

**THE GULLAH/GEECHEE  
CULTURAL HERITAGE CORRIDOR  
COMMISSION MEETING**

Monday, April 27th, 2009  
7:00 p.m. – 8:32 p.m.

The GULLAH/GEECHEE CULTURAL HERITAGE  
CORRIDOR COMMISSION MEETING, taken on the 27th  
day of April, 2009 at Bethel A.M.E. Church, located at  
464 Society Road, McClellanville, South Carolina 29458.

**CP-26 REPORTING**

Melissa M. Decker, Court Reporter  
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**APPEARANCES:**

**COMMISSION MEMBERS:**

Commissioner Ron Daise  
Commissioner Veronica D. Gerald  
Commissioner Nichole Green

**ATTENDEES/SPEAKERS:**

Reverend Branton, McClellanville, South Carolina

Ms. Vermel Powell  
Post Office Box 216, McClellanville, South Carolina 29458

Ms. Eugenia Deas  
Post Office Box 341, McClellanville, South Carolina 29458

Ms. Miriam Vereen, McClellanville, South Carolina

Ms. Sheila Powell, McClellanville, South Carolina

Ms. Minnie Powell, McClellanville, South Carolina

Ms. Barbara McCormick, McClellanville, South Carolina

Mr. Sam Watson  
Post Office Box 53, McClellanville, South Carolina 29458

Ms. Dolly Powell Johnson, McClellanville, South Carolina

Ms. Zelda Grant, McClellanville, South Carolina

Ms. Lucretia Swinton  
1464 River Road, McClellanville, South Carolina 29458

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**ATTENDEES/SPEAKERS CONTINUED:**

Councilman Gussie Humes  
Post Office Box 248, McClellanville, South Carolina 29458

Ms. Diane Geathers  
Post Office Box 543, McClellanville, South Carolina 29458

Ms. Thelma Harney  
1609 River Road, McClellanville, South Carolina 29458

Reverend Clemmons Blake, McClellanville, South Carolina

**ALSO PRESENT:**  
Sunny Fry, Videographer

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**INTRODUCTION**

COMMISSIONER GREEN: Good evening, everyone.  
My name is Nichole Green. I am a  
Commissioner on the Gullah/Geechee  
Cultural Heritage Corridor Commission.  
Thank you for coming this evening. It's  
just wonderful to see you all here.  
First of all, I'd just like to thank  
Reverend Russell and the officers and  
members of Bethel A.M.E. Church for  
opening their doors to us tonight. And  
I'm going to ask Ms. Vermel Powell just  
to give us a general welcome, followed  
by Reverend Branton just to do a short  
invocation.

**WELCOME**

MS. V. POWELL: Again, thank you. A  
pleasant and blessed, good evening to  
you. On behalf of our pastor, Reverend  
Russell, first family, officers and  
members of Bethel McClellanville we are  
certainly happy, are actually elated to  
have you come and be with us. We are so  
very proud of Nichole and, you know,  
that she bring honor and glory not only

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1 to God but to those of us who knew her  
2 as a baby and saw her grew up and all  
3 that she have done with her life. And  
4 at this time we are going to open with a  
5 little song, and then Reverend Michael  
6 will come with a prayer. If you know  
7 it, please help me say this. If you'll  
8 just stand that we give our bullets to  
9 God.

10 COURT REPORTER'S

11 NOTE: (EVERYONE BEGINS TO  
12 SING "THIS IS THE DAY THAT THE LORD HAS  
13 MADE.")

14 **INVOCATION**

15 COURT REPORTER'S

16 NOTE: (PRAYER BY REVEREND  
17 BRANTON.)

18 AUDIENCE: AMEN.

19 MS. V. POWELL: Again, you're certainly  
20 welcome. At this time we're going to  
21 turn it back at the hands of those who  
22 are presenting.

23 **OVERVIEW**

24 COMMISSIONER DAISE: Good evening, everyone.

25 AUDIENCE: Good evening.

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1 COMMISSIONER DAISE: My name is Ron Daise.  
2 I am also a Commissioner. I am a native  
3 of St. Helena Island, South Carolina, a  
4 resident of Beaufort, South Carolina,  
5 and as of five years ago I had a  
6 commuting job, a commuter job, so a part  
7 time resident of Georgetown County  
8 because I work at Brookgreen Gardens.

9 AUDIENCE: Oh.

10 COMMISSIONER DAISE: Some of you have  
11 recognized me coming in from the T.V.  
12 show Gullah-Gullah Island, that I and my  
13 family members starred in. And I am so  
14 thankful for that opening song because  
15 not only is this is the day that the  
16 Lord has made, but this is the day, with  
17 your presence here, to help give meaning  
18 and significance to two words that when  
19 I was growing up were fighting words.  
20 And those two words each start with a  
21 "G" are?

22 AUDIENCE: Gullah ---

23 COMMISSIONER DAISE: Gullah and?

24 AUDIENCE: Geechee.

25 COMMISSIONER DAISE: Geechee, absolutely

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1 right. Now some of you had the  
2 opportunity to look at the panels before  
3 you, and I am going to go through;  
4 explain some of them. I'm not going to  
5 read them in length. And you have  
6 opportunity even throughout this  
7 presentation, if you are comfortable you  
8 can make your way to the front. If you  
9 want to look a little closer you may do  
10 so and then after the meeting you may  
11 still pay attention to these panels. I  
12 think I can be heard well.

13 AUDIENCE: Yes.

14 COMMISSIONER DAISE: This first panel talks  
15 about the background. In 2006 Congress  
16 designated the Barrier Islands and  
17 Coastal Regions along the Atlantic Ocean  
18 as the Gullah-Geechee Cultural Heritage  
19 Corridor. And which Congressman was  
20 responsible for writing this bill that  
21 became a law?

22 AUDIENCE: Clyburn.

23 COMMISSIONER DAISE: And you know that.

24 AUDIENCE: (Laughter.)

25 COMMISSIONER DAISE: Congressman James E.

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1           Clyburn and the Heritage Corridor was  
2           created to recognize the important  
3           contributions made to American culture  
4           and history by Africans and African  
5           Americans known as Gullah/Geechee, who  
6           settled in the Coastal Regions of the  
7           four states. Prior to the bill being  
8           written, Congressman Clyburn tasked the  
9           National Park Service to put together a  
10          Special Resource Study and that was  
11          done. And because of all the  
12          information that was gathered, hopefully  
13          from communities right, such as  
14          McClellanville, that information has  
15          been documented and the legislation was  
16          written. And there, it is now a four-  
17          state cultural heritage corridor from  
18          the southern part of North Carolina down  
19          through South Carolina, Georgia, and  
20          down to the northern part of Florida.  
21          From Jacksonville, North Carolina down  
22          to Jacksonville, Florida and 30 miles  
23          inland; that's why we have freshwater  
24          Gullahs and Geechees, saltwater Gullahs  
25          and Geechees, and for those that are not

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1           in the lowcountry, we got high land  
2           Gullahs and Geechees. The Cultural  
3           Heritage Corridor is a national heritage  
4           area. This panel tells about that. A  
5           national heritage area is a locally  
6           managed place designated by the United  
7           States Congress where natural, cultural,  
8           historic and recreational resources  
9           combine to form a cohesive nationally  
10          distinctive landscape, arising from  
11          patterns of human activity shaped by  
12          geography. That's the dictionary  
13          meaning.

14       AUDIENCE:                   Yes.

15       COMMISSIONER DAISE:   It is an area that is  
16           set aside because of the culture. And  
17           this is the first and only national  
18           heritage area in our country that is  
19           designated for the preservation of the  
20           Gullah-Geechee culture. This is the  
21           day.

22       COURT REPORTER'S

23       NOTE:                       (Audience chatter.)

24       COMMISSIONER DAISE:   And your presence here  
25           helps to make sure that it will be done

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1 well. Now, throughout, since 2006,  
2 since the Commission was organized,  
3 there were 15 commissioners who were  
4 selected and 10 alternates. The other  
5 commissioner present tonight is Dr.  
6 Veronica Gerald, to the front, and you  
7 may hear from her later. Some of the  
8 resources that would have been  
9 identified in the northern part of South  
10 Carolina and in the southern part of  
11 South Carolina, and the resources are  
12 natural resources, cultural resources,  
13 recreational resources, and religious  
14 resources. Now this point was made  
15 earlier that this seems to be a vast  
16 number of resources identified on these  
17 two maps for the lower community of  
18 South Carolina. And please bear in mind  
19 that when the Special Resource Study was  
20 developed by the National Park Service  
21 there was a large, there was  
22 identification of a large number of  
23 resources throughout South Carolina, and  
24 in the other three states as well.  
25 Since the Commission was organized,

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1           however, at one of our meetings we were  
2           tasked with identifying those additional  
3           resources that had not been identified  
4           in the Special Resource Study. Now,  
5           this, what you see here, is not the  
6           culmination of all the resources that  
7           have been identified. But for the sake  
8           of this meeting, just for documentation,  
9           if there are communities, if there are  
10          resources that you feel we need to be  
11          sure are identified, please make sure  
12          that, that is done tonight. That is the  
13          purpose of this meeting. But before  
14          going further, I want to identify on  
15          this panel this is the names of each of  
16          the commissioners. The chairman of the  
17          corridor is Emory Campbell of Hilton  
18          head, South Carolina, and the other  
19          three officers are identified. For the  
20          purpose of this meeting, we want to hear  
21          from you. It is important that we hear  
22          your comments about just how this  
23          Gullah/Geechee Cultural Heritage  
24          Corridor is to be developed. We want to  
25          know your thoughts, your ideas, and your

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1 concerns. We want to know what are the  
2 top three things of the Gullah/Geechee  
3 culture that you would protect,  
4 preserve, and or continue. Now, if  
5 there are three things, if any of these  
6 things is a historic site, please  
7 provide us with the address and the  
8 location of those sites. And if any of  
9 these events or programs, if any of  
10 these events or programs, please provide  
11 the contact information for the people  
12 that produce the event. It could be  
13 festivals. You could talk about  
14 churches. You could talk about the kind  
15 of music, any aspect of the culture.  
16 You could talk about resources that you  
17 can't touch; you can't put your hands  
18 on. Individuals coming from the  
19 community who are deceased; practices  
20 that are no longer, any of those things.  
21 Those are the things that we want to  
22 make sure that you comment tonight. We  
23 have partnered, or we have aligned, with  
24 the Denver Service Center, who is  
25 putting together a general management

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1 plan that is going to be the blueprint  
2 for this Heritage Corridor for the next  
3 10 to 15 years. So, therefore, we need  
4 to hear from you in the McClellanville  
5 Community, in other areas of the  
6 Gullah/Geechee Heritage Corridor. What  
7 do you think will be most important that  
8 we do not forget; that we must site? So  
9 that when this general management plan  
10 is outlined and everyone is trying to  
11 decide just how we are going to put this  
12 corridor together that extends from,  
13 through four states, that we'll have to  
14 make sure that everything that was said  
15 tonight has to be, will be regarded.  
16 This is the day; that is the purpose for  
17 your coming together, and very excited  
18 to see each of you.

