

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

Tuesday, May 5th, 2009
7:08 p.m. – 8:35 p.m.

The GULLAH/GEECHEE CULTURAL HERITAGE
CORRIDOR COMMISSION MEETING, taken on the 5th
day of May, 2009 at the Atlantic Beach Community
Center, located at 1010 32nd Avenue South, Atlantic
Beach, South Carolina 29582.

CP-26 REPORTING

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APPEARANCES:

COMMISSION MEMBERS:

Commissioner Ron Daise
Commissioner Veronica D. Gerald
Commissioner John Haley
Vice-Chairman Eulis Willis

ATTENDEES/SPEAKERS:

Mayor Retha Pierce
Ms. Stephanie Simmons
Ms. Stanley
Ms. Patricia Mallett
Dr. John Haley
Ms. Dorothy Floyd
Ms. Charlene Bellamy Taylor
Ms. Sherry Suttles
Mayor Eulis Willis
Ms. Bunny Rodrigues
Ms. Sandra Ward

ALSO PRESENT:

Sunny Fry, Videographer

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1 INTRODUCTION

2 COMMISSIONER DAISE: Good evening, everyone.

3 My name is Ron Daise. I am a
4 commissioner with the Gullah/Geechee
5 Cultural Heritage Corridor Commission,
6 and on behalf of that organization I am
7 delighted to see each and every one of
8 you. We're gathered to give feedback
9 about how this commission, this Corridor
10 is to be developed and just to get you
11 excited about this public engagement
12 meeting, I'm going to have you to
13 participate by calling back in Gullah.
14 Just repeat what I say. You know one of
15 the grammatical rules of speaking in
16 Gullah is to make something superlative,
17 you just repeat the word. So I'm glad,
18 glad for be Gullah/Geechee.

19 AUDIENCE: I'm glad, glad for be
20 Gullah/Geechee.

21 COMMISSIONER DAISE: I happy, happy ---

22 AUDIENCE: I happy, happy ---

23 COMMISSIONER DAISE: --- for allowing more
24 and more ---

25 AUDIENCE: --- for allowing more and more ---

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1 COMMISSIONER DAISE: --- 'bout
2 Gullah/Geechee.
3 AUDIENCE: --- 'bout
4 Gullah/Geechee.
5 COMMISSIONER DAISE: I know I welcome to be
6 here.
7 AUDIENCE: I know I welcome to be
8 here.
9 COMMISSIONER DAISE: And you are. At this
10 time, if someone, please, would give us
11 an invocation; anyone so inspired?
12 Thank you.

13 **INVOCATION**

14 CHARLENE BELLAMY TAYLOR: May we pray?
15 COURT REPORTER'S
16 NOTE: (Ms. Taylor leads in
17 prayer.)
18 COMMISSIONER DAISE: Thank you so much.
19 This is the fourth in a series of five
20 public engagement meetings in northern
21 Charleston, in Georgetown, and in Horry
22 Counties. We've learned a lot of
23 valuable information and are hopeful of
24 learning more this evening. This
25 information is being documented so we

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1 have a court reporter and a
2 videographer. At the time when you are
3 beginning to give your public feedback,
4 we would appreciate it if you would come
5 to the front, if you would state your
6 names before you begin commenting, and
7 also a attendance sheet has been in the
8 back. If you have not signed it, please
9 make sure before you leave that you do.
10 At this time we will have welcomes from
11 Kenneth McIver, who is the town manager,
12 the City of Atlantic Beach; that will be
13 followed by a welcome from Mayor, the
14 Honorable Retha Pierce.

WELCOME

15
16 MR. McIVER: On behalf of the staff
17 and administration of Atlantic Beach, we
18 just want to welcome you here, or
19 welcome you back to Atlantic Beach. We
20 encourage you to come back, make your,
21 enjoy our beaches and state, and
22 actually build it and make your home
23 back in Atlantic Beach. There's
24 bathrooms in the back. We have
25 refreshments on the side. And if

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1 there's anything that the staff can do
2 here to make your stay in Atlantic Beach
3 more welcome, please tell me so. Thank
4 you.

5 MAYOR PIERCE: Good evening, everyone.

6 AUDIENCE: Good evening.

7 MAYOR PIERCE: It is indeed a
8 pleasure for me to welcome you
9 officially to this public meeting this
10 evening. Now I heard him speak some
11 Gullah, and before I continue to welcome
12 you, I want to tell you my first Gullah
13 was learned in the fifth grade, and if
14 you would just indulge me for a little.
15 "In the Morning," by Paul Laurence
16 Dunbar. 'Lias! Lias! Bless the Lawd!
17 Don't you know de day's erbroad? Ef you
18 don't git up you scamp, dey'll be
19 trouble in this here camp. T'ink I
20 gwine to let you sleep, w'ile I meks yo'
21 boa'd an'keep? Why dat's a putty
22 howdy-do. Don't you hyeah, me, 'Lias,
23 you? Bet ef I come crost dis flo', you
24 won't find no time to sno'. Daylight's
25 all a shinin' in, wile you sleep; why

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1 hit's a sin. Ain't de candlelight
2 enough to bu'n out without a snuff?
3 Huh-uh, no, no, he goes the whole day
4 through, just burning up the daylight
5 too. And that's just a little bit.

6 AUDIENCE: (Applause.)

7 MAYOR PIERCE: I usually like to go
8 all the way through and have the grace
9 and everything, but I love Gullah as you
10 can tell, ever since I was in the fifth
11 grade. And of course we are part of
12 this Gullah/Geechee heritage right here
13 in the town of Atlantic Beach, and
14 that's why we are extremely happy that
15 the commissioners decided to have a
16 public meeting here so that we might
17 become engaged in the talk of what's
18 going on with the Gullah/Geechee
19 Corridor. We want to thank Congressman
20 Clyburn and all those who worked with
21 him to get those millions for the
22 Gullah/Geechee Corridor that will be
23 developed on the Atlantic Coast in North
24 Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia and
25 Florida. And I may be a little bit

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1 biased, I think Atlantic Beach would
2 make a great heritage site. Anyway ---
3 AUDIENCE: (Laughter.)
4 MAYOR PIERCE: --- you are welcome, as
5 the town manager stipulated earlier.
6 And of course you guessed that I am the
7 mayor, Retha Pierce, with the immense
8 pleasure of welcoming you, again, after
9 him. So once again we welcome you to
10 have a great time and hopefully we can
11 all become very engaged as we talk about
12 our history, heritage and culture
13 tonight from the Gullah/Geechee
14 standpoint. Thank you.
15 AUDIENCE: (Applause.)
16 COMMISSIONER DAISE: Thank you. There are
17 three other commissioners in the
18 audience and I would like to recognize
19 them. The Vice-Chairman of the
20 Gullah/Geechee Cultural Heritage
21 Corridor Commission is from North
22 Carolina and is Mayor Eulis Willis;
23 would you please stand?
24 MAYOR WILLIS: (Complies with
25 request.)

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1 COMMISSIONER DAISE: Also from North
2 Carolina, we have Dr. John Haley.
3 AUDIENCE: (Applause.)
4 COMMISSIONER DAISE: And Commissioner
5 Veronica Davis Gerald has been
6 coordinating this meeting. She will
7 come forward and she will discuss the,
8 give you the purpose and explain these
9 panels before you.

10 **OVERVIEW**

11 COMMISSIONER GERALD: Good evening,
12 everybody.
13 AUDIENCE: Good evening.
14 COMMISSIONER GERALD: So glad to be in
15 Atlantic Beach and so glad to see this
16 happen, and see Alice sitting there.
17 And back in 1984 when I moved back home
18 they wanted me to write a grant for what
19 they were having, Afrofest at the time.
20 And I kept saying push the
21 Gullah/Geechee part; push the
22 Gullah/Geechee part. And so many young
23 people at that time were not in tune
24 with being Gullah/Geechee. So it's just
25 good to look out and see you gathered

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1 here tonight for that purpose. And I
2 wanted to just take a minute to explain
3 to you what this is all about and so
4 we'll all be on the same page. In the
5 first part of getting here tonight came
6 in the way of a resource study. This
7 resource study was sanctioned by the
8 Department of Interior, with the idea
9 that there was a culture in the
10 Carolinas and Georgia and Florida that
11 was very unique and very important.
12 Gullah/Geechee culture is one of the
13 oldest cultures in the United States.
14 And prior to that time it had not gained
15 any recognition outside of the culture
16 or within the culture, because even
17 within the culture people were ashamed
18 to be a part of it. And outside of the
19 culture people were considered to have
20 thick lips and lazy tongues and could
21 not speak the King's English, and we ate
22 a lot of rice. And we believed in root
23 work and magic and that kind of thing.
24 We had such a polarized view out in the
25 world. So, and when this particular

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1 resource study was sanctioned, it drew
2 attention to the culture and also drew
3 attention to the need to preserve it, to
4 start talking to people within the
5 culture. We had been interpreted from
6 the outside in for so long, and this was
7 the first time we were able to be
8 interpreted from the inside out. So
9 your presence tonight in terms of public
10 engagement, is an attempt to get a look
11 at this culture from the inside out.
12 Now these panels are fancy and they're
13 kind of intimidating when you come in,
14 because it looks all regal and stilted,
15 but for the most part, what they do is
16 explain what happened to bring us here.
17 The first panel gives the background and
18 I was just talking about the resource
19 study. And we went all over
20 Gullah/Geechee country. The
21 Gullah/Geechee country, as historians
22 defined it, began around about
23 Jacksonville, North Carolina and goes
24 down to Jacksonville, Florida, so
25 Jacksonville to Jacksonville is what

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1 would be a good set of bookends.
2 Technically the rice culture intensified
3 on the Cape Fear River, so when you look
4 at the study itself it pinpoints the
5 beginning point at the Cape Fear River
6 and goes on down to the St. John River.
7 What happened to make this region, what
8 we call Gullah/Geechee country, is that
9 during the early part of our history
10 there was an intense development of rice
11 culture. And this rice culture created
12 an isolated kind of situation. And you
13 see here kind of bordered by water. And
14 so this intensification of the rice
15 culture and the isolation really molded
16 a culture, the Gullah/Geechee culture.
17 It maximized it because it was not a lot
18 of outside impressions on it. So the
19 research, resource study was designed to
20 kind of look at that more closely and to
21 talk to people. So some thousand-plus
22 people were listened to, to get
23 information that eventually developed
24 into a publication that came out of that
25 resource study. From that point,

