



History Commission Minutes
Tuesday, March 10, 2026 at 6 pm
James Island Town Hall
1122 Dills Bluff Road, James Island, SC

Present Commissioners: Bill Lyon – Chair, Michael Corbo – Vice Chair, Inez Brown Crouch, Jim Morrisette, Jay Reese
Absent Commissioners: Randy Hilyer
Other Attendees: Mayor Brook Lyon, Julia Drayton Crumblin, Michael Williams, Nathaniel Smalls, Jr. and Victor Williams

I. Call to Order

Chair Bill Lyon called the meeting to order.

II. Changes to / Approval of Agenda - none

III. Approval of Minutes from February 10, 2026

There was a motion and second to approve; approved unanimously.

IV. Public Comments –

There were no public comments.

V. Reports:

a. Town Market Outreach:

There were discussions regarding changing the April Market Booth theme to “Art and Community Center” and the May theme to “Parks”.

b. Historic Markers:

There was no update on markers, and the commission did not act on the wording for the St. James Episcopal Church marker that was included in the meeting packet.

The commission did approve a recommendation to spend up to \$3,000 for the grave marker for the Town’s first Mayor, Joan Sooy along with a minor text correction. Motion and second, unanimously approved.

c. Special Projects:

There was a discussion regarding historical houses on James Island.

VI. Old Business:

a. Sons of Elijah Lodge Marker application issues were discussed. Mr. Williams received feedback on how the marker might be worded.

- b. The Commission again discussed the cleanup of various marker sites.
- c. The Commission was reminded of the upcoming retreat at Mill Point Park on March 14th at 1:00 pm.

VII. New Business:

- a. Mayor Lyon discussed the Commission's budget and reported that she intends to ask for an increase to \$20,000 for the 2026-2027 budget.
- b. The Commission discussed the locating and marking of the grave of Victor's great-great-grandfather, James Pramod in the James Island Presbyterian Cemetery. clean-up of various marker sites

IX. Commissioner Comments:

There were no commissioner comments.

- X. It was noted that the next regular meeting will be on April 14, 2026 at 6 pm at James Island Town Hall.

- XI. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Minutes provided by: Mike Hemmer interpreting notes from HyNote.

Meeting Notes: History Council Commission

Date: Tuesday, March 10th, 2026, at 6:00pm

Attendees: Chairman (Bill Lyon), Mr. Smalls, Mike, Jim, Inez Crouch, Brook Lyon, Micheal Williams, Victor, Jay, other commission members.

I. Decisions Made

- **Meeting Minutes:** Approved unanimously.
- **April Market Theme:** Changed from "Historical Houses" to "Art and Community Center."
- **May Market Theme:** "Parks"
- **James Sewey Marker:** Approved with corrected text and authorized Mayor to order up to \$3,000.
- **Budget Amendment:** Approved for discussion and submission to Town Council next week.

II. Key Points

- **Town Market Outreach (Past):**
 - Good turnout (90 people) at the last market.
 - Crossword puzzle game received limited interest; people were more interested in historical markers.
 - The market has successfully brought the community together.
 - Previous game (January) was more successful due to better crowd dispersion.
- **Historical Markers (Current Status):**
 - **Three Trees:** Under production, expected in next few months.
 - **Pain:** Under production.
 - **St. James:** Text approval pending from St. James. Need to confirm details with Mike.
 - **First Baptist:** Submitted August 25th last year, no update received.
 - **John of Elijah Lodge / Joan Sewey (Mayor):**
 - Marker approved (with corrections to text).
 - Proposed budget: \$2,500, authorized up to \$3,000.
 - A dedication ceremony with food is planned.
 - Proposed text corrections: "The town of James Island gratefully acknowledges the service and dedication of our first Mayor Joan Sewey." (Mayor capitalized, "grateful" corrected).
- **Historical Houses Discussion (Future):**
 - Initially proposed for April market but rejected due to insufficient research time.
 - Potential for future deep dive: Walton Bluff houses (Heyward Culvert, McLeod Plantation, Morselyn House, Esther Ferguson House), Richardson House (Bishop Gadsden White House).
 - Concern about Richardson House's current condition and potential for demolition.
 - The "president's house" (related to USC/MUSC) is now being restored.
 - Jay has permission to enter the "president's house" to explore.
- **Budget Amendments:**
 - Proposed significant increase for Historical Markers (potentially \$20,000).
 - Proposed \$10,000 for Children's Committee.
 - Proposed \$10,000 for Tree Council.
 - Increased budget for Arts Council.
 - Budget workshop scheduled for April 3rd or 4th.
 - **Simeon Pinckney Gravestone:** Discussion about beautifying the site with ground cover/plants.
 - **James Island Presbyterian Cemetery:**
 - Discussion about locating and marking the grave of Victor's great-great-grandfather, James Pramod, whose tombstone was destroyed in a 1911 hurricane.
 - Interest in using X-ray equipment to survey the ground.
 - **First Baptist Tree Planting:** Scheduled for the fourth Sunday in March, after service.
 - **Sons of Elijah Lodge Marker:**
 - Previous application issues: State does not allow individual names as the primary focus of markers.