19 COMMISSIONER GREEN: Thank you so much,  
20 Commissioner Daise.

21 AUDIENCE: (Applause.)

22 COMMISSIONER GREEN: Now this is the most  
23 important part of the meeting tonight,  
24 and it's the public input portion of the  
25 meeting. And just to get it started, I

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1           wanted Ms. Eugenia Deas to come up and  
2           talk about one component of  
3           Gullah/Geechee culture. One religious  
4           component, and that's praise houses and  
5           the seeking tradition. And a couple of  
6           years ago I spoke with Ms. Adams and Ms.  
7           Eugenia about this. I was doing  
8           research about this and they both gave  
9           so much wonderful information. But what  
10          I wanted to do is: Get Ms. Eugenia Deas  
11          to come up today and just take a couple  
12          minutes and tell us her experiences with  
13          seeking and praise houses. Ms. Deas,  
14          can you come up?

**SPECIAL GUEST SPEAKER**

15  
16       MS. DEAS:                       Good afternoon,  
17               chil'ren; how y'all doing?

18       AUDIENCE:                      (Chatter; laughter.)

19       MS. DEAS:                      All belongs to me.

20       AUDIENCE:                      (Laughter.)

21       MS. DEAS:                      That's what I love;  
22               being with my kids then and see how  
23               y'all performing. I'm so happy to see  
24               everybody this afternoon. Is the main  
25               thing about this Gullah/Geechee, you

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1           know I have a daughter who works with  
2           this organization, too. Anybody know  
3           Vinnie Moore?

4       AUDIENCE:                   Uh-huh (affirmative  
5                                    response). Sure.

6       MS. DEAS:                  That's my daughter.

7       AUDIENCE:                   Uh-huh (affirmative  
8                                    response).

9       MS. DEAS:                  And I try to help her  
10           out and keep her going, but the thing  
11           about it: Our language had been held  
12           back because even we went to school, Elk  
13           Haven, you say like dis a here and dat a  
14           yonders, you're speaking bad English.  
15           So we couldn't keep it going. Anybody,  
16           anybody would say, you said dis here;  
17           yeah, that mean this. Today, the  
18           present or the future: dis a here and  
19           dat a yonder; that's the way we speak.

20       AUDIENCE:                   (Laughter and chatter.)

21           Yeah, I went with my daughter sometime  
22           ago so I could be the translator.

23           (Laughing.) Went down in part of South  
24           Carolina, down there near South Santee.  
25           She was going to get the history.

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1 "Momma, go with me because sometime you  
2 know those peoples say things to me I  
3 don't understand." I said, "Okay, baby.  
4 They can't say nuttin' I ain't know  
5 sumtin' about."

6 AUDIENCE: (Laughter.)

7 MS. DEAS: She said, "Okay." So  
8 we stop at one place and we asked about  
9 a very interesting man. She was  
10 interested in this man but found out  
11 that he had died. I said, "I don't  
12 think I know him." So we stopped there.  
13 I said let's ask this lady maybe she may  
14 explain it to us. She said, "All  
15 right." So finally the lady came to the  
16 car. "Hello, how y'all doing?" I do  
17 all right. So we say, yes, we doing  
18 fine. Then we said, do you know Charles  
19 Williams, II, something. Who you mean,  
20 Charles Williams? We been plant him a  
21 long time.

22 AUDIENCE: (Laughter.)

23 MS. DEAS: Said, "Momma planting"?

24 COMMISSIONER GREEN: Talking about seeking.

25 MS. DEAS: I said, "Plant him

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1 means he been dead a long time."

2 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Long time.

3 MS. DEAS: Oh, you say plant him;

4 I didn't know you mean bury him.

5 (Laughing.)

6 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Yeah.

7 MS. DEAS: Bury him a long time  
8 ago. And another thing again: Another  
9 way we could not talk Gullah talk. Go  
10 to school, we talked like this a here  
11 and that a yonder and take you and chop  
12 you on your hand. "Girl, speak correct  
13 English: nouns, pronouns, adjectives,  
14 and describe things like that. You know  
15 you come here with all that backward  
16 talk." Now how we going to keep this,  
17 the Gullah, when they make us quit with  
18 it?

19 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Uh-huh (affirmative  
20 response).

21 MS. DEAS: You know you couldn't  
22 say that in school.

23 AUDIENCE MEMBER: No.

24 MS. DEAS: You said that you know  
25 the teacher getting ready to strike us.

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1 Even when you go into school late, you  
2 know what they do? We had to walk to  
3 school. When I was going to school, we  
4 had to walk to school. You get there  
5 five minutes late, hold your hand up.  
6 Feels like chopping your hand ---

7 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Amen.

8 MS. DEAS: --- for being late.

9 COMMISSIONER GREEN: Talk about seeking.

10 MS. DEAS: Yeah, and I'm going to  
11 get to the church, but I have to get  
12 through my chil'ren first.

13 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Amen.

14 MS. DEAS: Let them know where,  
15 why, you know, I speak in that language.  
16 Now going to church, when we was young  
17 coming up, you didn't just go up to the  
18 preacher and shake your hand and ---

19 AUDIENCE MEMBER: No.

20 MS. DEAS: --- give the preacher  
21 your hand and go, you had to get down to  
22 that mother's bench and you have to  
23 pray. And you pray until you ---

24 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Fall out.

25 MS. DEAS: --- fall out.

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1 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Faint.  
2 AUDIENCE: (Laughter.)  
3 MS. DEAS: Then they carry you to  
4 a mother so you can seek.  
5 AUDIENCE MEMBER: That's right.  
6 MS. DEAS: And the thing about it  
7 ---  
8 AUDIENCE MEMBER: How true.  
9 MS. DEAS: --- you couldn't even,  
10 they wouldn't let you eat.  
11 AUDIENCE: No. (Laughter.)  
12 MS. DEAS: That's the only thing.  
13 When you go into seek you had to go it  
14 in order in the forest. Then they put  
15 you by yourself and I was the scary one.  
16 I was scared what was in the nighttime.  
17 And you kneel down to a tree by yourself  
18 and you pray and you pray. And when you  
19 go back home, not to your home, you go  
20 back to your seeking mother. And when  
21 you went to bed, you're gone pray again  
22 before you go in your bed. Then when  
23 you wake up you have to tell ---  
24 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Your vision.  
25 MS. DEAS: --- your dream.

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1 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Uh-huh (affirmative  
2 response).  
3 MS. DEAS: And every time you tell  
4 that dream, you're getting closer and  
5 closer.  
6 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Amen.  
7 MS. DEAS: But if you don't come  
8 out true, according to how, you have to  
9 be serious. You know what you mean by  
10 serious, when you gone do something, put  
11 yourself into it. And every time you  
12 come with a good dream, then mother  
13 would say, "Well, I think you about  
14 finished now."  
15 AUDIENCE: (Chuckling.)  
16 MS. DEAS: You say, "Finished,  
17 mom"? "Yeah, you had a good dream last  
18 night. You tell me you've been to that  
19 water. Did you put your feet in there?  
20 How did it feel? Did it feel despair  
21 when you touch it"?  
22 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Uh-huh (affirmative  
23 response).  
24 MS. DEAS: She said, well, I think  
25 I'll let you go home to your mother.

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1           You got to stay with me no longer  
2           because you done come true. You have to  
3           go home, den you can get something to  
4           eat.

5   AUDIENCE:                           (Laughter.)

6   MS. DEAS:                       But long as seeking,  
7           and you eat so much you can't dream. So  
8           you're gone dream because you're hungry.

9   AUDIENCE:                           (Laughter.)

10   MS. DEAS:                       And you have one good  
11           dream and you go back and you tell your  
12           secret mother, not your birth momma now,  
13           your seeking mother. But you don't stay  
14           home when you're seeking.

15   AUDIENCE:                       No.

16   MS. DEAS:                       You have to go. And  
17           you talk about them mosquitoes been bad.  
18           Them mosquitoes, I seek in the  
19           summertime and the mosquito was bad.  
20           The thing you ain't supposed to kill  
21           them; you supposed to brush them off.  
22           But I, I, I ain't gone lie, I killed, I  
23           killed some.

24   AUDIENCE:                           (Laughter.)

25   MS. DEAS:                       And them skeeters bite

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1           hards. I guess that's why it take me so  
2           long to come true.

3       AUDIENCE:                   (Laughter.)

4       MS. DEAS:                Because I have to tell  
5           them the truth when I get back to my  
6           seeking mother. "Did you kill them  
7           mosquitoes?" because she seen I had my  
8           little messed up with a killin' them  
9           big, you know, a big one of those fly  
10          that make so much noise in your ear?

11       AUDIENCE:                Uh-huh (affirmative  
12          response).

13       MS. DEAS:                Uh-huh (affirmative  
14          response). And then the mother then  
15          would pray with you. Then after that,  
16          when you do come back to the revival  
17          meeting, you get down; you kneel down  
18          and you pray again. And then you go  
19          back and, with your mother again. You  
20          got to get it right. And as long as you  
21          didn't find that baby, you ain't coming  
22          true. When you find that baby and get  
23          ready for fellowship, the mother say you  
24          can fellowship. You got with that  
25          preacher that Sunday and you walk up

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1           there and give the preacher your hand  
2           and go with your heart; you're ready to  
3           fellowship.

4   AUDIENCE:                   Uh-huh (affirmative  
5           response).

6   MS. DEAS:                  Yeah. I ain't gone  
7           take too long because I, I know a lot of  
8           you want to talk, but that's the way we  
9           do the fellowship.

10   AUDIENCE:                 Uh-huh (affirmative  
11          response).

12   MS. DEAS:                 And another thing,  
13          again, you know, we used to believe in  
14          ghosts. You all ever talk about ghosts  
15          who go up and around?

16   AUDIENCE:                 Uh-huh (affirmative  
17          response).

18   MS. DEAS:                 What was three men  
19          walking down that lonely country road  
20          and they walked down towards dirt road.  
21          And they looking at a old house nobody  
22          was living in. One went a lookin'  
23          through the window and they saw a money  
24          bag on the table. So the first man went  
25          in and as he was going to put his hand

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1 to get to this, get that bag of money.  
2 Somebody said leave that money alone;  
3 I'm the ghost of Daniel Boone. Leave  
4 that money alone. Well they didn't get  
5 the money. The next man went there; he  
6 say you didn't get the money? I go get  
7 the money. He go in there and they tell  
8 him. He heard the same words: Leave  
9 that money alone. I'm the ghost of  
10 Daniel Boone. One of my buddies going  
11 in there say y'all all run in there and  
12 ain't get that money. He going in there  
13 and when he reach his hand in and voice  
14 calling: Boy leave that money alone.  
15 I'm the ghost of Daniel Boone." He  
16 said, "Leave the money alone. I'm the  
17 ghost of David Crockett and I'm putting  
18 this money in my pocket."