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1 Clyburn and his co-author, Lindsey
2 Graham, or Lindsey Graham helped him to
3 push the bill through, offered a bill
4 that would, for the most part, create a
5 national heritage area. National
6 heritage areas are all over the country
7 and I wish Michael was here; I think
8 it's 140 of them. And the
9 Gullah/Geechee culture, the bill was
10 designed to create a national heritage
11 area that would encompass the
12 Gullah/Geechee country that we have
13 formed. And as this happened, this
14 national heritage area was designed to,
15 for the most part, preserve, spotlight,
16 highlight, showcase a culture, a living
17 culture. And out of all of the national
18 heritage areas that exist, ours is the
19 only one that attempts to interpret a
20 people, a living people. So this is a
21 historic endeavor that we are on
22 because, for two reasons: We are being
23 able to interpret ourselves from the
24 inside out, and then we also have
25 legislation that says that we're

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1 important and that this culture is
2 necessary for the interpretation of
3 American history. The vision and
4 purpose, and a lot of you just help, I
5 encourage you to come up and look at the
6 panels before you leave, because we want
7 to get to the public engagement side.
8 The purpose and the vision and the
9 mission is, for the most part, set up
10 here. The, under this Gullah/Geechee
11 Heritage Act that came out of Congress
12 and the House was a mandate to create a
13 commission. This commission would be
14 like an umbrella that would oversee this
15 interpretation. And it's a 15-member
16 commission, and we have four
17 commissioners here, as we said from
18 North Carolina on down to Florida. And
19 our North Carolina representatives here
20 tonight are going to be doing public
21 engagement meetings as well. So by the
22 time we get to June, we will have
23 engaged the public extensively
24 throughout Gullah/Geechee country. So
25 this 15-member commission was comprised

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1 of people who had been doing this work,
2 as we call it. And it says, "work."
3 There are other people who have been
4 doing the work as well and they are our
5 kind of advisors as well, but this
6 commission is designed to simply look at
7 those things that are important to kind
8 of drive this mule so that we can end up
9 at the end of the road with a management
10 plan that would set forth a way to do
11 it, a way to look at a living culture.
12 And that's kind of hard. So here in
13 this one we have, you know, what we call
14 Gullah/Geechee country. People who live
15 along this Coastal Region and about 30
16 miles in, even though that's really a
17 little further in because places like
18 Sumter and Orangeburg and Manning are
19 also people from the Gullah/Geechee
20 ancestry. Wherever Gullah/Geechee
21 people move is where you have
22 Gullah/Geechee people. I think in D.C.
23 they even have a Gullah/Geechee Ball,
24 you know, and good food. The kind of
25 resources that we're trying to set up

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1 are places, and this is what we're here
2 for tonight. What are places, people,
3 sites, that you feel are important.
4 Things that are listed here are just
5 sites that came out of the resource
6 study. There are tons of them. I told
7 the people down in Georgetown about a
8 place in Murrells Inlet. My mom said
9 they had a place where you could only
10 empty your clam shells when they were
11 little. So after a certain amount of
12 time the clam shells pile got so tall
13 that it was a mountain. And they
14 started calling it Clam Bank. And Clam
15 Bank became a very important place. It
16 would be the place where you would meet
17 your boyfriend; sneak out and play with
18 your friends or whatever. It was a
19 monumental place. And who would know
20 about Clam Bank except people from
21 within the culture? So nothing is too
22 insignificant. While we think of
23 Atlantic Beach and places like Punk's
24 Patio, there were other places in this
25 area that were significant. So these

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1 resources here, just to name a few: We
2 have praise houses. We have Mosquito
3 Beach, Brookgreen Gardens, Brick Back
4 Baptist Church down on St. Helena
5 Island. Those are obvious resources.
6 Those are ones that the tourists already
7 recognize. But what we want to know is:
8 What are places, people, and things that
9 happened here. I interviewed a woman
10 from Atlantic Beach a few years ago and
11 she said to me that people came to,
12 black people came to Atlantic Beach for
13 a lot of reasons, but that one of the
14 reasons was that the water was good for
15 what ailed you. And how many of us now
16 don't see the water as an important part
17 of this Gullah/Geechee culture? So that
18 itself, stories like that. And then
19 here you have, of course the commission,
20 which is here on Saflo Island. I'm not
21 on there. And then we'll in with a
22 question: How can I participate? A lot
23 of times you think that because you're
24 not on a commission or you don't have a
25 title that, that means you can't

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1 participate. But it doesn't take a
2 rocket scientist to understand that 15
3 people cannot interpret a culture. So
4 we need everybody. So how can I
5 participate? We want to hear from you.
6 We want your thoughts. We want your
7 stories. We want your insight. We want
8 words. A woman told me this morning
9 that I was interviewing that there's a
10 word called broadus that they used to
11 use all the time. I learned a new word,
12 Gullah/Geechee word: broadus. She was
13 trying to explain to me what it meant
14 and got into a whole -- Kenneth, I'm
15 talking about Ms. Adams.

16 MR. McIVER: Oh.

17 COMMISSIONER GERALD: A whole new, we won't
18 even go there. Can you be contacted?
19 Can someone come in and interview you?
20 We have oral historians on this
21 commission. We have people with skills
22 that will come in and talk to your great
23 Aunt Lucy, who's 90-years old but her
24 mind is good. We can come in and talk
25 to Aunt Lucy and get information. Just

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1 any way that you can contribute to this.
2 If you can go to Walmart and get them to
3 donate digital cameras so we can send
4 the kids out to take pictures. Get
5 tapes; tape everybody. Some of the best
6 conversations that you have is after
7 dinner on Sunday when everybody's full
8 and sitting at the table or during a
9 funeral; those are the best times to get
10 information because you have all the
11 family there. And funerals can make
12 people remember things. So these panels
13 I'm going to encourage you to come and
14 look at them before you leave. But we
15 started as a resource study; moved into
16 an Act that was passed by the House and
17 Congress and the Senate. Now we're
18 moving into trying to get more
19 information because at the end of the
20 road we want this story to have all of
21 the pieces to it. And we don't want to
22 say as we always say that they're saying
23 this about us. We want to say it about
24 ourselves. So tonight we are here to
25 get your input and your engagement.

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1 COMMISSIONER DAISE: Thank you. At this
2 time, if you have not turned off your
3 cell phones or put them on silent,
4 please do so. And when you come forward
5 to give your feedback, as I stated
6 before, please state your names so that
7 it can be documented. Each of you, when
8 you came in, should have received a
9 packet off the table. It is a
10 newsletter. And at the center of the
11 newsletter is a comment sheet. If at
12 all possible, we'd like you to fill in
13 this comment sheet before you leave, and
14 turn it into one of the commissioners.
15 Particularly if you would focus on
16 answering Questions 3 through 7. And as
17 you listen to the feedback, that very
18 well you may hear some of the things
19 that you think are important, but write
20 it out anyway. This is very important.
21 Your information that you can have can
22 include, let's see, some partnerships,
23 if there are any, financial resources
24 that you think people or organizations
25 who can partner with the Gullah/Geechee

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1 Cultural Heritage Corridor Commission.
2 Your feedback can include any conflicts,
3 any things that may be an obstacle to
4 the development of the Gullah/Geechee
5 Heritage Corridor. So right now, before
6 you begin, I want you in your minds just
7 to fast forward, because this general
8 management plan will be developed within
9 the next three years. So let's fast
10 forward to five to 10 years later. The
11 Gullah/Geechee Cultural Heritage
12 Corridor is being developed, or a lot of
13 it has already been developed at this
14 time. And you're driving through,
15 traveling through, and you are in the
16 Atlantic Beach Community; what things do
17 you want to make sure are cited that
18 people see; that they know about when
19 they come through or when they read
20 information about Atlantic Beach? Who
21 will be first? Step forward, please.
22 Could be anything tangible that you can
23 see. Could be anything intangible.
24 Could be songs, aspects of culture and
25 heritage. It could be individuals who

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1 have been important to you or to
2 Gullah/Geechee culture and heritage that
3 you want to make sure are identified.
4 Institutions, anything that you see that
5 you think will be important to be
6 documented, that's what we want to hear
7 about. I'm moving aside. Someone's
8 stepping forward; I can feel it. Mayor,
9 if you wish, you can be first.

10 **PUBLIC ATTENDEES/SPEAKERS**

11 MAYOR PIERCE: Well that said, what I
12 envision ---

13 COMMISSIONER DAISE: Right.

14 MAYOR PIERCE: --- an entertainment
15 center. Oh, you want to know who I am?
16 I am Mayor Retha Pierce of the town of
17 Atlantic Beach. Fast forward, I
18 envision the arts, an entertainment
19 center, lots of entertainment that we
20 incorporate aspects of our culture.

21 COMMISSIONER DAISE: What aspects of our
22 culture would you think would be
23 important?

24 MAYOR PIERCE: Songs, folklore,
25 stories, storytelling, the quilt. I see

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1 a young lady back there. I like what
2 they do when they come to the
3 Gullah/Geechee Festival. They have a
4 quilt. I'd like to see, well, I'd like
5 to see a museum, too, so let me add that
6 with envisioning the arts here,
7 entertainment. So in addition to
8 storytelling, the folklore type
9 experiences, drama, just lots of Gullah
10 experiences through the poetry, through
11 the drama. And along the fact we'd like
12 to have a museum. I'd like to see a
13 museum that will include aspects of the
14 culture, the history and the arts.

15 COMMISSIONER DAISE: Are there any artists
16 from this community that you'd like to
17 identify; who you'd like to make sure
18 their names or their stories will be
19 included?

20 MAYOR PIERCE: Patricia Robinson I
21 know is a young lady that has a lot of
22 poetry and she can just put poems
23 together just like that. And she has a
24 very unique story to her life, too,
25 having been someone that has been around

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1 the beach since very young and some
2 experiences that she got into and then
3 came back; was like lost and then came
4 back. She's a very good writer, a very
5 good poet. So I would like to see some
6 of her poetry there. And anybody else
7 who might have anything. I know Ms.
8 Sherry Suttles, who is one of our
9 council members, has done a history
10 book, a historical book about Atlantic
11 Beach and its people.

12 COMMISSIONER GERALD: What kind of games did
13 y'all play when you were little?

14 MAYOR PIERCE: Little Sally Walker.

15 COMMISSIONER GERALD: Because you know, the
16 reason I ask is because when we were in
17 McClellanville we played some of the
18 same games but the words were different.

