone conducted a presentation regarding the Resolution of the Town Council of the Town of Hilton Head Island to Oppose the Inclusion of South Carolina in the Proposed Bureau of Ocean Energy Management 11th National Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Program. Council members made comments, asked questions and held discussion regarding the need to oppose the inclusion of South Carolina in the program.

Ms. Brison moved to approve. Mr. Brown seconded.

There was no public comment.

Motion carried 7-0.

Public Comment - Non-Agenda Items

There were none.

Executive Session

Mr. Alfred moved to enter Executive Session for the reasons listed below as referenced by the Town Manager. Ms. Brison seconded. Motion carried 7-0.

Discussion Incident to Proposed Contractual Arrangements (Pursuant to the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act Section 30-4-70 [a](2)) related to:

1. Town of Hilton Head Island Destination Marketing Organization Request for Qualifications

Discussion of Legal Updates from the Town Attorney on Matters Covered Under the Attorney-Client Privilege [Pursuant to the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act Section 30-4-70(a)(2)]

Discussion of Negotiations Incident to Proposed Contractual Arrangements and Discussion for the Proposed Sale or Purchase of Property [Pursuant to South Carolina Freedom of Information Act Section 30-4-70 (a)(2)] related to:

1. Main Street

2. Pope Avenue

3. Marshland Road
4. Union Cemetery Road
5. Bradley Circle
6. William Hilton Parkway/Stoney Area

Discussion of Appointment to Boards, Commissions, and Committees [Pursuant to the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act Section 30-4-70 (a)(1)] related to:

1. Accommodations Tax Advisory Committee
2. Beaufort County Stormwater Management Utility Board
3. Beaufort Jasper Housing Trust
4. Board of Zoning Appeals
5. Construction Board of Adjustments and Appeals
6. Design Review Board
7. Greenspace Advisory Committee
8. Gullah Geechee Historic Neighborhood Community Development Corporation
9. Gullah Geechee Task Force
10. Housing Action Committee
11. Island Recreation Board of Directors
12. Parks and Recreation Commission
13. Planning Commission

Discussion of the Employment, Appointment, Compensation, Promotion, Demotion, Discipline, or Release of a Person Regulated by a Public Body (Pursuant to South Carolina Freedom of Information Act 30-4-70(a)(1)) related to:

1. Discussion of the Annual Performance Review of the Town Attorney and Contractual Matters Related Thereto

Action from Executive Session

Ms. Brison moved to end the Executive Session and return to the regular meeting. Ms. Becker seconded. Motion carried 7-0.

Mr. Brown moved to authorize the Mayor and Town Manager to Execute and Deliver a Contract by and between the Town of Hilton Head Island, South Carolina, and Memory Matters, a South Carolina Not-for-Profit Corporation, for the Purchase and Sale of 0.78 Acres, more or less, of Improved Real Property located at 117 William Hilton Parkway, and to take such other and further actions as may be necessary to complete the transaction described in the Agreement. Ms. Brison seconded. Motion carried 7-0.

Mr. Brown moved to authorize the Mayor to Execute and Deliver a Contract by and between the Town of Hilton Head Island, South Carolina, and Curtis L. Coltrane for services as the Town Attorney. Mr. Alfred seconded. Motion carried 7-0.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10:13 p.m.


Kimberly Gammon, Town Clerk


Alan R. Perry, Mayor

The full recording and a transcript of this Meeting can be found on the Town's website at www.hiltonheadislandsc.gov