



Town of Hilton Head Island
**COMMUNITY SERVICES AND PUBLIC SAFETY
COMMITTEE MEETING**
Monday, July 21, 2025, 10:00 AM
Minutes

Call to Order

Chair Becker called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Committee Members Present: Tamara Becker, Chair; Steve Alfred and Steve DeSimone

Other Members of Town Council Present: Patsy Brison and Melinda Tunner

Adoption of the Agenda

Mr. Alfred made a motion to amend the agenda to allow for public comment prior to the new business item. Mr. DeSimone seconded. Motion carried 3-0.

Mr. Alfred made a motion to adopt the agenda as amended. Mr. DeSimone seconded. Motion carried 3-0.

Approval of the Minutes

Special Meeting Minutes of June 3, 2025

Mr. Alfred made a motion to adopt. Mr. DeSimone seconded. Motion carried 3-0.

Regular Meeting Minutes of June 16, 2025

Mr. Alfred made a motion to adopt. Mr. DeSimone seconded. Motion carried 3-0.

Public Comment - Non Agenda Items

There was no public comment at this time.

New Business

Consideration of a Resolution Authorizing Application to the South Carolina Arts Commission for a Cultural District Designation on Hilton Head Island – Natalie Harvey, Office of Cultural Affairs Director

Natalie Harvey presented the Committee with the following information.

The South Carolina Arts Commission (SCAC) established the Cultural District Program in 2014 to promote placemaking and support local economies through the arts. A Cultural District is defined as a geographic area with a concentration of artistic assets, cultural facilities, creative businesses, and placemaking activities. To date, eleven South Carolina communities have received this designation: Aiken, Beaufort, Camden, Congaree Vista (Columbia), Florence, Georgetown, Greenwood, Hartsville,

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Lancaster, Rock Hill, and Spartanburg.

Ms. Harvey reported that the Town's Office of Cultural Affairs, in partnership with the Arts Council of Hilton Head Island and in consultation with SCAC, has completed the initial steps toward submitting a Cultural District application. Shelter Cove has been identified as the proposed Cultural District based on its existing concentration of venues, events, and public art. This initiative will support the Town's ongoing District Planning and cultural tourism strategies and align with regional and statewide arts efforts.

A preliminary inventory of the area's cultural assets has been completed and includes performing arts venues, outdoor music and festival spaces, public art and sculpture installations, arts-related businesses and nonprofit organizations, and the Office of Cultural Affairs. These assets will be further evaluated during an Asset Mapping Workshop with SCAC staff, scheduled for September 2025. A detailed application timeline has also been developed in coordination with SCAC.

It was noted that a formal Cultural District designation would recognize the Town's arts ecosystem, enhance visibility on state platforms, and make the Town eligible for future SCAC funding specific to Cultural Districts. Additional benefits include increased collaboration among arts organizations, enhanced community engagement, support for creative economic development, and improved data reporting through required annual and five-year SCAC evaluations. There is no cost to apply for or maintain the designation. Optional investments in events and staffing are currently supported by the Office of Cultural Affairs, and any future needs such as signage, branding, or promotional materials may be integrated into existing or future budgets and grant funding opportunities. This designation is expected to strengthen Hilton Head Island's position as a cultural destination, promote local pride, and attract visitors seeking authentic, community-based arts experiences.

Should Town Council wish for the Town Manager to pursue a Cultural District designation from the South Carolina Arts Commission, the Director of the Office of Cultural Affairs will move forward with the next steps. These include conducting an Asset Mapping Workshop with SCAC staff in September 2025, finalizing application components in Fall 2025, and submitting the formal Cultural District application in Spring 2026. Throughout this process, the Office will continue community engagement and planning efforts to support the designation.

Members of the Committee had questions, comments and discussion regarding: how the area of designation was chosen versus the whole Island; compliments of the detailed information and plan presented; did the Office of Cultural Affairs have discussion with any of the other districts that currently have a designation; clarification regarding the process of keeping the designation; comments that there are not a lot of places that government and the private sector work well together but it does here; and visitors travel to Hilton Head Island to enjoy things like this, and this is what makes it special.

Mr. Alfred made a motion to forward to Town Council for consideration of approval a resolution authorizing an application to the South Carolina Arts Commission for a Cultural District Designation on Hilton Head Island. Mr. DeSimone seconded.

Chair Backer asked for public comment.

Jane Joseph addressed the Committee and expressed her support for the Committee's consideration of the Cultural District designation, noting that the project originated in 2015. She also acknowledged Shelter Cove as a strong candidate for the designation, recognizing its successful development over time.

Mario Incorvaia commended Natalie Harvey, recognizing her as an ambassador for the arts not only locally on Hilton Head Island but also at the state level. He expressed his appreciation for her ongoing contributions to the local arts and culture community.

Motion carried 3-0.

Unrelated to the discussion, Chair Becker reported that she wanted to share a priority as Chair of the Community Services and Public Safety Committee. She acknowledged receiving ongoing public comments regarding concerning behavior and conditions on the Island. Ms. Becker emphasized that these issues are among her top priorities and assured the public that she is actively focused on addressing them. She announced plans to convene a group of stakeholders to discuss solutions aimed at improving safety and enhancing the Island's family-friendly environment. Chair Backer noted that some of the feedback she receives is distressing, and she hopes to move forward with actionable ideas in the near future.

Adjournment

Chair Becker adjourned the meeting at 10:20 a.m.

Approved: September 15, 2025

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