19 MAYOR PIERCE: Did you play Little
20 Sally Walker?

21 COMMISSIONER GERALD: I mean when they were
22 doing it the other night ---

23 MAYOR PIERCE: Uh-huh (affirmative
24 response).

25 COMMISSIONER GERALD: --- they, it's the same

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1 concept but their words were different.
2 I'm wondering what were the words for
3 your Little Sally Walker?
4 MAYOR PIERCE: Well mine was: Little
5 Sally Walker ---
6 COMMISSIONER DAISE: Keep going. Sitting in
7 her saucer.
8 MAYOR PIERCE: Sitting in a saucer,
9 rise Sally, rise. Wipe your weeping
10 eyes. Turn to the east; turn to the
11 west; turn to ---
12 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Inaudible.)
13 MAYOR PIERCE: --- that Sally loves
14 the best.
15 COMMISSIONER GERALD: And then what about
16 your and put your ---
17 MAYOR PIERCE: And put your hands on
18 your hip, and let your backbone slip.
19 COMMISSIONER DAISE: Okay.
20 MAYOR PIERCE: Rise, Sally, rise.
21 Yeah, we did stuff like that. And Simon
22 Says.
23 COMMISSIONER DAISE: Uh-huh (affirmative
24 response).
25 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Ms. Mary Mack.

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1 COMMISSIONER GERALD: Who said that?
2 MAYOR PIERCE: Lots of rhymes. We did
3 a lot of rhymes.
4 COMMISSIONER GERALD: Do you remember how you
5 do it?
6 AUDIENCE: (Chatter.)
7 MAYOR PIERCE: You can come up and
8 help me.
9 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Ms. Mary Mack, Mack,
10 Mack, all dressed in black, black,
11 black.
12 MAYOR PIERCE: Come up here and do it.
13 Come up here and do it.
14 AUDIENCE: (Chatter.)
15 MAYOR PIERCE: Come on up.
16 COMMISSIONER DAISE: Yeah, yeah. Come on;
17 come on.
18 MAYOR PIERCE: I really used to love a
19 lot of the Paul Laurence Dunbar's ---
20 MS. SIMMONS: Well I had to work
21 for a living so I don't know too many of
22 these games.
23 COMMISSIONER DAISE: The things you
24 remember.
25 MS. SIMMONS: Ms. Mary Mack, Mack,

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1 Mack, all dressed in black, black,
2 black, with silver buckles, buckles,
3 buckles, all down her back, back, back.
4 She asked her mother, mother, mother,
5 for 50-cent, cent, cents, to ride the
6 elephant to ---

7 AUDIENCE MEMBER: --- jump the fence.

8 COMMISSIONER DAISE: Well thank you.

9 MS. SIMMONS: Also, to what Mayor
10 Prince, Price saying, Pierce, I'm sorry.
11 I was reading about Prince and, I'd also
12 like to see the culture as when they
13 have Gullah/Geechee Festival, everyone
14 dress in the Gullah/Geechee attire
15 because that shows that you appreciate
16 your culture. You appreciate what
17 you're doing. You're helping to sell
18 yourself and it helps to sell your
19 culture.

20 COMMISSIONER DAISE: When you say dress in
21 Gullah/Geechee attire, what do you mean?

22 MS. SIMMONS: With the head tied up
23 or the African kaftans and things like
24 that, just you know the way it was back
25 in the day, because we all remember.

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1 COMMISSIONER DAISE: All right.

2 MS. SIMMONS: And I think it just
3 helps make people feel more comfortable
4 and they'll participate more when they
5 see that you are dressed in the part
6 that you're trying to sell.

7 COMMISSIONER GERALD: All right. And you
8 need to identify yourself.

9 COMMISSIONER DAISE: Identify yourself.

10 MS. SIMMONS: My name is Stephanie
11 Simmons. I'm a former member, born and
12 raised on Atlantic Beach.

13 COMMISSIONER GERALD: Did y'all play
14 hopscotch?

15 MS. SIMMONS: Yeah, we played
16 hopscotch.

17 COMMISSIONER GERALD: So what did y'all do
18 while the tourists were here? We're
19 trying to get a sense ---

20 MS. SIMMONS: Work.

21 COMMISSIONER DAISE: And what kind of work
22 did you do?

23 MS. SIMMONS: We cleaned hotels.
24 I've worked since I was six. That's why
25 I said I can't remember every step of

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1 the games and stuff, you know, that we
2 did. We played house and house to us
3 was going outside and using the porch as
4 your car. You're using a little stool
5 or something as your kitchen. We made
6 mudpies out of dirt and water and paddy
7 cakes. We used to eat clay.

8 AUDIENCE MEMBER: That's right.

9 MS. SIMMONS: We'd eat clays; we'd
10 eat starch.

11 COMMISSIONER DAISE: Uh-huh (affirmative
12 response).

13 MS. SIMMONS: All that was all
14 included.

15 AUDIENCE MEMBER: That's right.

16 COMMISSIONER DAISE: So at 6-years old, and
17 I'm sure there were others who began
18 working at an early age. And what was
19 childhood?

20 MS. SIMMONS: Playing house. And we
21 would like to watch like the older folks
22 at The Patio or the juke joints they
23 were called then, or the places. That's
24 what we used to call them the place,
25 over at so and so's place or Skeeter's

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1 place or this one's place. And the
2 children, for me, we used to like to
3 sneak out about this time of the evening
4 and watch the people dance.

5 MAYOR PIERCE: And she touched upon
6 the places, and that's another thing I'd
7 like to see in the development of the
8 town, even as businesses and places of
9 accommodations come in. I would like to
10 see places like, I would like to see
11 something done to remember places like
12 Punk's Patio and other places that were
13 here. Because during the segregated
14 era, this was the only place that blacks
15 could come to. And you have the places
16 that she mentioned here. The kinds of
17 places ---

18 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Lots of patios.

19 MAYOR PIERCE: Yeah, lots of patios.

20 COMMISSIONER GERALD: Could you name them?

21 MAYOR PIERCE: And different
22 restaurants.

23 AUDIENCE MEMBER: The Patio.

24 COMMISSIONER GERALD: Can you name them so we
25 have them on tape?

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1 MAYOR PIERCE: What's that?
2 COMMISSIONER GERALD: Can you name the ones
3 you can remember, the places?
4 MAYOR PIERCE: Punk's Patio, Felton's
5 Patio and go ahead. Go ahead, Stephanie
6 MS. SIMMONS: Rooker's Baby Grand,
7 Rooker's Patio, Sheila, not Sheila ---
8 MAYOR PIERCE: Your mother, could you
9 help us out? Ms. Stanley, come on up
10 here and help us out with these places.
11 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Brenda's, what was
12 Brenda's Place, Brenda Raul's place?
13 MAYOR PIERCE: The Balsch, Solid Gold
14 maybe was later but, but it was ---
15 AUDIENCE MEMBER: The Palms.
16 MAYOR PIERCE: Uh-huh (affirmative
17 response). The Balsch. If Ms. Stanley
18 would come up and help us out.
19 MS. SIMMONS: Aunt Mable's, Ms. Mary
20 Gladys.
21 MAYOR PIERCE: And while Ms. Stanley
22 is coming up, she was telling me what
23 she did when she was a child. I started
24 to work at, my first job was age 4,
25 helping my mother pick cotton. Because,

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1 see, I'm one of those people that would
2 come to the beach, and we looked forward
3 to coming to the beach because it was
4 the only place at the beach that we
5 could come to. We worked on the farm.
6 So I picked cotton at age 4 and then at
7 age 6 I was handing tobacco, you know,
8 just about every day. And so the
9 elderly folks just lived for Saturday
10 night or Friday evening and they'd come
11 down on the beach and stay the whole
12 weekend, a lot of them. And little kids
13 like me would be begging to come and ---
14 MS. SIMMONS: We had to stay home and
15 wash with the rain washing.
16 COMMISSIONER GERALD: You should hear some
17 more places from ---
18 MAYOR PIERCE: Because she's going to
19 give us ---
20 COMMISSIONER GERALD: Give us your name and
21 then ---
22 MS. STANLEY: Rosa Stanley.
23 MS. SIMMONS: The partymaker.
24 AUDIENCE: (Laughter.)
25 COMMISSIONER DAISE: Go ahead; thank you.

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1 MS. STANLEY: Well some of them days
2 that I think when I was 4 I lived in, I
3 was raised up in Green Sea, but I been
4 on Atlantic Beach for most all my life.
5 But we used to take, they call them
6 hogheads; take them hogheads and put
7 dirt in them and run water through it
8 and tie a stick to it. And we run up
9 and down the road with it. We'd take a
10 bicycle rim and get a clothes hanger or
11 a stick and gun. It used to be fun.
12 We'd get in the barrel and roll around
13 in the barrel and play hopscotch. We
14 played marbles; we played marbles all
15 night long, sitting there as long as we
16 could, out there in the dark. And we
17 would walk the window of the house. A
18 country mile was a country mile.

19 COMMISSIONER DAISE: Uh-huh (affirmative
20 response).

21 MS. STANLEY: And you would walk to
22 that house and you'd turn around and
23 come back and then turn around and walk
24 to that house. And we did that 'til it
25 looked like it was so dark you 'til

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1 couldn't see so you say, all of the
2 sudden somebody say you got to go home.
3 Then you get scared and run home. We'd
4 knock the door down to get into the
5 house. But down on the beach here, when
6 I was staying here on the beach, we, I
7 didn't do a whole lot of playing. I was
8 trying to dance. I was ---

9 COMMISSIONER DAISE: What were some of the
10 dances?

11 MS. STANLEY: Well we done the Twist,
12 the Charleston, the Cha Cha Cha. The --
13 -

14 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Shag.

15 MS. STANLEY: The Shag, yeah, the
16 Shag has always ---

17 AUDIENCE MEMBERS: The Swing.

18 MS. STANLEY: The Swing dancing and
19 we wore those can-can slips, those
20 crinoline slip and, with all that starch
21 in them and they stand out about that
22 wide. You big as ---

23 COMMISSIONER DAISE: Say it now. Come on
24 now; say it.

25 MS. STANLEY: With black and white

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1 shoes and then we had one with the Ivy
2 League; they had the little buckle on
3 the back of them? Then we ---

4 AUDIENCE MEMBER: White shawls.

5 MS. STANLEY: And those, now the
6 pictures, you know like they, all up and
7 down the street they had the little
8 novelty shop where you can go in there
9 and take the pictures. And probably
10 cost about .25 or something like that at
11 the time. But you could, it was so many
12 peoples down here walking, you could
13 walk down the street and get lost. And
14 at the end of, there was no highway.
15 That sand was very hot.

