



Town of Hilton Head Island
GULLAH GEECHEE HISTORIC
NEIGHBORHOODS COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
COMMITTEE MEETING
Wednesday, July 24, 2024 – 6:00 PM
Minutes

Call to Order

Chair Peterson called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Board Members Present: Chair Shirley “Peaches” Peterson; David Ames; Alex Brown; and Terry Brubaker (via Microsoft Teams)

Board Members Absent: Pastor Louis Johnson and Andre White

Adoption of the Agenda

Mr. Brubaker moved to adopt the agenda. Mr. Ames seconded. Motion carried 4-0.

Approval of the Minutes

Regular Meeting Minutes of May 15, 2024

Mr. Ames moved to approve. Mr. Brubaker seconded. Motion carried 4-0.

Unfinished Business

Discussion of the William Hilton Parkway Gateway Corridor Project Timeline Update – Thomas Boxley, Executive Director for the Gullah Geechee Historic Neighborhoods Community Development Corporation

Mr. Boxley informed the Board that Town Council voted to approve Municipal Consent at its June 28th meeting. During the meeting, renderings of engineering and design aspects were presented for discussion purposes. The Town is currently awaiting Beaufort County's final decision. Mr. Boxley committed to updating the Board once that information becomes available. The Board commended Mr. Boxley for his efforts in working closely with property owners in the Stoney Community, providing them with detailed explanations and information about the process.

Chair Peterson asked for public comment.

There was no public comment at this time.

New Business

Discussion and Review of the Fiscal Year 2025 Gullah Geechee Historic Neighborhoods Community Development Corporation Approved Budget – Thomas Boxley, Executive Director for the Gullah Geechee Historic Neighborhoods Community Development Corporation

Mr. Boxley discussed that in March 2024, the Board approved the operating budget for fiscal year 2025. Subsequently, in June 2024, Town Council approved the Town's budget. As of June, the current budget reflects minimal changes from the approved budget. The year-to-date budget report presented provided a transparent overview of the Gullah Geechee Historic Neighborhoods Community Development Corporation's (GGHNCD) expenditures and current available funds. It is anticipated that spending will increase in the early part of the fiscal year due to the awarding of contracts for professional services and the Stoney Community Impact Grants, which will be discussed in detail later in the meeting. The Board remains focused on the ongoing review of the fiscal year 2025 GGHNCD approved budget in the coming months.

The Board members and Mr. Boxley discussed plans for the Gullah Geechee Historic Neighborhoods Community Development Corporation's (GGHNCD) mitigation efforts concerning the William Hilton Parkway Gateway Corridor Project for property owners. Mr. Boxley provided examples of specific needs expressed by property owners, including updated drainage systems, removal of unsafe structures, and construction of sewer infrastructure, along with other emerging needs as the project progresses.

Chair Peterson asked for public comment.

There was no public comment at this time.

Discussion of Request for Proposals 2-0204-19 Wayfinding Solution Development – Thomas Boxley, Executive Director for the Gullah Geechee Historic Neighborhoods Community Development Corporation

Mr. Boxley discussed that approved in the Fiscal Year 2024 - 2026 Gullah Geechee Historic Neighborhoods Community Development Corporation Strategic Plan, the stabilization and preservation of the Historic Gullah Neighborhoods, cultural sites, and history was identified as an objective. To this end, supported by a budget-approved line item for professional services, staff has worked with the Town's Procurement Department to issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) for development services. These services will develop the technological application to support the digital preservation of cultural sites and provide an enhanced experience for visitors to these identified sites. The RFP was developed to support enhanced cultural experiences and preservation for ten sites. The RFP opened on June 14th and closed on July 11th. The evaluation of the received proposals will begin being reviewed during the month of July. The anticipated awarding of the contract is proposed for August.

The Board was encouraged by the progress of the project. At the time of the meeting, there had been 11 submissions for review. This wayfinding solution development aims to showcase Hilton Head Island as more than just a destination for beaches and golf by highlighting its rich cultural heritage. The concept will allow the island's history to be told by members of the local community, further emphasizing its unique cultural background. Once an award is made, Mr. Boxley will update the Board.

Chair Peterson asked for public comment.

Elizabeth Belenchia addressed the board regarding the importance the project and asked for the inclusion of music.

Discussion of Stoney Community Impact Grants – Thomas Boxley, Executive Director for the Gullah Geechee Historic Neighborhoods Community Development Corporation

Mr. Boxley, discussed with the board as part of their 2024–2026 Gullah Geechee Historic Neighborhoods Community Development Corporation Strategic Plan, we are committed to stabilizing the Stoney community. To achieve this objective, we will offer immediate support to property owners in the Stoney community with demonstrated need, particularly focusing on our vulnerable population that has been significantly impacted by years of highway expansion. Backed by our Capital Outlay budget, I am recommending that the GGHNCDC allocate \$500,000 in funds to establish a grant program aimed at providing site improvements to minimize noise and emissions pollution. These improvements will offer immediate, permanent solutions that won't be affected by the highway expansion. Examples of such improvements include re-insulating homes, purchasing and installing new windows, and adding weather stripping for homeowners. The requested amount will need to be reassessed and potentially increased in the next fiscal year.

The Board members and Mr. Boxley discussed that he has identified six families who are eligible to benefit from the program. He also is currently working with the Town's Procurement department to advertise the program and aims to have it operational within the next 60-90 days. This initiative is designed to improve the quality of life in the Stoney area and offer assistance in long-term planning for the community.

Chair Peterson asked for public comment.

There was no public comment at this time.

Discussion of Community Educational Meetings – Thomas Boxley, Executive Director for the Gullah Geechee Historic Neighborhoods Community Development Corporation

Mr. Boxley informed the Board that, as part of the 2024-2026 Gullah Geechee Historic Neighborhoods Community Development Corporation (GGHNCDC) Strategic Plan, the organization is focusing on developing strategic partnerships to support its mission. Priority areas include increasing access to capital, providing financial education, and informing the community about the opportunities the organization offers. To support these goals, GGHNCDC is partnering with TD Bank to deliver a series of financial education workshops. These workshops will be hosted

by TD Bank at the Hilton Head Island Recreation Center and are aimed at equipping small business owners with essential information to improve their access to capital.

The Board was encouraged by the initiative but cautioned that many in the Gullah Community may initially be hesitant due to previous trust issues. They suggested that Mr. Boxley schedule personal follow-ups after the workshops to help build trust and improve future attendance at the seminar Mr. Boxley acknowledged this concern and mentioned the possibility of recording the seminars for future use, should it be appropriate.

Public Comment – Non Agenda Items

There was no request for public comment.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 6:48 p.m.

Approved: September 18, 2024

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