19 AUDIENCE: (Laughter and  
20 applause.)

21 COMMISSIONER GREEN: Thank you so much, Ms.  
22 Deas. Thank you so much for that. Now  
23 we're opening the floor for anyone to  
24 come up. We ask that you come up to the  
25 mic so you can be heard. If you're not

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1           able to come up, I'll bring the mic to  
2           you as far as it can reach.

3       COMMISSIONER DAISE:       State your name.

4       COMMISSIONER GREEN:       And if you could also  
5           state your name. We got a lot of names  
6           as you came in, but if you could also,  
7           before you start speaking, just state  
8           your name before you start. Anybody?

9       MS. V. POWELL:            I do. Is this for  
10           anything that you'd like ---

11       COMMISSIONER GREEN:       Anything. Anything at  
12           all.

13       COMMISSIONER DAISE:       Anything you think is  
14           important.

15       COMMISSIONER GREEN:       Anything you think is  
16           important.

17       COMMISSIONER DAISE:       And part of the  
18           culture, the heritage.

19       COMMISSIONER GREEN:       Yes.

20       COMMISSIONER DAISE:       Anything.

21       COMMISSIONER GREEN:       Ms. Powell.

22                                   **PUBLIC ATTEDEES/SPEAKERS**

23       MS. V. POWELL:            All right. Good  
24           evening. I'm Vermel Powell. And I  
25           assisted Ms. Deas. We call her Sister

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1           here in the community. I talked about  
2           religion. And in the black community  
3           religion played a very, very important  
4           part of our heritage. And the church  
5           played even a greater part. And the  
6           reason I'm saying that is because you  
7           would find, even at my age, and I'm, I'm  
8           moving; I'm getting there. But 55 years  
9           ago I was born at home, in my parents'  
10          house, not like going to the hospital  
11          and what have you. And it was, I was  
12          delivered by midwife, you know, by a  
13          midwife. But I'm saying the midwife  
14          did, brought the babies into the world.  
15          And then they didn't get to report the  
16          child's birth until maybe a week or two  
17          later when they rode the ferry to go  
18          into Charleston. And so now those  
19          persons who are perhaps older than my  
20          years will have difficulties or there  
21          would be some kind of discrepancy in the  
22          day they were born according to what  
23          their birth certificate is saying and  
24          what they are known to be saying. So,  
25          it was the church baptismal record that

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1 was kept that, you know, or took care of  
2 these kinds of errors and what  
3 have you. And the family Bible, of  
4 course, you know your grandparents wrote  
5 down the date. But I'm saying all of  
6 this to say that we are here at Bethel  
7 McClellanville. This is our new site.  
8 There is a Bethel McClellanville or the  
9 Old Bethel Church that is on Dupree  
10 Road; that church was built by a black  
11 man and we certainly would like to  
12 preserve that church. All of the  
13 shingles and stuff that's there, I  
14 understand was hand, you know was carved  
15 by hand. And it, it, it's just enough  
16 that our children will, it will be there  
17 for our children in years and generation  
18 to come. So we want you to consider the  
19 Old Bethel Church when you go to before  
20 in your boards or whatever, whoever make  
21 decisions about what would happen or  
22 what your committee would do. And  
23 someone else perhaps that has a bit more  
24 knowledge as to about who built it and  
25 all of that, you know. We tried

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1           restoring, unfortunately, Jenny Riggs  
2           who, Nesbitt, who chaired that program  
3           is not here today. But we did try  
4           restoring that church after Hugo, and it  
5           was not from its foundation and  
6           whatever. But it is on the state  
7           registry as a historical site. So if  
8           you ever choose to visit this area  
9           again, you perhaps would want to go to  
10          Dupree Road and look at the Old Bethel.  
11          Thank you.

12       COMMISSIONER GREEN:     Thank you. Thank you  
13                                so much, Ms. Powell; that's definitely  
14                                something that I think should be  
15                                preserved.

16       AUDIENCE:                        (Applause.)

17       COMMISSIONER GREEN:     That's the church that  
18                                I was going to when I was young. And  
19                                one of my earliest memories is parking.  
20                                Mr. Humes, I think we were almost  
21                                parking in your yard. My mom parked in  
22                                your yard, but it was really full. But  
23                                getting out, I remember getting out of  
24                                the car and looking at my shoes, black  
25                                patent leather shoes with the little

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1 socks turned down.

2 AUDIENCE: Uh-huh (affirmative  
3 response).

4 COMMISSIONER GREEN: And it was spring but  
5 it was a little chilly. So I had the  
6 white shawl with the slits in the side  
7 you put your arms through.

8 AUDIENCE: (Laughter.)

9 COMMISSIONER GREEN: And I could hear, then  
10 we were always late to church, so  
11 already singing inside. And I remember,  
12 I was about four or so, three or four,  
13 and I remember hearing "At the Cross" --  
14 -

15 AUDIENCE: "At the Cross."

16 COMMISSIONER GREEN: --- singing already.  
17 Anybody else? Yes. I'll come up.

18 MS. VEREEN: My name is Miriam  
19 Vereen. And I'm a part of Buckshot's  
20 Restaurant. And we have a soul food  
21 restaurant and we try to preserve my  
22 grandmother's recipes, like the shrimp  
23 and grits. We were in Gourmet Magazine  
24 for our style of shrimp and grits. The  
25 way how they make shrimp and grits now,

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1           they kind of put milk and all that stuff  
2           in it, but we do the old school.

3       AUDIENCE:                   Uh-huh (affirmative  
4           response).

5       MS. VEREEN:               We do it from the old  
6           school; add cornbread, collard greens,  
7           and we don't want to defray from that  
8           because we have people from all over  
9           coming to the restaurant just for the  
10          lowcountry mix, but it's Gullah.  
11          Because anytime you get cornbread,  
12          collard greens, they even, for New  
13          Year's we even do a chittlin' dish. And  
14          we try to stick to the old tradition,  
15          not the new method of cooking. So we  
16          would like to have our restaurant as a  
17          Gullah/Geechee because we have old  
18          remedies and the old methods of cooking.  
19          Carolyn Wright sits back there; she  
20          makes the best biscuits.

21       AUDIENCE:                   Yes. Yes.

22       MS. VEREEN:               Homemade. And every  
23           time somebody come in there they say you  
24           have to really go back and put this to  
25           market because it's excellent. And our

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1 macaroni, well, y'all know.

2 AUDIENCE: Yeah.

3 MS. VEREEN: Y'all know. So we come  
4 up with all styles of cooking, but we  
5 stick to the Gullah/Geechee recipes. So  
6 we would like to be a part of the  
7 Gullah-Geechee's Corridor with our name  
8 as the soul food restaurant on Highway  
9 17.

10 COMMISSIONER GERALD: What's the significance  
11 of the name?

12 MS. VEREEN: Buckshot?

13 AUDIENCE: (Laughter.)

14 MS. VEREEN: I'll tell you: My dad,  
15 my dad gave all of us a nickname. And  
16 I'm not going to tell you mine.

17 AUDIENCE: (Laughter.)

18 MS. VEREEN: Everybody had a  
19 nickname in our house. So when Buckshot  
20 was born, his name was Joseph Carlton.  
21 And my dad gave him that name: Buckshot.  
22 Now Buckshot started cooking up at the  
23 Rest, at the Shady Rest. And then we,  
24 we created a park called the Flintstone  
25 Park. And Hugo destroyed that park.

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1           And then after Hugo destroyed the park,  
2           he went to Jamestown and started cooking  
3           out there. He always had a knack for  
4           cooking. So my daughter and him teamed  
5           up and they created Buckshot's Carryout.  
6           But my dad gave him that name when he  
7           was three-months old.

8       COMMISSIONER GERALD: Was nicknaming  
9           something that was real common in the  
10          Gullah-Geechee Community here?

11       MS. VEREEN:               Yes. It was very  
12          common.

13       COMMISSIONER GERALD: Can you tell us a  
14          little bit about nicknaming as one of  
15          the traditions?

16       MS. VEREEN:               It's, it's, they, I,  
17          I, the reason why I think they gave a  
18          nickname because they couldn't pronounce  
19          the real name, because never, nobody  
20          never did call my name the right way.  
21          My name is Miriam. And everybody called  
22          me Murram (phonetically spelled).

23       AUDIENCE:                 (Laughter.)

24       MS. VEREEN:               Yeah. And my name is  
25          really Miriam. Buckshot's name is

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1           Joseph. Bernard's name is Gregory. So  
2           everybody had a nickname by identity.  
3       COMMISSIONER GERALD: So then a nickname can  
4           transform into the name of a restaurant?  
5       MS. VEREEN:               Yes. We, a lot of  
6           people say well, why did y'all come up  
7           with that name because a lot of people  
8           wouldn't relate to it. And so one day  
9           this car racer, he's a NASCAR racer.  
10          And he passed through, and he saw the  
11          name Buckshot's. And he came in and he  
12          said nobody has that name but him. His  
13          name was Buckshot.  
14       AUDIENCE:               (Laughter.)  
15       MS. VEREEN:               He took one of our  
16          menus and he autographed it. And he  
17          sent us back a hundred dollar bill  
18          because he said the food was excellent  
19          and it was just like him: Buckshot.  
20       AUDIENCE:               (Laughter and  
21          applause.)  
22       MS. S. POWELL:           I'd like to applaud you  
23          all for this effort and Congressman  
24          Clyburn. He always has my support  
25          because he always looks after us. I

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1           want to talk in reference to a couple of  
2           things.

3       COMMISSIONER DAISE:     State your name.

4       MS. S. POWELL:           Oh, excuse me. I am  
5           Sheila Powell and speaking to you on  
6           behalf of the seniors. I am the  
7           director of the senior centers here in  
8           this community. I'm also speaking on  
9           behalf of education. I'm a local board  
10          member for the district. I'd like to  
11          see a dedication in landmarks for this  
12          community as far as Gullah/Geechee. She  
13          alluded to, Sister Deas, how there was a  
14          difference. There was education but  
15          there was a separation in the education.  
16          One of the things that I want you, would  
17          like for you all to focus on, which I'm  
18          sure Nichole knows all about, is the  
19          high school, Lincoln High School. This  
20          has been prefaced in several meetings.  
21          And when you Google the town of  
22          McClellanville, you know you come up  
23          with excellent homes, beautiful homes,  
24          things of that nature. But it does not  
25          attach you to the true McClellanville.