16 AUDIENCE MEMBER: You know that's right.

17 MS. STANLEY: You walk all the way
18 down the street like that, but you'd
19 make it down there because that music
20 was sounding so good.

21 AUDIENCE: (Laughter.)

22 MS. STANLEY: It didn't bother you at
23 that time, you know, and those hills was
24 hard to climb. They go there when, you
25 know all day long you run down there,

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1 somebody say somebody got shot and
2 somebody, something happened down at the
3 beach and everybody take off; start
4 running and come back and eat. You
5 know, dancing and stuff like that, a
6 busload of people come where I was
7 working at Mable's, a place called The
8 Farm, at that time. And I would cook
9 fish, chicken, pork chop. We had
10 samwiches (phonetically spelled).
11 People would come down on buses and
12 they, a lot of them put them off right
13 at the, it was at the liquor store, Ms.
14 Webber's liquor store. They would put
15 them off there and they'd jump off the
16 truck and they'd take off down the
17 beach. And some of them get lost and
18 get left, and when they get left they
19 stay down here and work with the peoples
20 that down here, so you wind up calling
21 them leftovers. That's how the people
22 had got that word, you know being
23 leftover, and people that come down here
24 never stayed, you know, they was on a
25 farm.

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1 COMMISSIONER DAISE: Uh-huh (affirmative
2 response).

3 MS. STANLEY: So when they get down
4 here and stay down here so long, they
5 made it their home. Some of them never
6 did go back. And then some of them
7 might come back the next year; find out
8 they still down here on the beach, they
9 might go back they might not. It was so
10 easy to live down here because it didn't
11 cost you nothing, really.

12 COMMISSIONER DAISE: Uh-huh (affirmative
13 response).

14 MS. STANLEY: I mean everything was
15 practical, you know, everybody was like
16 family and things. Now them other times
17 it was just like, well, maybe four or
18 five families left here on the beach
19 that stayed 'til the next year. But we
20 used to take a, a man would come by with
21 the ice truck. Take the ice, put it on
22 his back, last for a half a block or a
23 whole block. They'll put it in your
24 drink boxes; that's how you kept your
25 sodas and stuff cold. And then some

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1 people had a wagon, a little red wagon
2 and they had a scraper. And you take
3 that scraper and you'd scrape snowballs.
4 And you'd have you a little coloring
5 with some syrup; put it on a Pepsi-Cola
6 bottle, a Co-Cola bottle, any type of
7 bottle. And you dap it up there and you
8 could sell them all day long.

9 COMMISSIONER DAISE: Uh-huh (affirmative
10 response).

11 MS. STANLEY: And we had, you know
12 that was a good seller for us. Now
13 there's a lady from Georgetown, Ms.
14 Singleton, she used to cook that soup.
15 You know how they talk Geechee, you
16 know. We call them Geechees, anyway,
17 they talk. And she would, those people
18 would come down, you'd never know what
19 it was because they just put a whole lot
20 of stuff in the pot. And they cook it
21 and they boiled it up and they eat it,
22 and it be good.

23 AUDIENCE: (Laughter.)

24 MS. STANLEY: The recipe, I couldn't
25 tell you what it is. But you know it

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1 was a lot of little things. I have to
2 jog my mind with just like we was
3 talking some of the, I forgot something
4 that I, that was years ago that used to,
5 you know, happen.

6 COMMISSION DAISE: Right. Well, thank
7 you. Thank you. Anyone else?

8 AUDIENCE: (Chatter.)

9 COMMISSIONER DAISE: You've been hearing
10 reflections from childhood experiences
11 at Atlantic Beach. Who would say what
12 was the importance of these memories
13 that you have now? Why were they
14 important? Why were they significant?
15 Why would you want 10 years from now,
16 those who come through to know? What
17 would you want them to know about the
18 importance of these aspects of culture
19 that you have identified? Anyone? Come
20 on; come on.

21 MS. MALLETT: Good evening, My name
22 is Patricia Mallett, and I'm from, a
23 little bit from the middle part of the
24 state. Well she was talking about
25 Manning, that's my hometown. And I grew

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1 up on a farm just like you did. And
2 every summer, about two or three times a
3 summer, we would have the opportunity to
4 come out of that tobacco field and to
5 come to Atlantic Beach. Now, you talk
6 about working hard, that's hard work.
7 But your parents, my parents knew how to
8 get the whole community together. And
9 they knew they were going to have a
10 cook-out and we were going to go go two
11 or three times a year to Atlantic Beach.
12 And there were other times my family
13 would bring just us. But the best
14 times, we've got a whole truckload of
15 people and they got in there any way
16 they could. The girls had to change
17 clothes in the back of the truck; switch
18 off, then the boys would. That was the
19 best time to come and spend a weekend
20 down here to dance because there's
21 nothing like your own culture, to hear
22 that music that they played there and
23 you could dance until you couldn't dance
24 anymore, and there were so many
25 different places. And everybody felt

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1 kind of comfortable. So what you meant
2 is that you didn't worry that something
3 happened to your children or anything
4 like that. And it was just a wonderful
5 experience. Now to have that family, I
6 mean it's not just my family, but to
7 have the whole community. We don't have
8 that anymore, you know. We don't have
9 that come back home and be comfortable
10 and enjoy yourself. We get a little bit
11 of it during Bikers' Weekend, okay. And
12 that's hard as, you know, people talked
13 about, but that's, I think that feeling
14 that's there, that's what we're talking
15 about keeping. Because that feeling
16 that most of us have when we're kids,
17 that's that feeling you can put a whole
18 lot of us on one little block and nobody
19 fight hardly, whoa. And that's what has
20 gone on for generations. And that's why
21 it's so important to maintain that
22 because our students today, and our
23 young folks, they don't see that. You
24 know they see so many variety of things,
25 but to understand your own culture and

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1 to appreciate. And you will also see
2 some of the richer blacks, okay. You
3 will see doctors, lawyers, president of
4 universities, and they would talk to you
5 just like everyone else. So you got a
6 variety. You got the poorest person
7 that may have worked at a restaurant,
8 but you also got the richest people.
9 And everybody was a family. That's what
10 I wish we could see again. Thanks.

11 COMMISSIONER DAISE: What other resources in
12 Atlantic Beach are important? Yes. And
13 you'll be next.

14 DR. HALEY: My name is John Haley
15 and I've had a house down here since
16 1970. Stephanie, are you one of Mark
17 Simmons' descendants? I'm right next to
18 you. But the thing that struck me is
19 the physical beauty of this beach, and
20 it hasn't really changed. The sand is
21 still there, the dunes. And over 30
22 years it's still one of the prettiest
23 beaches I've seen, and I've been from
24 Waikiki to Malibu, but it's a great
25 beach. The next thing is the, as the

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1 last speaker mentioned, was the
2 cordiality. Everybody was friends. As
3 a matter of fact, I was adopted into Mr.
4 Simmons' family and James is my brother.
5 But places that I remember is Skeeter's
6 Restaurant, and particularly the big
7 tree next to Skeeter's. You almost
8 would have to get reservations to sit at
9 that picnic table and drink whatever you
10 might have. Listen to the music from
11 the inside. And you could go inside and
12 have some of the best food. The first
13 time I ever ate fish and grits, I just
14 could not envision anybody eating that.
15 But it was on a Sunday morning. And
16 after all night what they used to call
17 walking the strand, I don't know if
18 anybody remembers that, you just didn't
19 go to sleep. You just walked around and
20 stopped at every patio and ate Mr.
21 Rucker's old greasy sot sausages 'til
22 you got sick.

23 AUDIENCE MEMBERS: Yes. Good sausage.

24 MR. HALEY: The next place, which
25 really has some historical significance

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1 was Esau Jenkins' place. And everyone
2 thinks that Esau Jenkins was basically
3 finer than the John's Island. But he
4 had a place here, and I think a lot of
5 the strategy of the civil rights
6 movement was probably worked out within
7 the confines of Esau Jenkins'
8 restaurant. And certainly there was the
9 Gordon Motel. Bubba Gordon, who was a
10 character unto himself, maintained a
11 house that whatever you wanted to do, if
12 his mother wasn't there, simply was
13 fine. But the last thing is, and the
14 reason why I still come here, I still
15 keep my house here, is I feel free. And
16 I don't think I ever feel bad when I'm
17 down here. I can get reinvigorated,
18 spiritually and emotionally recharged,
19 and there's nothing like sitting down on
20 that beach in the morning looking out to
21 the east. And I tell people now: Don't
22 look to the west. You know, just look
23 to the east. Then you will see one of
24 the prettiest beaches, from which you
25 know, you can draw both a physical

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1 beauty and spiritual nourishment. I
2 have seen probably 4 or 5,000 people
3 down here on weekends, sleeping in
4 trees. Someone mentioned the clothes
5 that they used to wear in the old days,
6 well I've seen everything down here from
7 evening gowns to hot pants, to church
8 clothes. The quilt tents down on the
9 beach, wash basins cleaning up on Sunday
10 morning, cooking collards on an outdoor
11 grill. You name it, I've sort of seen
12 it here and I'd like to sort of, you
13 know, keep it in our community because
14 if it ever gets out of our hands, we'll
15 never ever get it back again.

