



Town of Hilton Head Island
GULLAH GEECHEE HISTORIC
NEIGHBORHOODS COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION MEETING
Wednesday, September 17, 2025, 10:00 AM
Minutes

Call to Order

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

Board Members Present: Louis Johnson, Chair; Shirley Peterson, Vice-Chair; David Ames; Alex Brown; Sarah Eisner, Treasurer; Alan Perry; and Andre White, Secretary

Adoption of the Agenda

Mr. Perry made a motion to adopt. Mr. Brown seconded. Motion carried 6-0 (Mr. White was not present at the time of voting).

Approval of the Minutes

Regular Meeting Minutes of August 20, 2025

Mr. Brown made a motion to approve. Mr. Perry seconded. Motion carried 6-0 (Mr. White was not present at the time of voting).

Presentation and Recognitions

Report of the Executive Director

Mr. Boxley provided the Gullah Geechee Historic Neighborhoods Community Development Corporation Board of Directors with a comprehensive update on the activities and initiatives the CDC has been engaged in since the last meeting. He reported on the Community Needs Group, the Land Management Ordinance (LMO) Focus Group, the Home Safety and Repair Program, Experience Gullah, Accounting Services, and the Money Talks Financial Education Series. Mr. Boxley discussed the ongoing coordination with community partners to assess and address emerging needs within the Island's historic neighborhoods, continued participation in the LMO Focus Group to ensure the Gullah Geechee community's priorities are represented in the ordinance update process, and progress on home repair projects within historic neighborhoods. He also highlighted the successful launch and continued expansion of the Experience Gullah digital platform, coordination with Town finance staff to strengthen financial management and reporting, and the ongoing success of the Money Talks Financial Education Series, which continues to provide valuable resources to local business owners and residents.

Board members held discussion and made comments regarding hurricane preparedness and community readiness efforts, potential state legislation related to housing and expressed their appreciation and encouragement for the continuation of the Money Talks Financial Education

Series. The Board thanked Mr. Boxley and CDC Staff for their continued dedication to advancing the organization's mission and supporting the Gullah Geechee community through these initiatives.

Unfinished Business

2024-19 Wayfinding Solution Development Update - Thomas Boxley, Executive Director for the Gullah Geechee Historic Neighborhoods Community Development Corporation

Mr. K.J. Jackson and Mr. Clarence Boyd of Solaos provided a presentation to the Board on the progress of the Wayfinding Solution Development project. The presenters demonstrated the functionality of the mobile application and companion website, highlighting the technology's capabilities, including real-time updates, user-friendly navigation, and the integration of augmented reality features designed to enhance visitor engagement. They also reviewed design concepts and signage elements, noting that feedback from previous focus groups had been incorporated into the ongoing development process. The presentation illustrated how the wayfinding system will connect digital tools with physical markers to guide residents and visitors throughout Hilton Head Island's historic neighborhoods.

Board members held discussion and made comments regarding the overall look and design of the platform. Members expressed that the visual approach should remain authentic to the character of Hilton Head Island and not be overly influenced by the existing marketing tone of the Chamber, which some felt has already saturated the Island's branding. Several members suggested incorporating local artwork, photography, and cultural motifs to better reflect the Island's history, ancestry, and Gullah Geechee heritage. Additional recommendations included developing a coordinated social media presence to support the wayfinding application and ensuring that images used throughout the platform represent real people and places from the community rather than standard stock photography.

In closing, Mr. Boxley announced that the official launch of the Wayfinding Solution Application would take place on October 2nd at the Rowing and Sailing Center at Squire Pope Community Park.

Public Comment - Non Agenda Items

Luana Graves Sellars commended the Board on the successful launch of the website and mobile application, noting that this initiative positions the Town and the Gullah Geechee culture as leaders within the corridor.

Al Jenkins addressed the board sharing his personal connection to the area and expressing his support for the ongoing efforts of the organization. He stated that if there is any assistance Senator Tim Scott's office can provide, the Board should not hesitate to reach out.

Adjournment

At 11:37 a.m., Mr. Perry made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Brown seconded. Motion carried 7-0.

Approved: November 19, 2025

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