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1 Lincoln is not in the town of  
2 McClellanville, but it is  
3 McClellanville. When it comes to  
4 education, that school, and Ms.  
5 (unintelligible), I think she was one of  
6 the first members in that school that's  
7 across the street, somewhere in that  
8 area. But the point to that is: That  
9 there were schools based on not  
10 necessarily the fact that we all need to  
11 be educated, but based on the color of  
12 your skin; that's just plain and simple.  
13 But with that school, that school taught  
14 us to identify who we are. It taught us  
15 to be comfortable with who we were. We  
16 had people like Ms. Adams that nurtured  
17 us. Like the parents, when you leave  
18 home, you still have your mom and your  
19 dad at school. That's what we had, that  
20 setting. What that did for us: It  
21 allowed us to use that local platform to  
22 allow us to compete anywhere, with  
23 anybody. For that matter, that school  
24 needs to be notated for the success that  
25 it has not only brought to this

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1 community, but to this nation. We have  
2 had people that graduated from that  
3 school that has put Lincoln on the  
4 international map; that in itself  
5 deserves to be noteworthy and to be  
6 recognized.

7 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Right.

8 MS. S. POWELL: I do wish that you  
9 would please remember Lincoln High  
10 School in this plan. It needs to be  
11 done. And your mother, one of my main  
12 teachers, I could stand here and talk  
13 about education all night because we had  
14 people who genuine ---

15 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Cared.

16 MS. S. POWELL: They were genuine.  
17 They cared about the person. The  
18 textbook was one thing, but the person  
19 was the main thing. When you went to  
20 school, you went to school knowing while  
21 you were there you respected the school  
22 for what you were to get out of it.  
23 Textbooks and, you know and here again,  
24 we're talking about just a little  
25 history. We were always taught things

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1 in the textbook, but then again you had  
2 the opportunity to do performances to  
3 the community with the help of Ms. Adams  
4 and those where we showcased the same  
5 abilities, the speaking abilities. Just  
6 being able to go out and say we've got  
7 this and we're going to show you that we  
8 can compete. Ms. (unintelligible), I  
9 think we tore up several of her cars  
10 going up and down this road. Because  
11 what it was, she was determined as well  
12 as others: We were in a village, but  
13 they're going to know who we were in  
14 Charleston County; they were going to  
15 know who we were in the state of South  
16 Carolina. Therefore, here we go with  
17 Ms. Deas' daughter. Those types of  
18 stories, and we can talk about that all  
19 night. But, again, education, please,  
20 Lincoln High School.

21 COMMISSIONER GERALD: What communities did  
22 this high school serve?

23 MS. S. POWELL: It served  
24 McClellanville and Awendaw Community.

25 COMMISSIONER GERALD: Awendaw?

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1 MS. S. POWELL: Yes.  
2 COMMISSIONER GERALD: And how, what are the  
3 grades?  
4 AUDIENCE MEMBER: From Seewee to Santee.  
5 MS. S. POWELL: Seewee to Santee.  
6 COMMISSIONER GERALD: What were the grades'  
7 level?  
8 MS. S. POWELL: The high school? Well  
9 at one time it went from K to 12.  
10 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Right. (Uh-huh  
11 (affirmative response)).  
12 MS. S. POWELL: Okay. And so there  
13 were several time eras and changes, but  
14 the high school itself also, you know,  
15 you had your 9 to 12. But, you know,  
16 throughout the years there were some  
17 changes there.  
18 COMMISSIONER GERALD: Were all the teachers  
19 from the Gullah/Geechee Community?  
20 MS. S. POWELL: For the most part,  
21 teachers were homegrown.  
22 AUDIENCE: Uh-huh (affirmative  
23 response).  
24 MS. S. POWELL: Clara Belle Gibbs,  
25 Melba Green, Minnie Adams, Ms.

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1 Dillagard. Oh, that's, let me tell you:  
2 That's a landmark in itself.

3 AUDIENCE: Yeah.

4 MS. S. POWELL: You know, you stop  
5 right there with Ms. Dillagard. That is  
6 a landmark by itself.

7 AUDIENCE: Amen.

8 MS. S. POWELL: She was. Mr. Bennett,  
9 I mean we can call the roll all night  
10 long; homegrown.

11 COMMISSIONER GERALD: Were these things that  
12 these people made the school?

13 MS. S. POWELL: Yeah. And they made  
14 the school. (Speaking same time as  
15 Commissioner Gerald.)

16 COMMISSIONER GERALD: So there may be parts  
17 that we need to put their names ---

18 Ms. S. POWELL: They made the school  
19 and they made you know that it doesn't  
20 matter if somebody said you were from  
21 Awendaw, McClellanville that you were up  
22 there with the best of the best.  
23 Because they, I mean it was that family  
24 value that did not leave you when you  
25 left your home.

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1 AUDIENCE: Uh-huh (affirmative  
2 response).  
3 COMMISSIONER GERALD: What kind of proverbs  
4 did they pass on: "It's better to have  
5 and not need than to need and not have"?  
6 What kinds of ---  
7 MS. S. POWELL: Well the main proverb:  
8 "It takes the village" ---  
9 AUDIENCE: (In unison.) --- "to  
10 raise the child."  
11 MS. S. POWELL: --- "to raise the  
12 child." That was Number 1 and key.  
13 AUDIENCE: Uh-huh (affirmative  
14 response).  
15 MS. S. POWELL: From that, that meant  
16 it didn't matter if your name was not  
17 momma. But I guarantee you better  
18 respect me as your momma as long as  
19 you're in my presence. And it wasn't a  
20 matter if you think you're going to get  
21 away with something because you're here  
22 and they can't see you. And we all know  
23 the story, if you do something wrong ---  
24 AUDIENCE: Yeah.  
25 MS. S. POWELL: --- before you got

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1           home, they knew what you did.  
2 COURT REPORTER'S  
3 NOTE:                           (Chatter amongst  
4           audience.)  
5 MS. S. POWELL:                But you also knew you,  
6           you weren't going to try anything  
7           because of the fact you knew that was  
8           going to happen. You know kids were  
9           kids, you know, but at the same time we  
10          lived in a society where if you went to  
11          a football game or basketball game you  
12          didn't worry about the elements. You  
13          just knew it was a safe, loving  
14          environment and that's just how we grew  
15          up.  
16 MS. VEREEN:                   We had two principals,  
17          too.  
18 MS. S. POWELL:                James McNeil.  
19 MS. VEREEN:                   Mr. Shepherd, Mr. ---  
20 MS. S. POWELL:                Mr. Shepherd, yes.  
21 MS. VEREEN:                   Mr. Middleton and ---  
22 MS. S. POWELL:                Yeah, Mr. Jerry  
23          Middleton.  
24 MS. VEREEN:                   It wasn't professional  
25          that way ---

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1 MS. S. POWELL: Uh-huh (affirmative  
2 response).  
3 MS. VEREEN: --- but Mr. Shepherd  
4 just took over.  
5 MS. S. POWELL: Uh-huh (affirmative  
6 response).  
7 MS. V. POWELL: Yeah. And when we  
8 speak of homegrown teachers, Ms. Sarah  
9 R. Reed Lewis.  
10 MS. S. POWELL: Lewis, Ms. Lewis, yes.  
11 MS. V. POWELL: Everybody talk about  
12 the trip to Washington, D.C.  
13 AUDIENCE: Yeah.  
14 MS. V. POWELL: I'm proud to say that I  
15 was one of those persons who traveled  
16 there. And while my son has already  
17 been to California, different places,  
18 Las Vegas, when he didn't know even  
19 where he was going. I was an eighth  
20 grader when I went on my first trip out  
21 of the state of South Carolina. And it  
22 was Sarah R. Reed Lewis that took me to  
23 Washington, D.C.  
24 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Uh-huh (affirmative  
25 response).

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1 MS. V. POWELL: Homegrown.  
2 MS. S. POWELL: Homegrown. And I know  
3 you've got several people who want to  
4 make comments, so I'm going to make this  
5 brief. But back in the day when we had,  
6 each community had a school, if you want  
7 to venture down to South Santee or like  
8 they say down here, "on Santee," that's  
9 the Gullah part of it. When you go to  
10 Santee you don't just go to Santee,  
11 you're on Santee.  
12 AUDIENCE: That's right.  
13 MS. S. POWELL: Okay. So you  
14 understood exactly what they meant so  
15 don't say that's not a correct form; you  
16 knew exactly what was going on.  
17 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Yeah.  
18 MS. S. POWELL: But that school that's  
19 there now, the building I should say,  
20 that's there now, was once the local  
21 school. The, and I still have the  
22 blueprint in my office. I stumbled  
23 across it a couple of years ago. The  
24 blueprint was actually designed to be  
25 the Negro school.

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1 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Uh-huh (affirmative  
2 response) .  
3 MS. S. POWELL: That's says a lot about  
4 how the concept of education was when  
5 that school was built. The mindset was,  
6 you know, there has to be education.  
7 But we don't have to have it all the  
8 same education. So here again, when you  
9 go out to build on the county school  
10 level, to actually put in writing: This  
11 is the Negro school; that says a lot  
12 about the culture. That,  
13 Gullah/Geechee, when you're talking  
14 about that, didn't matter what you  
15 wanted to label that school. The fact  
16 of the matter that once you open the  
17 doors you had producers coming out. It  
18 didn't matter what someone called you.  
19 So I'm going to show you, better I can  
20 tell you: that education means a lot so  
21 regardless of what you think you did to  
22 keep me in a box, I used that  
23 opportunity to use that as my gateway.  
24 And that's what that school is. That,  
25 too, is another landmark when it comes

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1 to education. So South Santee, the  
2 Negro school in South Santee is there  
3 for you to also consider.  
4 COMMISSIONER DAISE: Can she ---  
5 MS. S. POWELL: Portrait school, the  
6 same thing.  
7 COMMISSIONER DAISE: Can you or others  
8 identify the names of three to five  
9 residents who, as you said, put  
10 McClellanville on the international  
11 level?  
12 MS. S. POWELL: H. Wade Johnson, Dwayne  
13 Williams. How many other doctors we got  
14 going on right now?  
15 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Curtis Tarleton.  
16 MS. S. POWELL: Curtis Tarleton. I  
17 mean we can sit here all night.  
18 AUDIENCE: (Chatter amongst  
19 audience.) Donnie Smith.  
20 MS. S. POWELL: Nita Nixon's daughter -  
21 --  
22 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Judge Jenkins.  
23 MS. S. POWELL: --- is a writer.  
24 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Judge Jenkins.  
25 MS. S. POWELL: Judge Jenkins.

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1 MS. V. POWELL: Yeah, Judge Jenkins.  
2 Ms. S. POWELL: I mean we've got, I  
3 mean the roll is long and ---  
4 MS. V. POWELL: Drexel Ball.  
5 MS. S. POWELL: Drexel Ball. From  
6 education to medicine ---  
7 COMMISSIONER GREEN: Professor Middleton.  
8 MS. V. POWELL: NASA.  
9 MS. S. POWELL: We're there. George  
10 Meyers.  
11 AUDIENCE: Yeah, NASA is here.  
12 Melba -- Uh-huh (affirmative response).  
13 Melba -- Pro football players.  
14 MS. S. POWELL: We're there.  
15 Basketball, football, name it; we're  
16 there.  
17 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Paul Williams.  
18 MS. S. POWELL: Right from this little  
19 village ---  
20 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Paul Williams.  
21 MS. S. POWELL: --- right here.  
22 MS. DEAS: Vinnie Moore, too.  
23 MS. S. POWELL: Vinnie Moore is there.  
24 COURT REPORTER'S  
25 NOTE: (Chatter amongst

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1 audience.)