16 COMMISSIONER DAISE: Thank you. Yes, right
17 here.

18 MS. FLOYD: My name is Dorothy
19 Floyd and I'm currently treasurer of the
20 Atlantic Beach Historical Society. But
21 I have real early memories. I used to
22 come down here in the '40s. My family
23 is from Nichols, South Carolina. And I
24 can remember as a little girl coming
25 here, and I might have been 3 or 4. And

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1 I was hollering to my father; I wanted
2 to go in the water. And I remember my
3 father having to buy me a bathing suit.
4 And of course with all those, when all
5 those waves starting hitting me I was
6 screaming and hollering and wouldn't let
7 him put me down. But I have such fond
8 memories of Atlantic Beach, because
9 living in Nichols we would make day
10 trips. And as a teenager, I had a
11 cousin who could drive at 14, so the
12 teenagers would come down for the day.
13 And then we had to be back home and the
14 adults would have the car and come down
15 in the evening. Of course there was
16 plenty of dancing and things like that.
17 But I, I feel it's important for folks
18 to know their history. And I think
19 Atlantic Beach is someplace that, I know
20 it's important for me and my kids to
21 know about. It was special for us
22 because it was the only place that we
23 could come. Now, I was born in
24 Wilmington, North Carolina, but my
25 family left when I was three. And I was

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1 reared in Baltimore, but just as soon as
2 I would get out of school, I was always
3 coming to South Carolina or North
4 Carolina. My father was from South
5 Carolina. My mother was in North
6 Carolina. And they met up in
7 Wilmington. And I had some pictures of
8 my father, you know, being on the beach
9 early on. I mean there wasn't that much
10 here back in the 40s and the 50s. You
11 know I came down, up until probably '60,
12 1960, so I don't know too much about
13 what happened in the 70s. But in the
14 60s, we were down here. And as you
15 said, I used to come down and hand
16 tobacco. And you couldn't wait to get
17 to Atlantic Beach. And what I remember
18 is the food. The fried shrimp was the
19 best that I've ever tasted in my life.
20 And I can remember coming, I did come
21 back once in the 70s. And I remember
22 looking for a place that I could find
23 some of these fried shrimp but, and
24 disappointed that I really, you know,
25 some places weren't open. I brought my

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1 little girl down, I think in '73, and I
2 was looking you know for some of those
3 places. And any time that I would come
4 down to Myrtle Beach, I'd always have to
5 ride people through Atlantic Beach.
6 Some of my younger friends didn't know
7 about Atlantic Beach, so I'd always
8 would have to ride them through. So I
9 just think it's important that we keep
10 that and for all the old pictures and
11 things like that, it's something that we
12 have to teach our kids because it was
13 wonderful. I went to the beaches in
14 Maryland but they were not, they
15 couldn't touch the beach here, in
16 Atlantic Beach. So the dancing, the
17 food, the fellowship, the friendship and
18 everything like that was just so very
19 important. And it will always remain a
20 special place in my heart. And when I
21 moved to Myrtle Beach I joined the
22 church in Atlantic Beach, you know,
23 because, and I used to go to the
24 restaurant. We used to get fish
25 sandwiches because I'm always looking

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1 for that delicious fish samich
2 (phonetically spelled).
3 AUDIENCE: (Laughter.)
4 MS. FLOYD: Between two pieces of
5 white bread.
6 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Inaudible.)
7 MS. FLOYD: Say what?
8 MAYOR PIERCE: Tell them who cooked
9 it?
10 MS. FLOYD: Retha cooked fish.
11 But, you know, back in the day it was
12 very easy to find a place that would
13 cook fish sandwiches (phonetically
14 spelled). But it's pretty hard today.
15 I have to run all over the place trying
16 to get those sandwiches. But, again,
17 the history is just important. And as
18 Retha said, I really would like for
19 there to be a museum, you know, so folks
20 can come. Because our younger folks,
21 you know, don't know Atlantic Beach. My
22 kids don't know. When my son comes to
23 the Bike Fest, he's down at Myrtle
24 Beach. You know, he comes after the
25 fact. But it would be great if there's

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1 a place where any artifacts or anything
2 that a person has can be preserved for
3 history.

4 COMMISSIONER DAISE: You mentioned joining
5 the church in this community. What
6 resources of church life should be
7 remembered? Any sites? Any activities?
8 Any aspects of ---

9 MS. FLOYD: Well, I've only been
10 here ---

11 COMMISSIONER DAISE: --- church culture?

12 MS. FLOYD: --- five years.

13 COMMISSIONER DAISE: Okay.

14 MS. FLOYD: Okay. So, some of the
15 other church members can speak about
16 that, but I have often heard the pastor
17 say the church was started under a tree.
18 And he often talks about, you know,
19 about folks getting together and having
20 services under a tree. Now I'll be very
21 honest with you, when I used to come
22 down, we did not go to the church. We
23 went across the other side of the
24 street. I didn't even know, I didn't
25 even know there was a church down here.

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1 I didn't. In fact, I didn't know about
2 this side of the street until I moved.

3 I always knew about that side ---

4 COMMISSIONER DAISE: I gotcha.

5 MS. FLOYD: --- of the street. So,
6 and I've heard other people say, well,
7 when we used to come down we would make
8 a left instead of a right. So, but you
9 know a lot, somebody else could probably
10 speak about the church. When we came,
11 it was just for the day. And like I
12 said, we would come almost every
13 weekend. Even if I was in North
14 Carolina and some of my family from
15 North Carolina would come here, I knew
16 that I would see some of my family from
17 South Carolina. You know because they
18 were always coming, you know coming
19 here, so I always felt good about that.

20 COMMISSIONER DAISE: Thank you. Thank you.

21 Yes.

22 MS. SIMMONS: Stephanie Simmons. I'm
23 going to say a little bit about that
24 church. We used to, when I was small,
25 we used to love to come to revival,

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1 because that brought back that
2 togetherness feeling of warmth and
3 unity. And the music, we didn't, we
4 didn't have a hymn book where we had to
5 go by every step. You got a hymnal for
6 this and you got something else for
7 that. You just sung whatever was in
8 your heart, and you praised. But now,
9 you go by the instruction when you go to
10 church. Everything is in order. You
11 got to go in order. You have to sing
12 this song at this time and that song at
13 that time. Back then you sung whatever
14 you knew or whatever was in your heart.
15 I vaguely remember, well my grandmother
16 did. I can't speak for everybody else
17 in the church because I never saw
18 anybody do it but my grandmother. And
19 at the time, I was kind of embarrassed,
20 but I grew to appreciate it and love it
21 because she had her own style. And her
22 own style, she'd come to church. She'd
23 have this long dress on with these wild
24 patterns and designs on them. Bright
25 colors: red, lime green, orange, and

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1 she'd have her wrap on her head. And I
2 think that's where I got my love of
3 bright colors. When I go to church I
4 love vivid colors, and as I got older
5 and starting visiting other churches,
6 they have a black history month. And
7 they dress with the African attire. And
8 they serve the food back like the Gullah
9 food and stuff like that. So that's
10 something as far as being church-wise
11 is, you know we enjoy in the area ---

12 COMMISSIONER DAISE: Uh-huh (affirmative
13 response).

14 MS. SIMMONS: --- to see and
15 participate in. I love black history
16 month. I love it, because everybody
17 comes back together as one. Everybody's
18 dressing the part. Everybody's eating
19 the hamhocks and the field peas and the
20 corn fritters. And all of that stuff.
21 You go to church now and you'll get a
22 cookie, a slice of cake, and a bottle of
23 water.

24 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Have you ever come to a
25 praise bath?

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1 COMMISSIONER GERALD: Did y'all seek? Did
2 y'all seek? Do you know anybody that
3 seek down here? Seeking?
4 COMMISSIONER DAISE: Seek religion.
5 MS. SIMMONS: Seeking religion?
6 COMMISSIONER DAISE: Was that a part?
7 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Yes. Oh, yes.
8 COMMISSIONER GERALD: Could somebody explain
9 how that was done?
10 MS. SIMMONS: Like you're at revival?
11 COMMISSIONER GERALD: I'm not sure how you
12 get it.
13 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Get on your knees and
14 as you lift your hands they pray over
15 here.
16 COMMISSIONER DAISE: And state your name,
17 please.
18 MS. TAYLOR: My name is Charlene
19 Taylor, Charlene Bellamy Taylor. I'm
20 from Horry County, from Conway, South
21 Carolina. So I remember back in the day
22 that we used to come to the beach on
23 Sunday afternoon after church service.
24 You had to go to Sunday morning church
25 service and you were able to come, and

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1 you'd slip away most of the time and
2 come to the beach on Sunday afternoons.
3 And so you would get to, right at 30th
4 Avenue there, and you, if you didn't get
5 up here early that's where you had to
6 park out here on, almost on 17. Then
7 you had to walk down on the strand. To
8 get down on the strand, you couldn't get
9 there fast enough because them music was
10 calling you.

11 AUDIENCE: (Laughter.)

12 MS. TAYLOR: And so we'd get off the
13 patio; we'd go dancing 'til we had to be
14 home before a certain time, and so
15 that's what we did during the summer.
16 So we did that until, back when I was
17 younger, my uncle used to bring us down
18 here in a bus. And he would get the
19 Sunday School class, our classes at the
20 church, and he would haul them down
21 here. But we wasn't allowed to do a lot
22 of stuff on the Patio back then because
23 we had to stay with our parents whenever
24 we was going and still was talking about
25 the dunes on the beach out there. They

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1 were beautiful. They would go, we would
2 go and baby them. And we would get over
3 in the water. A couple times during the
4 year we would go out there on the beach.
5 And so the beaches are still just about
6 the same as it was back then. And so we
7 enjoyed the Patio as I became older, and
8 the fish that was cooked on the outside
9 and all that was unique to us because
10 like if we got down here so far all you
11 could smell was the fish frying. And so
12 as Ms. Floyd was talking about, it was
13 delightful to smell fish because back in
14 those days you didn't get fish but just
15 on Sunday morning, at my house on
16 Saturday night. And so later on we got,
17 I moved out here in 19, in the 70s,
18 1970. And so I raised my family here.
19 But when I first came here, my mother
20 thought I was coming to Hell. Because
21 nothing, she thought it was just party
22 all the time in Atlantic Beach, and so
23 she didn't think I could raise a family
24 in Atlantic Beach because of the
25 atmosphere that she was used to. So,

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1 but I showed her different. Before she
2 passed away, she realized I had a home
3 for my family. And so we enjoyed
4 Atlantic Beach. With the church, I
5 joined the church here. And the church
6 is actually over 60 years old. And so
7 it used to be when the church was here,
8 we didn't have church in the summertime.
9 You only had church in the wintertime.
10 Because the people that was in the
11 church, they had to work during the
12 summer. And so you had to open your
13 business; that's how you made your
14 money. And so you didn't have, the
15 church doors were closed in the
16 summertime. And so the fall of the year
17 we did have a revival. And the revival
18 came about, that's whenever everybody
19 got religion again.

20 AUDIENCE: (Laughter.)

21 MS. TAYLOR: And so we had the
22 mourning bench. We had the mourning
23 bench and you had to go to the mourner's
24 bench; what we call it, the mourner's
25 bench. And they would pray over you and

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1 sing those songs that they were talking
2 about. They would sing them and you had
3 to get up shouting or else you didn't
4 have none. Your parents would tell you,
5 you don't have no religion if you got up
6 without shouting, shedding some tears.
7 And that's the way it was. And so we
8 just now, here in a few years past, some
9 people I guess still do that, but we
10 couldn't ---

11 COMMISSIONER DAISE: By shouting, what do
12 you mean?

13 MS. TAYLOR: Beg your pardon?

14 COMMISSIONER DAISE: You said, "You had to
15 shout" and ---

16 MS. TAYLOR: You had to get up ---

17 COMMISSIONER DAISE: --- and that meant?

18 MS. TAYLOR: That meant to claim
19 your religion.

20 AUDIENCE MEMBER: The Hallelujah Dance.

21 MS. TAYLOR: Yes, ma'am. You had
22 to get up shouting. Because if you
23 didn't get up shouting, the older ladies
24 in the community would tell you: "Chile,
25 you ain't got nothing. You got to go

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1 back down tomorrow night." And some
2 people will go down there all five
3 nights of the week and go in the street
4 to the next church and go down the same
5 way. And you still come back and they
6 said you didn't have it. And they
7 wouldn't baptize you if wouldn't, if
8 you, you know confessed to that.

