



Town of Hilton Head Island  
GULLAH GEECHEE HISTORIC  
NEIGHBORHOODS COMMUNITY  
DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION MEETING  
Wednesday, November 19, 2025, 10:00 AM  
Minutes

Call to Order

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

Adoption of the Agenda

**Mr. Perry made a motion to adopt. Mr. Brown seconded. Motion carried 7-0.**

Approval of the Minutes

Regular Meeting Minutes of September 17, 2025

**Mr. Brown made a motion to approve. Mr. Perry seconded. Motion carried 7-0.**

Presentations

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. Mr. Boxley provided the Board with an update on CDC activities since the last meeting, including COAD, the Land Management Ordinance Focus Group, the Stoney Corridor/Highway 278 efforts, Experience Gullah, and the Money Talks Financial Education Series. He noted continued discussions on COAD and the CDC's potential leadership role, recent progress on the LMO Focus Group and the appointment of the new 21-member LMO Task Force, and ongoing engagement with Highway 278 property owners. He reported that Experience Gullah successfully launched on October 2 and is now entering Phase II, and that the Money Talks series has covered business law and non-traditional lending, with a session on Town procurement scheduled for November 18. He concluded by announcing that the CDC Christmas Party will be held on December 12, 2025.

Board members held discussion and made comments regarding the attendance at the money talks financial series; and positive thoughts that the LMO focus group would assist the Town in having forward thinking to see any potential conflicts as unintended consequences have happened previously.

## Unfinished Business

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

Mr. Boxley provided the board with an update on the expansion of the wayfinding application. As part of the ongoing maintenance of the site, we anticipate regular hosting fees to support the continued operation of the application, website, and Gullah TV, which will feature evolving content and updates. In order to support costs Mr. Boxley shared that he has identified a revenue stream to include marketing and advertising outreach to Native Island Gullah Geechee owned businesses, Island owned businesses (Non-Gullah Geechee) and Non Islander owned businesses. There was also mention of site impressions thus far and interactions over the last month.

Board members held discussions and made comments regarding the proposed advertising fee structure and potential length of contracts; a request not to have the website cluttered with ads to sustain income; and allow the application to grow but not to stretch Staff too far.

## New Business

### Review and Discussion Regarding the Renaming of the Rowing & Sailing Center at Squire Pope Community Park - Thomas Boxley, Executive Director for the Gullah Geechee Historic Neighborhoods Community Development Corporation

Mr. Boxley discussed with the board that As part of our ongoing mission to honor and preserve the history of the Gullah Geechee culture and community of Hilton Head Island, the CDC is proposing a name change that more accurately reflects the historical significance of this site. In recognition of the previous ownership, utilization, and historic context of this location, Mr. Boxley is proposing that the current name — Rowing and Sailing Center at Squire Pope Community Park — be changed to Hilton Head Island Fishing Cooperative Park. Historical references to the Hilton Head Island Fishing Cooperative date back to 1966, seventeen years prior to the Town’s incorporation, highlighting the organization’s instrumental role in advancing business and advocacy for Gullah fishermen and producers.

Board members held discussions and made positive comments regarding the proposed name change; questions of any other names that were thought of; comments of what those that are familiar of the area have called it; and a request for Mr. Boxley to engage with those family members that were involved in the Fishing Cooperative be contacted for their input and guidance.

Chair Johnson asked for public comment.

**Heather Rath** addressed the board with her compliments of this being a long awaited change and provided them with context of how the original name of the park came about.

**Sharon Sherman** addressed the board with her compliments for the name being changed for those in the community that it serves.

Review and Discussion of the Community Organizations Active in Disasters (COAD) Proposal - Thomas Boxley, Executive Director for the Gullah Geechee Historic Neighborhoods Community Development Corporation

Mr. Dunn provided the Board with a presentation of the Community Organizations Active in Disasters (COAD) proposal. He gave background of work that has been done and the plan going forward for the program.

Board members held discussions and made comments regarding a request for Mr. Boxley to look into possible grant opportunities and partnering with local vendors; discussion of the current evacuation plan for 278 during hurricane season; clarification of the types of disasters that this plan would aid with; and questions regarding who would respond and how that process would be activated.

Consideration of 2026 Meeting Schedule - Thomas Boxley, Executive Director for the Gullah Geechee Historic Neighborhoods Community Development Corporation

**Ms. Peterson made a motion to approve the 2026 Gullah Geechee Historic Neighborhoods Community Development Corporation meeting dates with the exclusion of the April meeting date. Mr. Perry seconded. Motion carried 7-0.**

**Public Comment - Non Agenda Items**

Chair Johnson asked for public comment. There was no public comment at this time.

Executive Session

**At 11:15 am, Mr. Brown made a motion to go into executive session. Ms. Peterson seconded. Motion carried 7-0.**

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:

Gullah Geechee Historic Neighborhood Community Development Corporation

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:

Stoney Area

Action from Executive Session

**At 11:46 am, Ms. Peterson made a motion to end executive session and return to the**

**regular meeting. Mr. Brown seconded. Motion carried 7-0.**

Chair Johnson asked if there was any action to be taken as a result of Executive Session.

Discussion of Appointment to Boards, Commissions, and Committees related to the Gullah Geechee Historic Neighborhood Community Development Corporation

**Ms. Peterson made a motion to Approve the appointment of Dave Byrd, Town of Hilton Head Island, Finance Director, as a non-voting board member to the Gullah Geechee Historic Neighborhoods Community Development Corporation who shall serve without term limits. Mr. Brown seconded. Motion carried 7-0.**

Adjournment

**At 11:47 am, Mr. Perry made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Peterson seconded. Motion carried 7-0.**

**Approved: February 19, 2026**

**The full recording and a transcript of this meeting can be found on the Town's website at [www.hiltonheadislandsc.gov](http://www.hiltonheadislandsc.gov)**