2 MS. S. POWELL: So it doesn't matter  
3 which area you are looking for, we are  
4 represented in that equation.

5 AUDIENCE MEMBER: There you go.

6 MS. S. POWELL: So, not to take up your  
7 time, but speaking of my dear seniors,  
8 please make sure that somehow, some way  
9 that their stories are told in this  
10 project. Your history books are right  
11 here. You've got people like Rebecca  
12 Chapman who could give you poems that  
13 was written a hundred years ago that a  
14 poem is about three to four pages long,  
15 nothing from sheet, back here in the  
16 memory, and will recite it at the drop  
17 of a dime. (Snapping fingers.) You've  
18 got Ms. Williams, Anna Mae Williams. I  
19 mean I can rattle off names, but this is  
20 what we have right here. You got Ms.  
21 Ladson, you got Ms. Harney, you got all  
22 these ladies right here. Ms. Lewis,  
23 that how you're history without looking  
24 in a book. Make sure the senior concept  
25 is in your guidelines some way because

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1           that is your true history. That is your  
2           Gullah/Geechee connection. Thank you  
3           very much.

4       MR. BUD HILL:                Sheila, before you sit  
5           down, tell them about the singing that  
6           y'all do.

7       MS. S. POWELL:               Oh, yes. If you ever  
8           want a real, true Gullah/Geechee good  
9           time, some of them from South Santee are  
10          in here right now. Raise your hand; Ms.  
11          Harney, Ms. Ladson, y'all raise your  
12          hand, Ms. Betty. Now if you want a good  
13          time, they were recognized about five,  
14          seven years ago. I think it was ETV  
15          heard about them through someone else  
16          and they came down and they recorded  
17          them, so we do have a, we have a C.D. of  
18          the true Gullah/Geechee music. So,  
19          thank you very much.

20       AUDIENCE:                    (Applause.)

21       COMMISSIONER GREEN:        Anybody else?

22       MS. SWINTON:                We didn't talk anything  
23           about families and they're close-knit  
24           together.

25       COMMISSIONER GREEN:        Families and ---

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1 MS. M. POWELL: Good evening.  
2 AUDIENCE: Good evening.  
3 MS. M. POWELL: Hi.  
4 COMMISSIONER GERALD: Give your name.  
5 MS. M. POWELL: My name is Minnie  
6 Powell and I'm here to sing a little  
7 song for y'all that my great, great,  
8 grandaunt; she passed 116 years old,  
9 Agnes Brown.  
10 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Agnes Brown.  
11 MS. M. POWELL: Okay. And she would  
12 live with me for one year and about two  
13 or three months. So I'm going to do a  
14 little piece of song for y'all.  
15 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Go ahead.  
16 COURT REPORTER'S  
17 NOTE: (Ms. M. Powell begins  
18 to sing song: "Rap on Lula Window.")  
19 AUDIENCE: (Applause and chatter.)  
20 COMMISSIONER GREEN: Barbara.  
21 MS. B. MCCORMICK: Hi, my name is Barbara  
22 McCormick and I am a sweetgrass basket  
23 maker. I'm a professional sweetgrass  
24 basket maker for over 40 years. I was  
25 doing it ever since I was a child. I

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1 was taught by my grandparents by sitting  
2 down the oak trees in the yard with my  
3 grandparents' friends. When they come  
4 around I was very interested in learning  
5 how to do sweetgrass basket. And I'm  
6 still doing it today. I travel up and  
7 down the road spreading the good news  
8 about sweetgrass baskets. I have  
9 traveled from Georgia many places. I  
10 have traveled a lot of places in North  
11 Carolina. I have traveled to first part  
12 of Florida and I'm still traveling.  
13 Every year during the January to May  
14 I'll be on the road spreading the good  
15 news about basket. One thing with the  
16 sweetgrass basket, right now the  
17 material is very hard to find. And we  
18 are trying our best to cultivate it,  
19 just keep it growing so we can have this  
20 material and make our basket with it.  
21 But another thing: If we don't keep it  
22 going and the young children don't get  
23 interested, it's going to die out. So I  
24 go around and I teach basket weaving to  
25 the kids that are interested. Any time

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1           they ask me to teach the class I'm  
2           willing to teach the class. So anyone  
3           who want to learn, on weekend, if you  
4           want to come by, I'm always free to  
5           learn how to make sweetgrass basket.

6   AUDIENCE:                               (Applause.)

7   MS. V. POWELL:                       And more important, we  
8           need to designate an area where we can  
9           grow their material for making them.

10   MS. MCCORMICK:                      Well right now I have a  
11           small area in my yard that I am trying  
12           to grow it in, and it is doing very well  
13           right now. But it's hard to get the  
14           little plants to plant it, but I'm  
15           trying. I'm trying to grow a little  
16           part on my property. But right now we  
17           have to travel so far to go. We have to  
18           travel to north, on the first part of  
19           Florida. We go far as Georgia. And  
20           every year when you go it's always  
21           something different. Sometime they got  
22           landscape already come in, cut down the  
23           places that we go. But we have one  
24           particular place that we goes every year  
25           and that is in Hardeeville, Georgia.

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1 And then we go there and they give us  
2 permission, two months, to harvest as  
3 much sweetgrass as you can harvest. But  
4 after that two months you don't have no  
5 place to go because in South Carolina is  
6 very limited places to go get  
7 sweetgrass. And that's why we trying to  
8 plant it so that we can have sweetgrass  
9 back in South Carolina. I, when I was a  
10 little girl we used to always go at  
11 Seabrook Island and Kiawah Island to  
12 pull sweetgrass, but after the golf  
13 course and the condos come, that's gone.  
14 So we have to travel far distance to  
15 find sweetgrass, and palmetto, now  
16 they're even stopping us to get palmetto  
17 in certain places. And the pine  
18 needles, they're trying to stop us to  
19 get that, too. So right now it's very  
20 hard to find the materials to keep this  
21 art going. So anytime y'all can find an  
22 area that y'all know where sweetgrass  
23 at, just come and tell me.

24 AUDIENCE: (Applause.)

25 MS. V. POWELL: You have a question?

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1 Oh, I thought I saw your hand.  
2 MR. WATSON: I was going to get up  
3 and say something.  
4 COMMISSIONER GERALD: Well go ahead, Sam.  
5 MS. V. POWELL: Like you're here for  
6 someone, Sam?  
7 AUDIENCE: (Laughter.)  
8 MR. WATSON: Dolly Johnson and I  
9 learned the same lesson: Do whatever by  
10 yourself.  
11 MS. JOHNSON: That's right.  
12 MR. WATSON: I'm Sam Watson, and a  
13 couple of things I've been thinking  
14 tonight. One is: Going back in my mind  
15 to a session about three weeks ago. I  
16 was visiting a class at UNC Charlotte  
17 where I'm retired from. And one of the  
18 young ladies in the class, they were  
19 working on senior projects for the  
20 honors college. And one of them who is  
21 African-American, her project is, has to  
22 do with articulating something of her  
23 own religion, and then start in  
24 magazines for other students, not just  
25 African-American. In the course of that

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1 discussion I said, "You know one thing  
2 that interests me a lot is what might be  
3 the difference between a church and a  
4 social club." And I said, "Frankly,  
5 when I go into my own church very often  
6 I feel like it was a social club. But  
7 usually when I go into Bethel A.M.E."  
8 and I named your church, "I feel like  
9 I'm in a church."

10 AUDIENCE: Amen.

11 MR. WATSON: And I sure feel that  
12 way tonight. I've been thinking a  
13 couple of other things. One is: What we  
14 have heard tonight already, what I am  
15 hearing tonight is so rich. How is it  
16 going to get recorded? People in the  
17 National Park Service can't do it all.

18 AUDIENCE MEMBER: No.

19 MR. WATSON: They can ask for the  
20 names and it's appropriate to know the  
21 names of people from Lincoln High School  
22 who have made a name for themselves  
23 internationally, fine. But that's not  
24 capturing the stories. How are the  
25 stories going to get captured and passed

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1           on? And that leads to the second  
2           question I've been thinking: Where are  
3           the young people? Where are the young  
4           people tonight?

5 AUDIENCE:                           Right.

6 MR. WATSON:                       Where are the young  
7           people in the African-American Community  
8           of the South Santee, McClellanville,  
9           Germantown when it comes to their  
10          understanding, their knowledge, their  
11          awareness of what's being said in the  
12          experience in this church this evening?  
13          I'm pretty sure most of them know about  
14          Buckshot's and have at least seen  
15          sweetgrass baskets, but have they heard  
16          the stories? Do they know the names?  
17          Do they know the history and the culture  
18          of where they are? I don't know the  
19          answer to that. Y'all may know the  
20          answer to that. But, and I'm retired  
21          and I am not looking for a job.

22 AUDIENCE:                           (Laughter.)

23 MR. WATSON:                       But I do know  
24           something of the power that could be  
25           generated when young people as

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1 educational projects are invited to go  
2 out and talk with and learn from older  
3 people ---

4 MS. V. POWELL: Oh, yeah.

5 MR. WATSON: --- in their own  
6 community. And I don't know what the  
7 curriculum is at Lincoln High School or  
8 ARA or the middle school or anything  
9 else in this community, but I do know  
10 that, that is an initiative that usually  
11 is not even thought about. And when  
12 it's not thought about and when it's not  
13 done, we lose a lot in the stories that  
14 never get heard and never get told.

15 COMMISSIONER GERALD: That's true.

16 MR. WATSON: And in the education  
17 and the pride of young people that never  
18 gets developed. So ---

19 AUDIENCE: (Applause.)

20 MS. S. POWELL: I just want to ask this  
21 question: Mr. Watson, you may not have  
22 been around but that concept is  
23 happening. And I think the young lady  
24 right over there by Vermel -- You're in  
25 the chorus, R.O.T.C.?

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1 CHEYENNE: Yes, ma'am.

2 MS. S. POWELL: We have projects with

3 the seniors where the R.O.T.C. that

4 comes over and records the history; the

5 seniors. In addition to that, St. James

6 Santee, we have seniors who are now

7 partnering with the young ones as

8 mentors. We have won the state

9 recognition for that innovative project.

10 So that is how ---

11 MS. JOHNSON: Okay. I'm Dolly Powell

12 Johnson.

13 AUDIENCE: (Laughter.)

14 MS. JOHNSON: I'm thinking about

15 history and stuff, and Sam, I probably

16 should have spoken before you, because I

17 really wanted to say some of the same

18 things. But I, I, there are so many

19 different things that's here that you

20 know and you can remember. But the one

21 thing I wanted to say is: We don't have

22 the young people here, but we must

23 instill in our young people the stories

24 about their heritage, their culture.