9 COMMISSIONER GERALD: Now did they have
10 certain women that, certain ---

11 MS. TAYLOR: You usually ---

12 COMMISSIONER GERALD: --- certain women that
13 was designated for that?

14 MS. TAYLOR: Usually the mother, you
15 know, the elder ladies in the church.

16 COMMISSIONER GERALD: What did they say to
17 you while you were down there? Did they
18 whisper in your ear things?

19 MS. TAYLOR: Tell you to pray hard,
20 chile. Just believe. As they tell you
21 those things like believe it. And say
22 He's, He's here. You call him up, say
23 He's right there. He can answer you.
24 All you got to do is believe it. So
25 they tell you those things so they want

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1 you to say it.

2 AUDIENCE: (Chatter.)

3 MS. TAYLOR: And they want you to,
4 you know, they sing those songs that
5 Stephanie was talking about. They
6 don't, no hymns, no songs out of the
7 book, you know. Just songs, hand
8 clapping songs that they was clapping,
9 hand clapping 'til they shout.

10 MAYOR PIERCE: Like floodgates.

11 MS. TAYLOR: That was one of them.
12 And they would sing those songs and they
13 clapped their hands until you either had
14 to get up or you know the preacher said,
15 I can't confess tonight. And I was just
16 going to sit on the bench; get up, and
17 so if you got converted that night and
18 shouted, but you went to that pastor on
19 Sunday morning. And so usually baptism
20 at my church went down to a little, what
21 we called the barpit. It was a little
22 pond down below the church. And that's
23 where you baptized at. We didn't have a
24 pool, the pools in the church anywhere
25 at that time. We baptized down at the

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1 banks down at the river. That's where -
2 --

3 COMMISSIONER DAISE: What were those
4 baptisms like? Was there any kind of
5 ceremony or ---

6 MS. TAYLOR: Yes, it was a ceremony.
7 Had to be your pastor, your deacons and
8 your mammas and your daddys and all them
9 people was there. And so you wrapped
10 your head up with a scarf, and you put a
11 white sheet around you. They took you
12 into the water. The pastor was on one
13 side, my side, and your father or your
14 deacon was on the other side. And they
15 prayed to God they took you up in time.

16 AUDIENCE: (Laughter.)

17 MS. TAYLOR: They dunk you in that
18 water and you get down in there and so
19 that was the baptism.

20 MS. SIMMONS: It's easier to get
21 baptized there than in the ocean.
22 Because you got to wait on the waves ---

23 MS. TAYLOR: Yeah.

24 MS. SIMMONS: --- in that ocean.

25 MS. TAYLOR: But that was in the

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1 pond they baptized you. And they would
2 take you all the way down in the water;
3 bring you back up. And when you come
4 back up, a lot of people come back up
5 shocked ---

6 AUDIENCE: (Laughter.)

7 MS. TAYLOR: --- shocked because
8 you don't know if you gone get drowned
9 (phonetically spelled).

10 AUDIENCE: (Laughter.)

11 MS. TAYLOR: That's why you were
12 shouting because you didn't want to say
13 you was going to get drowned
14 (phonetically spelled) down in that
15 water. So they got to come up shouting
16 because the sisters thought you really
17 was converted then, you know. If you
18 went and did something next week or
19 something, you got called to the church,
20 you know ---

21 COMMISSIONER DAISE: Were there any songs
22 that were a part of the baptism?

23 AUDIENCE: Take Me to the Water.

24 COMMISSIONER DAISE: Take Me to the Water.
25 What else?

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1 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Take Me to the Water to
2 be baptized.
3 COMMISSIONER DAISE: Okay.
4 AUDIENCE MEMBER: We used to say, I know
5 I got religion; I know I've been
6 converted. I know I've been, and sing
7 Take Me to the Water.
8 COURT REPORTER'S
9 NOTE: (Audience begins to
10 sing Take Me to the
11 Water.)
12 MS. TAYLOR: Now you do that as
13 they're walking you into the water, down
14 to the water. You're trembling, but you
15 have to go down to get baptized. And so
16 that's the church.
17 COMMISSIONER DAISE: Thank you. Thank you.
18 MAYOR PIERCE: Now she's talking
19 about the Baptist church.
20 AUDIENCE: (Chatter.)
21 MS. TAYLOR: Oh, we didn't
22 sprinkle. We baptized. We immersed in
23 the water. And so we was Baptist.
24 AUDIENCE MEMBER: A.M.E., A.M.E. then.
25 MAYOR PIERCE: Yeah, A.M.E. will

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1 sprinkle, give you a choice.

2 COMMISSIONER DAISE: Uh-huh (affirmative

3 response).

4 MAYOR PIERCE: They would sprinkle

5 you. You got a choice of sprinkle,

6 pour, or you can go in the water like

7 the Baptist.

8 COMMISSIONER DAISE: Now, author Sherry

9 Suttles is in the audience, and her new

10 book is entitled: "Images of America -

11 Atlantic Beach." And the picture on the

12 cover, there are fishermen on the front.

13 Can you talk about this part of Atlantic

14 Beach, the fishing the work of the

15 fishermen.

16 MS. SUTTLES: Okay. I'm glad you

17 specified what you will allow me to talk

18 about.

19 COMMISSIONER DAISE: Just a jump off point.

20 MS. SUTTLES: Because I want to talk

21 about ole' Mary Mack. We used to sing

22 that in Detroit, Michigan. So a lot of

23 people tell me: Well, there's no

24 Gullah/Geechee culture in Atlantic

25 Beach. I tell them what Veronica Gerald

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1 told me: If it's black folk from Africa
2 it's Gullah/Geechee. But we just have
3 attributed this southern eastern coast
4 for the purposes of the
5 heritage, and to trace the original
6 folks that came off the boat. But there
7 certainly is Gullah/Geechee culture in
8 Atlantic Beach. And it's surprised me
9 when I went to doing the book, and I
10 feel like I am an author already, some
11 phrases here that were attributed to
12 people that I have met here. And I just
13 left the home of Tina Lewis Hills. She
14 allowed me to use her family to use
15 these words like sot, somebody sot down
16 and wot, w-o-t; that means what is. And
17 I mean it took me years of living here
18 from 2000 to, I moved to 2008, to
19 understand what they were saying, let
20 alone what they meant. So there is a
21 language here. There is certainly the
22 church. I, they know I joined, I didn't
23 join but I attended the Atlantic Beach
24 Missionary Church for many years. Very
25 frustrated because I found myself

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1 playing the piano, and I thought I could
2 help. Well, they didn't need my
3 playing. I did it for a year. And it
4 was more for me than for them, and I
5 loved it. But there is a beautiful
6 singing that goes on in Atlantic Beach
7 today that is the hand and clap response
8 that I know you talked about, that are
9 the old hymns, and it doesn't
10 necessarily follow the book. It's how
11 you feel, like a Charlene or a Dot
12 Floyd. So there's a lot of the roots in
13 the history here. I just wanted to say
14 that, that fishing scene was very moving
15 to me when I decided to do this. But
16 since I missed all the good 'ole days
17 they're talking about and it really
18 frosts me that I didn't know Atlantic
19 Beach existed, let alone have this
20 wonderful culture. When I found out
21 that it did, I became immersed totally
22 in it, as a lot of people around this
23 room know. I spent a lot of days and
24 nights traveling between Charlotte. Now
25 I'm up here from Florida. There were a

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1 lot of things that I would find out
2 slowly. It's not written anywhere.
3 Nobody talks about it, so you have to do
4 the research and Veronica knows this,
5 too. But one of the first pictures that
6 was given to me in my pursuit of photos
7 was that picture right there. And I
8 just hugged Linwood Lewis for loaning it
9 to us, and I still have it six years
10 later.

11 COMMISSIONER DAISE: (Chuckling.)

12 MS. SUTTLES: And when I told him, he
13 told me, you want this picture back? He
14 goes, no, you keep it; it's been with
15 you. And his mom had just died and so I
16 did feel good about taking it and
17 keeping it. But what it means to me,
18 there's so much about Atlantic Beach
19 that a lot of people don't know.
20 Everybody knows about the dancing and
21 the food and the music; that's the part
22 I don't, I missed, not partaking of.
23 But this fisherman scene goes on today,
24 once again. There are men that go out
25 with their nets on the wee hours of the

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1 night and fish, the black men. So when
2 the publisher said to me, "What are you
3 going to put on the cover?" I said,
4 "Well, you've got to put these souvenir
5 photos. Everybody knows them, and Alice
6 has got a ton of them at her house. I
7 call them the girly pictures, you know.
8 And they have this Atlantic Beach
9 welcomes you. We love Atlantic Beach in
10 the back of 'em. And by the way, that's
11 what makes this book unique. There's no
12 book that I've seen that has those
13 pictures, those .25 pictures that you
14 talked about. So they said no, we're
15 looking for the landscape. And the
16 landscape, well, there is no landscape.
17 There's the ocean. Everybody can see
18 that. But they picked the picture that
19 I find to be the most important picture
20 about Atlantic Beach, because back in
21 the day the fishing was the source of
22 food for what they, for people. There
23 were the huge, big turtles that came out
24 and laid the eggs. You don't see those
25 anymore. But this was the camaraderie

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1 of the men. And those pictures, that
2 particular picture, Linwood believes,
3 are pictures of his father, Jim Lewis,
4 who did a lot of the building in this
5 community, and some of his friends and
6 family members. So now you have,
7 literally, he's one in his fifties, that
8 generation carrying on tradition. So
9 unlike the dancing and all, which we
10 don't have any more, except for Bike
11 Week, the fishing goes on. It goes on.
12 So I thought that was important to
13 convey to this book, that there is still
14 at least one aspect of the beach that
15 carries on to this day. And it's a
16 peaceful sign. It's a working, people
17 worked with that fish. They sold; they
18 made money. So it has a lot of
19 different purposes, not just
20 recreational. And you'll see Mr. Dixon
21 out there. He's darn near 90-years old.
22 Ms. Parker, where's she, Mel Parker?
23 She's his fishing buddy. And you see
24 them casting; I don't fish. So this
25 book is dedicated to my dad and mom.