25 There are 11, well, it's only 10 of us

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1 left in the family now as siblings. And  
2 we could go from one to the other and  
3 tell stories. My mom was the  
4 storyteller, but my father was sure that  
5 we knew all the facts.

6 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Right.

7 MS. JOHNSON: If one of our children  
8 want to date a young man or a young lady  
9 in the community, we are able to say  
10 that's your cousin.

11 AUDIENCE: (Chatter and laughter.)

12 MS. JOHNSON: You can't do that. So  
13 then now what happens when you go to  
14 Awendaw looking for someone, well you  
15 can't do that because he's your cousin,  
16 though could be fifth or sixth, but he's  
17 your cousin. But we have so many rich  
18 stories to tell. And again, we need to  
19 do something to get to keep those  
20 stories that our young people would  
21 know. But what I want to say is: You  
22 need to talk to the young people and let  
23 them know. When we say the word,  
24 cuttah, (phonetically spelled) ---

25 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Uh-huh (affirmative)

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1 response).

2 MS. JOHNSON: --- do you remember  
3 what the word cuttah (phonetically  
4 spelled) mean?

5 AUDIENCE: Yeah.

6 MS. JOHNSON: Don't let that cuttah  
7 (phonetically spelled) get your hand.

8 AUDIENCE MEMBER: That's the turtle.

9 MS. JOHNSON: Talking about a turtle.

10 AUDIENCE: Yeah.

11 MS. JOHNSON: And then I'm not too  
12 sure how that word came to pass, but my  
13 sister, Vermel, or Vern, I think, think  
14 that it's because when we were all  
15 lumped together, just because our skin  
16 colors were in the same range we were  
17 all lumped together. But everyone did  
18 not speak the same dialect. So they  
19 were able to put a piece of their  
20 language or their dialect with the other  
21 and then came up with words. And that's  
22 how you, you know we are able to speak  
23 to each other and back in the days, you  
24 know, when we did use the word cuttah  
25 (phonetically spelled). And then,

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1           again, the teachers and everyone we said  
2           homebred. Yes. Then when we got the  
3           teachers and so forth from Charleston  
4           and other area, they were telling us  
5           that we were speaking improper English.  
6           So then we have to bite our tongue and  
7           try to talk and (making noise with  
8           mouth) ---

9           AUDIENCE:                               (Laughter.)

10          MS. JOHNSON:                        So, again, we must, we  
11           must become storytellers.

12          AUDIENCE MEMBER:                Yes.

13          MS. JOHNSON:                        We didn't have T.V. We  
14           didn't have T.V. But I remember dad  
15           getting books from a Doubleday Book Club  
16           or something.

17          AUDIENCE MEMBER:                Book club.

18          MS. JOHNSON:                        And basically it was  
19           the religious books. And he would read  
20           them and he would tell us stories, and  
21           then we were able to read them when the  
22           book looked a mess, you know. We  
23           couldn't touch them, but he would read  
24           to us and he would tell us the stories,  
25           and the funny books. And, and we were

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1           able to just be able to relate different  
2           things. Again, we didn't have T.V. But  
3           we, stories were being told. We had, we  
4           didn't, well we took the peach stones --  
5           -

6   AUDIENCE MEMBER:           Uh-huh (affirmative  
7           response).

8   MS. JOHNSON:               --- five of them ---

9   AUDIENCE MEMBER:           Yeah.

10   MS. JOHNSON:               --- and we learned to  
11           sit with our legs, the toes touching  
12           each other, and we would play jacks.

13   AUDIENCE:                 Uh-huh (affirmative  
14           response).

15   MS. JOHNSON:               Then when I went to the  
16           city, big Charleston, the big city, and  
17           my cousins and those would play with the  
18           ball, what in the heck? I'm thinking  
19           'til this day if I was able to sit and  
20           do it I probably still can't do that.  
21           We would go to the trees and pull the  
22           vine down and make our jump ropes.

23   AUDIENCE:                 Yeah.

24   MS. JOHNSON:               And so, so we, we  
25           invented things for us to do. And there

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1           were just, you know and I, I can, you  
2           know, I don't have pants on but I  
3           remember little nursery rhymes. Kids  
4           don't know nursery rhymes anymore, you  
5           know. And I remember my Uncle Walter  
6           would come, you know, and hambone,  
7           hambone 27 pounds, eat hambone until the  
8           knee broke down. Ate my hambone in the  
9           park, I ain't gonna' eat it 'til the  
10          soup get hot. Hambone, and he would  
11          just go. And we just loved that. We  
12          just loved that. So it was just really  
13          a wonderful life that we had and we  
14          could do -- It would be just wonderful  
15          for you to relate some of these things  
16          to your children, your grandchildren,  
17          and your children, children, children.  
18          And then you know when, when God call  
19          you home you still would be alive. But  
20          we still talk about our grandparents and  
21          thing of that nature and just fall out  
22          laughing. But you must do these things.  
23          And Vermel, I'm going to steal this one:  
24          You're drunk or you're sober, you need  
25          to know your business; who you are.

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1 AUDIENCE: (Applause.)  
2 COMMISSIONER GERALD: Ms. Powell.  
3 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Ms. Johnson.  
4 COMMISSIONER GERALD: Ms. Johnson, could you  
5 share one of the ring plays with us that  
6 the kids played? Maybe if somebody else  
7 in the audience that you were in school  
8 with, could y'all do one of those?  
9 MS. V. POWELL: "Little Sally Walker,  
10 Punchanella, Punchanella" (phonetically  
11 spelled).  
12 COMMISSIONER GERALD: Yeah, could you ---  
13 AUDIENCE: (Chatter and laughter.)  
14 MS. V. POWELL: We'll do a simple one:  
15 "Around the Green Apple Tree."  
16 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Mr. Arthur kicking in  
17 now.  
18 MS. V. POWELL: You know "Around the  
19 Green Apple Tree"?  
20 COURT REPORTER'S  
21 NOTE: (Group of ladies  
22 singing/reciting "Around the Green Apple  
23 Tree and Punchella.")  
24 MS. SWINTON: "Sally Walker," get in  
25 the middle one.

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1 COURT REPORTER'S  
2 NOTE: (Chatter and laughter  
3 throughout room.)  
4 MS. V. POWELL: Come on, Cheyenne; come  
5 on.  
6 MS. JOHNSON: Cheyenne, my knee just  
7 cracked.  
8 AUDIENCE: (Laughter.)  
9 MS. V. POWELL: Okay. Mary, come on,  
10 Mary.  
11 COURT REPORTER'S  
12 NOTE: (Others join in to  
13 sing/recite "Little Sally Walker.")  
14 AUDIENCE: (Applause and chatter.)  
15 COMMISSIONER DAISE: Talk about one thing  
16 that doesn't go out. Now when was the  
17 last time some of you ladies did those?  
18 AUDIENCE: (Laughter.)  
19 COMMISSIONER DAISE: Was it last week?  
20 AUDIENCE: (Laughter.)  
21 COMMISSIONER DAISE: How many just fell  
22 right in? Ah, that was wonderful. Now,  
23 we have about 12 more minutes for giving  
24 comments. And I want to just remind you  
25 that you picked up a newsletter in the

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1 back and in the center of the newsletter  
2 is a comment card. For the remainder of  
3 the time or while we're in the back  
4 recepting, fill in the card. Fill in  
5 from Numbers 3 through 7; answer those  
6 and turn them in before you leave. That  
7 would be greatly appreciated. Keep the  
8 comments coming, but these are some  
9 things I want you to consider: Are there  
10 any foreseen conflicts to the Cultural  
11 Heritage Corridor; anything that you can  
12 foresee that could cause a conflict?  
13 And are there any partnerships that you  
14 can inform us about or any financial  
15 resources that can assist, please let us  
16 know. And next on tap, please, Zelda,  
17 come forward; you are ready.

18 MS. GRANT: Okay. Thank you. Good  
19 evening, everyone.

20 AUDIENCE: Good evening.

21 MS. GRANT: I think all of the  
22 children are here. I don't know why we  
23 thought the children didn't come; stop  
24 all the children.

25 AUDIENCE: (Laughter.)

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1 MS. GRANT: My name is Zelda Grant.  
2 My grandmother actually named me  
3 Grizzelda Grant; you can imagine me  
4 struggling with that until I was in the  
5 12th grade. And then I just realized,  
6 oh, I don't have to do all that. I grew  
7 up in Georgetown. And when you were  
8 talking about the schools, Ms. Powell,  
9 you know just, I was at Howard High  
10 School. David Drayton was the  
11 principal. He just stood in the hall  
12 and everybody got right, you know. You  
13 didn't have to go to whatever, all of  
14 this I.S.S. and all that stuff. You  
15 just didn't have it. I left and I was  
16 gone for 35 years to Atlanta. And I  
17 actually got stuck there. And I've been  
18 back home now for about a year-and-a-  
19 half. And I call up, the whole corridor  
20 is home for me, okay? I've been away  
21 from the water for so long 'til any part  
22 of this is home. My, we found out about  
23 five years ago that my great granddaddy  
24 was from Awendaw. And so you see, and  
25 now I'm here in McClellanville kind of

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1 right in the middle of everything. I'm  
2 a teaching artist and my students, I  
3 have students here today. Would all the  
4 students who have done a class with me  
5 raise your hands, please, all of the  
6 students, the seniors? I see two or  
7 three, just come on; raise your hand.  
8 So I have worked with everyone from pre-  
9 K on up to the seniors. I do fabric  
10 arts. Started making doll clothes when  
11 I was 10-years old, recycled. So I've  
12 been doing something with my hands a  
13 long time. I was making some notes  
14 sitting here because somewhere for the  
15 sweetgrass baskets, sweetgrass to grow,  
16 where you don't have to go to North  
17 Carolina, wherever to get that.  
18 Education, arts, crafts, you know the  
19 basketry. I mean I believe that we,  
20 this culture, I believe we created, if  
21 not the whole world at least half of it.  
22 You know? I mean because the hands-on  
23 thing it's just, I believe in it. And  
24 teach, sharing with young people that it  
25 is okay to know how to do something.

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1 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Yes.

2 MS. GRANT: It's really okay. Sure

3 you might be able to afford to go buy

4 it, whatever, or your mom give it to you

5 or whatever, but it's okay to know how

6 to pick up a needle and a thread and sew

7 on a button.

8 AUDIENCE MEMBER: That's right.

9 MS. GRANT: That's not a crime.

10 AUDIENCE MEMBER: That's right.

11 MS. GRANT: I'm holding in my

12 hands, let's see here: God gave me this

13 dream as I was heading back home;

14 actually it's been longer than that.

15 I'm starting a foundation called "Chili

16 in de Mud." When, and I've been cooking

17 this chili. Just went to a restaurant

18 and saw the menu one day and I mean I'm,

19 and I'm like, oh, wait a minute. I'm

20 eating and I'm writing. I'm like, I

21 like this. And I added some to it and

22 have this black bean chili. Well God

23 showed me that chili stood for:

24 Creativity, holistic living,

25 inspiration, love, intent and purpose.