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1 And my dad used to take us; we were
2 little girls, but we made too much noise
3 for him. And we scared the fish off, so
4 I never learned. And then my mother
5 picked it up when we went away to
6 college. And so she loved fishing and
7 left me a legacy of some small, little
8 fish to fry, the day she died, very
9 suddenly. So I have a fondness for that
10 picture in this community, and I, too,
11 hope that it's preserved. We gave up, I
12 must not I say we gave up, but we got
13 tired of waiting for the museum to come
14 into town. So these officers are here.
15 Rose is co-chairman and Dot's the
16 treasurer. Retha's the parliamentarian.
17 Brenda's not here, or Roella Brommell.
18 She just came on. And the founder of
19 it, Marie Sadler, is up in Charlotte.
20 So what we did was discover the Avery,
21 Avery Research Center. So they have a
22 lot of what we have; whatever we could
23 collect. But whenever there is a place
24 here, repository, it would be nice for
25 Atlantic Beach to showcase to the world

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1 what this place used to be, and
2 hopefully will be again one day. Thank
3 you.

4 COMMISSIONER DAISE: Thank you.

5 MAYOR WILLIS: In your research did
6 you come across the doctors? I
7 understand there was some doctors that
8 actually founded the community?

9 MS. SUTTLES: Yes. I'm glad you
10 asked me that. I feel like a
11 politician. If I might: This is another
12 thing that's so important to me about
13 having written this book. When I got
14 here there was, I call it the myth, that
15 somebody gave land to a black guy, named
16 George Tyson. And, you know, there was
17 that myth. Then the other myth was:
18 Some doctors from North Carolina came
19 and took it over from him. He lost it.
20 He was in financial trouble. So they
21 gave all the credit of this beach to the
22 doctors. And when I did the research,
23 this man, George Tyson, George W. Tyson
24 from Conway, was not given anything. He
25 paid for it. There are copies of his

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1 deed in here. And he held on to it for
2 many years. From 1934, heart of
3 Depression, to 1941; he bought the
4 second tract. And then in '43, I'm not
5 sure what happened. But he either sold
6 it to these doctors because he was going
7 belly up, or he went belly up. But
8 anyways, they did buy Seabrook. And not
9 a medical doctor, he was a PhD. And
10 people think that, you know, just some
11 ragamuffins or something came along and
12 took this beach. These were very
13 learned people, one of whom is in this
14 audience. His uncle, Dr. Cooper, his
15 uncle was a doctor, medical doctor. The
16 Callies was a medical doctor. And, yes,
17 the doctors did save the beach, whatever
18 you want to call it, but George Tyson
19 had already developed it. And he was a
20 laundrymat cleaners owner. He wasn't
21 all that heavy duty (unintelligible).
22 His wife was a seamstress, just like
23 Rosa here. She, they made good money
24 and they came up here and purchased this
25 land. And I'll tell you a moving thing

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1 about research. Gerald, Veronica's
2 helped us with interviewing people. Now
3 when I went to the cemetery where those
4 two people are born, I near about cried.

5 MAYOR WILLIS: You mean buried?

6 MS. SUTTLES: They're buried right
7 here in Conway, in Rose Hill, and it's
8 all covered up, you know. Moss, you
9 could hardly see the stone. I consider
10 these two people saints.

11 COMMISSIONER DAISE: Uh-huh (affirmative
12 response).

13 MS. SUTTLES: They did something
14 unheard of in the 1930s, to come up in
15 here and buy this land and preserve it
16 for black people. And all they get is:
17 Well, they lost it, and the doctors is
18 what really ran -- No, they had 9 years
19 before the doctors.

20 MALE AUDIENCE MEMBER: Well, my other
21 question is: There's no memory of those
22 guys anywhere other than ---

23 MS. SUTTLES: Yes.

24 MALE AUDIENCE MEMBER: I guess in your book?

25 MS. SUTTLES: Yes. We have recorded

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1 their backgrounds, their families. And
2 I have to say this, and I know I'm
3 taking too much time.
4 COMMISSIONER DAISE: No, you're not.
5 MS. SUTTLES: This book is a
6 pictorial history. It, the amount of
7 information is so slim to none,
8 considering I wrote 125-page manuscript.
9 And one day the people tell me that will
10 get written. But this is not going to
11 tell you everything about the history
12 that we have. We have, on file, the
13 historical society, everything that we
14 could find about Dr. Gordon and Dr.
15 Kelly. And I have to tell you, Rosa, I
16 asked her one day: Why are you keeping
17 all these obituaries for? She's got
18 hundreds of obituaries and that's where
19 the information is. That's how you can
20 find out who lives here; who belonged
21 here; people I never heard of: the
22 Hemingways. Some of these other people,
23 I didn't know they were the ones that
24 first come. So Alice is looking at me.
25 Alice Graham has a lot of photos, too,

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1 and a lot of people have tried to
2 capture this history. This book isn't
3 going to do it. It will just hopefully
4 tweak your interest. But we now know, I
5 know that those were three very
6 important contributors to this
7 community, and they did what they could
8 do 'til about '53, about 13 years. And
9 then there's some never, never land. I
10 don't know what happened there. And
11 then it got incorporated as a city. So
12 we won't say anything else about that.
13 Oh, I'm sorry. I got to talk to you,
14 and greet my sister here for
15 Gullah/Geechee purposes, Bunny
16 Rodrigues. She helped us. She's helped
17 this community lift the Gullah/Geechee
18 culture. And these are her buttons that
19 I got from her. And I almost didn't
20 recognize her; she looks great.
21 Anything else I forget? June 1, the
22 book will be out. June 1.

23 COMMISSIONER DAISE: Thank you.

24 MS. SUTTLES: Actually she looked
25 great before but she knows what I mean.

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1 It will be in the "B" bookstores:
2 Borders, Barnes and Nobles, Books a
3 Million. And then after that we will
4 rely on you all to get it out to the
5 people because our folks may or may not
6 go into those bookstores. And they
7 should know. And didn't you interview,
8 you're the one that interviewed Jenkins?

9 COMMISSIONER GERALD: Yeah.

10 MS. SUTTLES: I want you all to say
11 one other thing since Jenkins' name came
12 up, Esau Jenkins. I knew that he had a
13 place here. Russell Skeeters told me.
14 But I knew nothing about it. It was so
15 in disrepair. And fortunately we were
16 able to get Veronica to interview his
17 heir. And fortunately I was able to get
18 on my knees and crawl through the ashes.
19 So, Dot, you may have been burnt out but
20 don't let them shelf that stuff away;
21 you never know what you're going to find
22 in the ashes. We found an actual motel
23 receipts, the names who had rented. We
24 saw the license that says he was
25 permitted to run this motel and bar.

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1 And we took that to Avery and they were
2 just aghast. They only knew about his
3 work there in Charleston, civil rights.
4 They knew he had a business up here but
5 they didn't know the extent of what it
6 was. So we've done a lot of work to try
7 to begin this history. And it's
8 exciting but I'm tired now. I'm ready
9 to retire again when I get back to
10 Florida. So you all pick up the slack
11 and keep this thing going, okay?

12 COMMISSIONER DAISE: Thank you.

13 AUDIENCE: (Applause.)

14 COMMISSIONER DAISE: We have about 10 more
15 minutes. We're talking about pictures.
16 What is the picture that you want to
17 make sure those who come through
18 Atlantic Beach as part of the
19 Gullah/Geechee Cultural Heritage
20 Corridor they have a snapshot of. Thank
21 you.

22 MS. RODRIGUES: Bunny Rodrigues. These
23 10 minutes could be mine.

24 COMMISSIONER DAISE: (Chuckling.) She's
25 claiming it.

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1 MS. RODRIGUES: Get out of my chair but
2 I want to tell you something. I was
3 going through some things today, and
4 I've always been a part of Atlantic
5 Beach from the time I can remember
6 myself. I'm from Georgetown, and I have
7 something here from 1999. And Michael
8 was working and that was when I came
9 back to Georgetown, and they have Gullah
10 sites. And guess what, they had not
11 mentioned Atlantic Beach. When we did
12 the Resource Study I could not get
13 Cynthia Forsheer to come up here and
14 look at Atlantic Beach. But every
15 meeting that I went to, I told them how
16 important Atlantic Beach was because
17 practically every black person in South
18 Carolina and North Carolina had touched
19 bases with Atlantic Beach, and this is
20 holy ground. And this is why we gonna
21 keep it, and it's God-given to us, and
22 we gonna keep it.

23 COMMISSIONER DAISE: (Chuckling.)

24 MS. RODRIGUES: And, I brought
25 something else, too. I don't have

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1 enough time, but we need to talk about,
2 just like the dancing, we need to talk
3 about education. How will these
4 children learn, you know, the school
5 system and whatnot, the teachers. Also
6 talk about all the professional people
7 who came to Atlantic Beach. Atlantic
8 Beach was like a pot of gumbo soup. And
9 this is what I'd like for this
10 commissioner, I;d probably would be like
11 a pot of gumbo soup; you got everyting
12 (phonetically spelled) in it. You've
13 got your okra, you've got your corn,
14 you've got your onion, and then you've
15 got your bay leaves. 'Cause all of it
16 makes that soup taste good. In order
17 for this culture to survive, we're going
18 to need Aunt Sookie; that means that she
19 knows the Gullah history. And she
20 doesn't need a PhD. And I am gonna look
21 at all those commissioners, and I want
22 to see how old they are and how young
23 they are because I see a lot of old,
24 young, and I'm 71. And the other thing,
25 and then I'm going to get off, because

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1 I've got some, if anybody want to look
2 at this, this is the Resource Study that
3 they did; Atlantic Beach is not in it.
4 And then I'd like to know, and I'm going
5 to mention it to those commissioners
6 when they come: What does Myrtle Beach
7 have to do with the Gullah culture. If
8 it's on here, that one, you have Myrtle
9 Beach. If you're going to put anything
10 up there, it should be Atlantic Beach.
11 And I'm going to yield my time.

12 AUDIENCE: (Applause.)

13 COMMISSIONER DAISE: Thank you. Anyone
14 else?

15 MS. WARD: Yes. Good evening.

16 AUDIENCE: Good evening.

17 MS. WARD: I'm Sandra Ward and I
18 am, as we pretty much know, the
19 chairperson for the Gullah/Geechee
20 Festival Committee here on Atlantic
21 Beach. And I wanted, tonight, just to
22 hear what people had to say about, I
23 didn't want to take up a whole lot of
24 time with me. I already know what we
25 need to do, and I already know what the

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1 commissioners are going to do for us,
2 right? Atlantic Beach will be a site,
3 okay? I feel solid with that. I have
4 been coming to, and I want to do this.
5 Ron, if you don't mind. I've been
6 coming to Atlantic Beach since I was
7 about this big. And I mean literally
8 this big. And it is a family beach.
9 Family values, excuse me. It was a
10 family beach, family values, economic
11 cog, a place where people met their
12 husbands and wives. Families were
13 started here, all kind of goodness.
14 Atlantic Beach, there's no reason in
15 this world that these people who brought
16 Atlantic Beach to its realization cannot
17 have this again. There's no reason why
18 Atlantic Beach can't be the economic cog
19 with the historical preservation of who
20 we are as a black people. And there's
21 no reason why that cannot be again. We
22 will have that again. I am just solid
23 in that. God didn't bring us this far
24 just to leave us in a standstill like
25 this. Hurricanes have come and gone,

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1 and as raggedy as people have described
2 the buildings here they still stood.
3 It's got the most beautiful dunes up and
4 down this Grand Strand. Everybody else
5 got their buildings in the ocean. We
6 haven't deserted that. There's a reason
7 for all of that. Since there's a reason
8 for all of that, it is our
9 responsibility to take the charge and do
10 what must be done. November the 4th, a
11 change did happen, right?

12 COMMISSIONER DAISE: Uh-huh (affirmative
13 response).

14 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Barack Obama became the
15 President of the United States.

16 MS. WARD: November 4th, a change
17 did happen, right?

18 AUDIENCE: Yes.

19 MS. WARD: Okay. Thank you. Now,
20 but it didn't, it's not going to live if
21 we don't do something about it. We have
22 to change our way. We have to be more
23 of that caring persons or people so that
24 our economics where we live. Our
25 educate, first of all, because we don't

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1 know who we are or who we were. We
2 won't know where we going. So we must
3 revisit that. Our children must know
4 that they came from richness. They
5 didn't come from trifling. We must
6 teach that. But we got to learn that
7 ourselves, those of us who decide we
8 want to push it back. We got to bring
9 it up. Entertainment, we could work in
10 Myrtle Beach, but that's all we could
11 do. We had to come, if you wanted to
12 meet somebody, dance on the patios like
13 you talking about, like I know I danced
14 a hole in a lot of them.

15 AUDIENCE: (Laughter.)

16 MS. WARD: If you wanted to do
17 that, you had to come to Atlantic Beach.
18 There's no if, ands about it. You had
19 no choice. And as you look back, living
20 through Atlantic Beach is there and
21 living through the segregates, the
22 desegregation of it, I prefer what we
23 had. You know why? Because we were a
24 people who cared. We made a difference.
25 Our children did not have to struggle.

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1 I feel so sorry for these young people
2 today. We got to give it back. We did
3 a lot of things not knowing why we did
4 them. We came from somewhere. I don't
5 care how many of us deny who we came
6 from. We are African-American people.
7 Why we did a lot of things. Why we like
8 rice. Why you like, enjoy fishing. Why
9 you sing. Why you dance? Where do you
10 think it came from? It's in your genes.
11 And your genes did not come from here.
12 They came from, if you look at the
13 historical tpath, that piece that they
14 did that's in Columbia on the state
15 grounds, you'll see how it relates to
16 us. It comes right from Sierra Leone,
17 right on down this coast. That's why
18 you do what you do because that's who
19 you are. You are people of richness; we
20 got to get back to that. I remember,
21 now see, I just remember those things
22 that we had here on Atlantic Beach, we
23 had economics. We had people with money
24 running out their pockets. That's how
25 fruitful it was. We had entertainment

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1 beyond entertainment. As far as the
2 children, we had an amusement park. I
3 remember over Mr. Wofford's. There was
4 an amusement park and it had water, that
5 water thing with the boats and stuff in
6 it because my folk used to tell me:
7 Don't put your hand in the water 'cause
8 you'll get electrocuted, because it was
9 electrically run. We had all t hat kind
10 of stuff: ferris wheels, we had all of
11 that. So you see, we are a people of
12 means. Let's get back to it. Now,
13 August 14th and 15th, this is our
14 seventh year. Last year we had some
15 real problems, I think economically
16 across this whole world. The gas prices
17 were extremely high. It seems that our
18 participation was not as great. I got
19 to meet the commissioner; that's how
20 come I know Atlantic Beach is going to
21 be a site. Anyway, at the festival last
22 year. Well, this year it's going to be
23 the 14th and 15th of August. We will be
24 here on Friday. We will convert this
25 into a museum. Since we don't have one,

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1 but we can make it. We're going to have
2 a museum here on Friday with the arts
3 and whatever. We'll have artists here
4 doing the portraits and stuff onsite.
5 We've already talked to somebody to do
6 that. We'll have our quiltmakers, and I
7 was told yesterday that ain't gone
8 happen, but I know it is. Anyway, we'll
9 have our quiltmakers because one of our
10 very own, Vermelle Rodrigues, Bunny as
11 we call her, did the quilt for Michelle
12 Obama. So we will have our quiltmakers.
13 We have a young lady, hopefully she'll
14 be back from Wilmington, who does the
15 quilting. They set up last year. And
16 the thing about quilting is, there's a
17 lot of conversation around quilting.
18 It's like being on grandmomma's porch on
19 Sunday, like we all used to do, go sit
20 'round there and talk. We even have
21 that circle because we had some
22 malfunctions, so we developed a family
23 circle. And we talked about our people.
24 That, too, will be, and a lot of other
25 things. But I want to do is do this

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1 plug for you now: Is that please, put on
2 your calendar, August the 14th and the
3 15th. And of course the 15th is
4 Saturday and we'll have a parade. And
5 I've got an idea and I want to talk to
6 the people at the church, at First
7 Baptist about some spiritual service
8 during this whole festival. And I think
9 we can do it. I think we'll have time
10 to do it, because that's our backbone.
11 I don't care; that's our backbone. I
12 don't care what kind of denomination you
13 come from; that's your backbone. So we
14 got to make sure that we understand
15 that. And then it will go all through.
16 And hopefully we will reenact some of
17 that good stuff about we were talking
18 about all them patios. Late on that
19 Saturday evening we'll reenact the Patio
20 scene, hopefully. And we just going to
21 have a good time. It's going to be an
22 educational piece. It's an educational
23 piece. It's an entertainment piece, and
24 it's a free festival. And all you have
25 to do is pay for what you consume. Now

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1 there's one requirement for vendors.
2 Because we are a people of means, and
3 whatever we create, it usually lasts
4 forever and a day, if it has any
5 substance. You must be a maker of your
6 wares. There's no reason why we have to
7 market somebody else's wares. We can be
8 a people of means. So your vendors will
9 be people who can make whatever they
10 sell. It's going to be appreciated.
11 We're going to be appreciative of what
12 their wares are. And hopefully it also
13 will lead. Once again, Atlantic Beach
14 has always been economically minded. So
15 if we bring our vendors here and they
16 can market their wares you see we're
17 still taking care of each other
18 economically. Because once they leave
19 here they can market their wares and
20 you'll be looking for them to purchase
21 whatever. Once again, the economic cog.
22 Atlantic Beach is not going to look like
23 this forever and a day. The economics
24 will be back because the education is
25 going to be, the religious is, no, how

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1 do I want to say it. Your relationship
2 with God is going to be renewed. Then
3 your education's going to be restored.
4 And then your economics will relive
5 again. And what a beautiful place we'll
6 have again.

7 COMMISSIONER DAISE: And the name of this
8 festival is?

9 MS. WARD: The Gullah/Geechee
10 Festival of Atlantic Beach.

11 COMMISSIONER DAISE: And the dates, again,
12 are?

13 MS. WARD: Are August 14th and
14 15th of 2'09.

15 COMMISSIONER DAISE: Thank you so much.

16 AUDIENCE: (Applause.)

17 **CLOSING**

18 COMMISSIONER DAISE: I want to thank
19 everyone for coming out here for all the
20 comments that you gave. Please remember
21 that you have received a comment sheet.
22 If, before you leave, fill that out and
23 turn it into any one of the
24 commissioners and don't let the
25 conversation end. If you have ideas,

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1 feedback that you want to give, on that
2 comment sheet, and I'm looking for it,
3 right, the comment card. There is a
4 website given,
5 parkplanning.NPS.gov/guge. You can
6 write in and you can give your comments
7 there as well. We have refreshments for
8 your enjoyment, and we thank you so much
9 for voicing your comments. Veronica.

10 COMMISSIONER GERALD: We've travelled up and
11 down the Gullah/Geechee country and we
12 haven't found anybody that knows how to
13 do the Hully Gully. And I'm wondering
14 since Atlantic Beach is a dance hub,
15 does anyone in here know how to do the
16 Hully Gully?

17 AUDIENCE: (Chatter.)

18 COMMISSIONER GERALD: Okay. Then Atlantic
19 Beach doesn't know how to do the Hully
20 Gully; is that possible?

21 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Is that what they dance
22 in Atlantic Beach; what you think?

23 AUDIENCE: (Chatter.)

24 COMMISSIONER DAISE: You're thinking of the
25 Hokey Pokey.

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1 MALE AUDIENCE MEMBER: I was doing the Hokey
2 Pokey.

3 COMMISSIONER DAISE: And you turn yourself
4 around.

5 AUDIENCE: (Chatter.)

6 MAYOR PIERCE: Veronica, show us how
7 to do it ---

8 COMMISSIONER DAISE: No, what we're trying
9 to do is find out because it has been
10 referred to in a lot of oral histories.
11 But the dance apparently has been lost.

12 AUDIENCE: (Chatter.)

13 COMMISSIONER GERALD: It's called the Hully
14 Gully.

15 AUDIENCE MEMBER: I'm going to have to
16 ask my daddy, because my daddy used to
17 be on Punk's Patio.

18 AUDIENCE: (Chatter.)

19 COMMISSIONER DAISE: All right.
20 Refreshments await you. Thank you so
21 much for coming.

22 (The meeting concluded at 8:35 p.m.)
23
24
25

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CERTIFICATE

I, Melissa M. Decker, Notary Public in and for the State of South Carolina, do hereby certify that the foregoing proceeding 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 proceeding given at said time;

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 20th day of July, 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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