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1 I went, whoa, all that in some chili?  
2 And so I've been in conversation and,  
3 more than conversation but I've been  
4 meeting with the USDA department since  
5 last summer because the wonderful mayor  
6 in Awendaw helped me to connect with  
7 that entity. And an art farm is coming.  
8 An art farm is coming to the  
9 Gullah/Geechee Corridor and we're going  
10 to grow sweetgrass on the art farm,  
11 okay?

12 AUDIENCE: Okay. All right.

13 MS. GRANT: We're going to have  
14 everything ---

15 AUDIENCE: (Applause.)

16 MS. GRANT: --- that, yes,  
17 everything that we know how to do: the  
18 storytelling, the everything, is going  
19 to be, is like -- If nothing, I believe  
20 that the Gullah/Geechee Corridor should  
21 be known as the, leave a creative  
22 legacy. Because that's what we have  
23 going and that's what we need to  
24 continue in any way that we can. And if  
25 you sit still long enough like my

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1 grandmother, my grandmother taught  
2 school for about 35 years. She taught  
3 up in North Santee so I guess nobody  
4 around here knew her because she was out  
5 of Georgetown and she, you know, taught  
6 North Santee. But, you know, mother, if  
7 you stood still long enough, she would  
8 teach you something, okay? Just give  
9 her a minute. If it's something about  
10 Jesus, or something, she's going to  
11 teach you and I believe that she has  
12 passed that on to me. And so instead of  
13 talking about what I wish I could do,  
14 what I used to do, whatever, now is the  
15 time to do it; this is the day. So,  
16 you'll hear more. Thank you.

17 AUDIENCE: (Applause.)

18 COMMISSIONER DIASE: Five more minutes.

19 MS. SWINTON: I have a loud, I am  
20 Lucretia Swinton. I have a loud mouth.  
21 I am Lucretia Swinton, and one thing  
22 about the Gullah/Geechee culture is that  
23 families were very closely knitted  
24 together. You take the, it, it was  
25 based on the grandparents, the momma and

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1           dad and the great-granny and then the  
2           siblings in the home. And what would  
3           happen was: I can understand now that we  
4           had gotten away from it because we have  
5           such beautiful facilities there, and  
6           when the older ones get old and sick  
7           they are, usually put them in a home or  
8           something like that. But during my time  
9           they were cared for in the home.

10       AUDIENCE MEMBER:           That's right.

11       MS. SWINTON:               Families were very  
12           closely knitted and that Bible was  
13           taught every night before you went to  
14           bed. In the morning there would be  
15           prayer before you go to school. And the  
16           last thing that was said was behave  
17           yourself and listen to your teachers.  
18           And when you come from school, you did  
19           your chores: you're getting the wood and  
20           get the water from the well. And back  
21           in those days we didn't have grass in  
22           the yard.

23       AUDIENCE MEMBER:           No.

24       MS. SWINTON:               We, let me tell: They  
25           made us wear a piece of grass out of the

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1 yard and you didn't have all the  
2 mosquitoes like we have now.

3 AUDIENCE: Right.

4 MS. SWINTON: And then we took the  
5 broom sword. We didn't have like a rake  
6 where you rake. You took those broom  
7 swords and you tied it up to gather it.  
8 You sweep from the front to the back.  
9 And it was, our families were inventors.  
10 We didn't say went to the store and buy  
11 a doll baby. Oh, man we got those  
12 nutgrass and dig it up out the yard and  
13 ---

14 AUDIENCE: (Chatter.)

15 MS. SWINTON: --- washed their hair.  
16 Take a little stick and curled it.

17 AUDIENCE: (Laughter.)

18 MS. SWINTON: Made you little corn  
19 rows that you learned how to braid.

20 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Yeah.

21 MS. SWINTON: I mean we were very  
22 inventive people. And like we would get  
23 these books that have the little doll  
24 and it would have little dresses to the  
25 one side. And you would take the doll

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1 out the back and put your little dress  
2 on. And you would draw; whatever parts  
3 that wasn't there, you would draw it.  
4 We were very creative. And you know  
5 it's so sad that we had gotten away from  
6 some of those things. And I think what  
7 we need to do, like we said: talk about  
8 it and write it and teach our young  
9 people that where we came from was not a  
10 bad thing.

11 AUDIENCE MEMBER: No.

12 MS. SWINTON: It was the best thing  
13 ever happened because from that the  
14 education was stressed to us. You, you  
15 know you've got to be somebody. You  
16 have to go to school to listen, to  
17 learn, so you can teach your children.  
18 So you can help us to read better. So  
19 you can do better for yourself. And in  
20 order to extend that, you would go and  
21 you'd stop there and there were  
22 opportunities in the home that's under  
23 you, younger; you would help the next  
24 one. That next one would help the other  
25 one, and that's the way how we came to

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1 be where we are now. But the food,  
2 planted, you know, everything we plant.  
3 We didn't go to the grocery store for  
4 much: .25 bag of rice. I remember my  
5 daddy used to get .5 flour, you know,  
6 back in those days. And the, and my mom  
7 would make bread. You know it wasn't a  
8 bought bread out of the store. She  
9 would make bread. So what I was saying  
10 that I thank God for my family. And it  
11 wasn't like my household only. It was  
12 everybody in that little area on that  
13 road because if my dad kill a hog ---

14 AUDIENCE MEMBER: That's right.

15 MS. SWINTON: --- everybody had a  
16 piece.

17 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Yes.

18 MS. SWINTON: And somebody had eggs.  
19 When the chicken laid eggs, everybody  
20 had eggs. And they, they would make the  
21 butter. They would make their own  
22 butter. They would milk the cow and the  
23 cow would kick the bucket over. And we  
24 would milk cow. We raised livestock and  
25 you know it was so much. So tonight I'm

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1 sitting here thinking to myself; I said  
2 you know what, I need to go back. I  
3 need to go back and just sit down and  
4 start writing some of the things so I  
5 won't forget. And I am so happy to be a  
6 part of this tonight because family is  
7 all we have.

8 AUDIENCE MEMBER: That's right.

9 MS. SWINTON: And let's keep it  
10 going. Thank you.

11 AUDIENCE: (Applause.)

12 COMMISSIONER GREEN: I just want to thank  
13 you all tonight. This has just been  
14 wonderful. I haven't had such a good  
15 time in a long time. First of all,  
16 thanking Reverend Russell and the  
17 officers and members of Bethel A.M.E.  
18 Church McClellanville for opening the  
19 doors to us. Thank you so much to the  
20 people I've been bothering for weeks  
21 now: Ms. Vermel Powell, Ms. Diane  
22 Geathers, Ms. Estelle Geathers, and Ms.  
23 Johnson; where is Ms. Johnson?

24 AUDIENCE MEMBER: She's in the back.

25 COMMISSIONER GREEN: She's in the back. And

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1           for preparing this wonderful reception  
2           for us; just thank you so much. I am  
3           just so pleased about the turnout here.  
4           I can tell that everyone had so much  
5           fun. And it doesn't have to end  
6           tonight; you can do this again. And I  
7           am just so proud that I'm a member of  
8           this community and Bethel is my home  
9           church.

10       AUDIENCE MEMBER:           We're proud of you.

11       COMMISSIONER GREEN:       And everything I do I  
12           know where I came from and I'm looking  
13           out into the audience now and all of  
14           these people that helped raise me.

15       AUDIENCE MEMBER:           Yes.

16       COMMISSIONER GREEN:       (Becoming emotional.)  
17           And you might not know it, but every  
18           time you say something to my mother it  
19           gets back to me.

20       AUDIENCE:                   (Laughter.)

21       COMMISSIONER GREEN:       And sometimes I get so  
22           busy that I don't get to come back. But  
23           I'm going to come back. Ms. Geathers,  
24           every time you ask about me she tells  
25           me. And I feel your prayers and I thank

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1           you for all your support. And just know  
2           that whatever I do, McClellanville and  
3           Bethel are in my heart. And Ms.  
4           Geathers, please don't get upset with  
5           all the announcements I send because I'm  
6           going to keep sending them, because I  
7           want you to be involved in everything.  
8           This is such a rich community and I've  
9           benefitted so much from the education.  
10          And I listened. I listened to all of  
11          you. I listened to Mom and Papa, Liza  
12          and Little Blake.

13       AUDIENCE MEMBER:           Yeah.

14       COMMISSIONER GREEN:       I was so fortunate  
15           enough to have known them. I was  
16           telling Ms. Powell and Ms. Johnson in  
17           the back that I remember my great,  
18           great-grandmother, Papa's mother, Alice.  
19           I remember her. And I would listen to  
20           the stories she would tell. And I would  
21           listen to the stories. Sometimes I  
22           wasn't supposed to be listening, but I'd  
23           listen to the stories Momma and Papa  
24           told and my grandmother, who I call Ma  
25           Middleton Ruth, would tell. And I

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1           benefitted so much from them and I  
2           benefitted from everything that you  
3           taught me. And I hope that I make you  
4           proud. And everything I will bring back  
5           to McClellanville so that you can be a  
6           part of everything. I see that Reverend  
7           Blake is in the back now, and Reverend  
8           Blake would you mind giving us just a  
9           closing prayer and also blessing the  
10          food that's been prepared, this  
11          reception that Ms. Powell and Ms.  
12          Johnson and Ms. Geathers has prepared  
13          for us? Are there any other last minute  
14          announcements?

15       COMMISSIONER GERALD: Nichole?

16       COMMISSIONER GREEN: Yes.

17       COMMISSIONER GERALD: I just wanted to say  
18          that what you can do to carry this on:  
19          is to have kitchen meetings. You know  
20          how after you eat on Sunday and  
21          everybody stays in the kitchen at the  
22          table and you start talking about old  
23          times?

24       AUDIENCE MEMBER: Uh-huh (affirmative  
25          response).

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1 COMMISSIONER GERALD: Those are valuable bits  
2 of information. So the meeting doesn't  
3 have to stop tonight. I think the  
4 gentleman was right: You can't do it all  
5 in 20 minutes ---

6 AUDIENCE MEMBER: That's true.

7 COMMISSIONER GERALD: --- 30 minutes, so what  
8 we need is stories that relate to  
9 hurricanes. How did it affect your  
10 community? Was there someone who may  
11 have run up two miles to tell people it  
12 was coming? You know even the smallest  
13 contribution. Want to hear about,  
14 Nichole was telling us that everybody  
15 kept a cooler on their porch.

16 COMMISSIONER GREEN: On the back porch.

17 COMMISSIONER GERALD: On the back porch.

18 COMMISSIONER GREEN: If somebody need to  
19 bring by ---

20 COMMISSIONER GERALD: And people would come  
21 by and put crab in it sometimes. Those  
22 are all practices that, you know, I grew  
23 up in a Gullah community, too, and  
24 things that we do are so natural to us -  
25 --

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1 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Yes.  
2 COMMISSIONER GERALD: --- that we don't know  
3 that they're unique ---  
4 AUDIENCE MEMBER: True.  
5 COMMISSIONER GERALD: --- to our culture. So  
6 particularly I'm interested in the  
7 effect of weather on the ---  
8 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Right.  
9 COMMISSIONER GERALD: --- culture because it  
10 has, too, impacted our culture.  
11 Tourism, day's work.  
12 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Uh-huh (affirmative  
13 response).  
14 COMMISSIONER GERALD: My mom did day's work  
15 when you'd work for somebody each day of  
16 the week.  
17 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Right.  
18 COMMISSIONER GERALD: Those are things that  
19 are important kind of features of the  
20 culture that another culture ---  
21 AUDIENCE MEMBER: No.  
22 COMMISSIONER GERALD: --- didn't have. And  
23 games, that's why I asked you to do the  
24 games because you know my favorite one  
25 was: "Look who's here, Punchanella,

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1 Punchanella."

2 AUDIENCE: (Laughter.)

3 COMMISSIONER GERALD: You know, they were  
4 passed on among us but we sang them  
5 differently and that kind of thing, so  
6 keep writing it down. Because once the  
7 corridor is developed, it's going to be  
8 like hindsight when you say, oh, we  
9 should have done this.

10 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Right.

11 COMMISSIONER GERALD: So whatever you feel  
12 that is, just go, get out of the box.  
13 Have breakfast with your girlfriends.  
14 Get out of the box and remember those  
15 little, tiny things. Everybody has  
16 someone who prayed too long in the  
17 church.

18 AUDIENCE: (Laughter.)

19 COMMISSIONER GERALD: Who was that person?

20 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Inaudible.)

21 COURT REPORTER'S

22 NOTE: (Laughter.)

23 COMMISSIONER GERALD: It was time to go on  
24 First Sunday; you're hungry, and those  
25 are features of the culture are the

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1 prayer, or mainly, you know, don't let  
2 my sheep be my wine. What's that  
3 phrase?  
4 AUDIENCE: Yeah.  
5 COMMISSIONER GERALD: You know, remember  
6 those kinds of things and just kind of  
7 keep notes and keep making the stories  
8 bigger. And bring them all to Nichole's  
9 mom's house and Nichole will get them.  
10 AUDIENCE: (Laughter.)  
11 COMMISSIONER GERALD: Thank you.  
12 MS. HARNEY: We talked about those  
13 things that sell, too, you know.  
14 COMMISSIONER GERALD: All right.  
15 MS. HARNEY: We sews. I make the  
16 lap cushions, stuff like that ---  
17 COMMISSIONER GERALD: Yes, ma'am.  
18 MS. HARNEY: --- and we be talking  
19 about, to each other about the things.  
20 COMMISSIONER GERALD: But do you need us to  
21 come and sit with you and ---  
22 MS. HARNEY: And we have a good time  
23 every day.  
24 COMMISSIONER GERALD: We may do that.  
25 MS. HARNEY: We invite everybody who

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1           that quilt that my great, great-  
2           grandmother made, and kept it in a trunk  
3           and smelled like mothballs, okay.

4       COMMISSIONER GREEN:     What's your name?

5       MS. GEATHERS:           Diane Geathers.

6       COMMISSIONER GREEN:     And I just want to make  
7           one last point and Ms. Geathers, you're  
8           the one reminded me. There is the  
9           National African-American, the National  
10          Museum of African-American History and  
11          Culture in Washington, D.C., and it's  
12          going to be on the mall. They have a  
13          program called, "Saving our African-  
14          American Treasures." And right now they  
15          are planning to come to Charleston, and  
16          this is something I'm going to talk to  
17          the commissioners more about, about the  
18          Commission getting involved in this.  
19          But they're planning on coming to  
20          Charleston and it looks like they may  
21          come next month in May. And I thought  
22          about the quilt. They're bringing about  
23          30 professionals, and all day they're  
24          going to have workshops. And this is  
25          about informing the African-American

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1 community about first of all, preserving  
2 their own treasures: The quilts that you  
3 have, the family Bibles, how to preserve  
4 those things that are the cloth things,  
5 that are made of cloth; the Bible, the  
6 paper things and how to do that. So  
7 they're going to have workshops all day  
8 and they're also going to have a session  
9 almost like an antiques road show type  
10 thing where you get to bring in, I think  
11 they're going to limit to three  
12 different items. And they have, going  
13 to have appraisers there that will tell  
14 you. Of course they're important to  
15 you, of course.

16 MS. V. POWELL: Of course.

17 COMMISSIONER GREEN: You're going to learn  
18 how to preserve those things but also  
19 get them appraised. So that's something  
20 that's going to be coming up. And when  
21 I find out a date, Ms. Geathers I will  
22 send it along, send that announcement  
23 along so everyone will know about it,  
24 okay?

25 MS. GEATHERS: Thank you.

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1 COMMISSIONER GREEN: Mr. Humes, you have one  
2 thing to say?

3 COUNCILMAN HUMES: Thank you. I won't  
4 stand up. My name is Gussie Humes and  
5 I'm just going to tell y'all this little  
6 story that happened to me when I was in  
7 the service. I can't remember what year  
8 it was, but I do remember that I was in  
9 Camp Prairie, Virginia. And we traveled  
10 all the way from Camp Prairie, Virginia  
11 to Mississippi on a train, all night  
12 long. And at the last minute, I wasn't  
13 supposed to be going down there, but at  
14 the last minute my platoon went down  
15 there and I was the last man. And they  
16 didn't have room for me so they put me  
17 in the car with the prisoners.

18 AUDIENCE: Uh-huh (affirmative  
19 response).

20 COUNCILMAN HUMES: And I ride down with  
21 the prisoners all the way down to  
22 Mississippi. We got to Mississippi that  
23 morning and we got out of the car from  
24 the train, and you know you had your  
25 bag. You take a truck, pick a truck and

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1 we take our bag and we went to this  
2 camp. I don't remember the camp name.  
3 And we put our bag on the, right in  
4 front of the camp where you were going  
5 to stay and put your bag right there;  
6 everybody putting their bag down as they  
7 go along. And this boy came up, two or  
8 three M.P.s. came up in the jeep and  
9 said we are looking for Gussie Humes.  
10 And I said, "I'm Gussie Humes." And  
11 they said okay, we have, you've got a  
12 telegram in the town you're going to  
13 have to get. My parents, my daddy had  
14 sent me some money. And don't you know  
15 that I got on that jeep and three, the  
16 driver and two other men with a gun,  
17 took me into Mississippi, into the town  
18 of Mississippi.

19 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Oh, boy.

20 COUNCILMAN HUMES: And when I went into  
21 the town of Mississippi they took me to  
22 the Western Union, into the Western  
23 Union office. I went to the Western  
24 Union office and signed and got the  
25 money order. Then they, right next door

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1           was the bank. They took me to the bank  
2           and I got, went to the bank and got it  
3           cashed. They put me back in the jeep  
4           and take me back to the camp. And  
5           that's how I got my, that's the only way  
6           I could go down there and get that  
7           money. They would not let me go down  
8           there by myself. And they won't, they  
9           didn't allow, they didn't allow a black  
10          man to ---

11       AUDIENCE MEMBER:           Walk in Mississippi.

12       COUNCILMAN HUMES:        --- walk in  
13               Mississippi; that's right. And that's,  
14               that's, that's what happened. But we  
15               came from a long ways. We came from a  
16               long, long ways. And some of these  
17               things, I can't even remember what year  
18               it was. I'm going to tell you the  
19               truth: I'm so old I can't remember.

20       AUDIENCE:                   (Laughter and  
21               applause.)

22       COMMISSIONER GREEN:       That's all right, Mr.  
23               Humes. Thank you so much. And again,  
24               you have that comment card, if you could  
25               fill that out as much as you can and

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1           give that to me or Commissioner Gerald  
2           or Commissioner Daise before the end of  
3           the night we would greatly appreciate  
4           it. Reverend Blake.

5 AUDIENCE MEMBER:           Put your name on it?

6 COMMISSIONER GREEN:       Yes, ma'am. Also, if  
7           you didn't sign in there's a sign-up  
8           sheet in the vestibule. If you didn't  
9           sign in, if you would please do so we  
10          would greatly appreciate it. Thank you.

11                               **CLOSING AND PRAYER**

12 REVEREND BLAKE:           Good evening.

13 AUDIENCE:                 Good evening.

14 REVEREND BLAKE:           We want to just say  
15          thanks to Nichole and her group for  
16          coming out on behalf of our pastor.  
17          He's at a meeting tonight in Mt.  
18          Pleasant with the elders, and that's why  
19          he's not here tonight. And we just want  
20          to thank you, Nichole, for coming in and  
21          sharing this with us and we just want  
22          you to know that we are proud of you.

23 AUDIENCE:                 Yes.

24 REVEREND BLAKE:           You don't have to worry  
25          about that because we are proud of you

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1           and what you're doing.

2       AUDIENCE:                   (Applause.)

3       REVEREND BLAKE:           And I heard some great  
4           things in here and a lot of it I do  
5           know. And when Sister Johnson said,  
6           looked back and said, pointed back to me  
7           and I told her, no, not me. I don't  
8           know what she was talking about. But I  
9           didn't want nobody to know I was that  
10          old, but ---

11       AUDIENCE:                   (Laughter.)

12       REVEREND BLAKE:           --- anyway I just know,  
13           I know a lot about it and I know Vermel  
14           is a historian herself. You know to  
15           hear her get up here and say what she  
16           said. So it all, everything's been good  
17           and we enjoyed everything and we say  
18           just keep up the good work. Keep up the  
19           good work, Nichole. And we are proud of  
20           you. And I got one of those old prayers  
21           you were talking about, one of those  
22           long ones.

23       AUDIENCE:                   (Laughter.)

24       REVEREND BLAKE:           Get relaxed.

25       AUDIENCE:                   (Laughter.)

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1 COURT REPORTER'S

2 NOTE: (Reverend Blake prays.)

3 (The meeting concluded at 8:32 p.m.)  
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**CERTIFICATE**

I, Melissa M. Decker, Notary Public in and for the State of South Carolina, do hereby certify that there appeared before me the foregoing witness;

That said witness was sworn by me to state the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth;

That the testimony was recorded by me, by open tape and Stenomask, reduced to typewriting and proofed under my direct supervision and the foregoing consecutively numbered pages are a complete and accurate record of the testimony given at said time by said witness;

That the undersigned is neither of kin nor in anywise associated with any of the parties to said cause of action, nor any counsel thereto, and that I am not interested in the event(s) thereof.

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF** I have hereunto set my hand and seal this the 29th day of May, 2009.



Melissa M. Decker  
Court Reporter  
Notary Public in and for  
The State of South Carolina  
My Commission Expires: 1-23-14

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