- Suggestion to have one side about the lodge history and the other side about the foundation/community service, with names included in the text rather than as a heading.
- Suggestion of a secondary plaque on the building to list the 56 men.
- Recommendation to place the marker out of the right-of-way for better appearance and ease of approval.
- The state requires source material for historical claims.
- **Commission Retreat:** Scheduled for March 14th, 1:00 PM (not 6:00 PM). Food will be from Wisconsin Meat and Cheese.
- **Flagpole Area Landscaping:** Meeting planned with Maggie to address this.
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III. Tasks & Responsibilities

Task	Responsible Party(ies)	Deadline/Timeline	Details
Approve minutes	All	Immediately	Completed.
Promote game interest at market	All	Ongoing	Find new game ideas, learn from past experience with crowd flow.
Research historical houses on James Island	All	For May market (after current focus)	Deep dive into Heyward Culvert, McLeod Plantation, Morselyn House, Esther Ferguson House, Richardson House.
Prepare for April Market (Art/Community Center)	All	April Market	Source new, current photos, prepare posters, anticipate questions from attendees.
Prepare for May Market (Parks)	All	May Market	Source photos of blooming parks, design posters.
Coordinate St. James Marker approval	Bill, Mike	Before next meeting	Confirm current status of text approval from St. James.
Order James Sewey Marker	Mayor	Immediately (to avoid price increase/delay)	Max budget \$3,000. Ensure corrected text is used.
Follow-up on Richardson House	Brooks	Ongoing	Get good photos, potentially contact the owner for information.
McLeod Plantation photos	[Unspecified]	Ongoing	Get photos.
Esther Ferguson House tracking	[Unspecified]	Ongoing	Track down current owner/possessor of the house for historical information and access.
Prepare budget amendments	Mike, Mayor	Before Town Council workshop (April 3rd/4th)	Include increased allocations for historical markers, children's committee, tree council, arts council.
Simeon Pinckney Gravestone Plan	[Unspecified]	Before next meeting	Discuss with Mary (family friend) to develop a plan and budget for beautifying the gravestone site. Consider a workday with History Council members.
Coordinate marker cleanup	Coach	Set date (already in touch with kids for task)	Ensure clear parameters for cleanup.
Research James Pramod grave	Victor, Leslie Scott	Ongoing	Work with Leslie Scott to potentially use X-ray equipment to survey the ground at

			James Island Presbyterian Cemetery. Call the person in charge of the cemetery.
Prepare verbiage for First Baptist Tree Marker	[Unspecified]	Immediately (for submission to Columbia)	Develop concise verbiage for the marker to be placed at First Baptist Church.
First Baptist Tree Planting	[Unspecified]	Fourth Sunday in March	Coordinate with Pastor Murray and Julia.
Prepare verbiage for Sons of Elijah Lodge Marker	Victor	By next meeting (April 14th)	Develop verbiage for the marker. One side for lodge history, one side for foundation/community service, with names in text. Include source material (book).
Get marker dimensions/parameters	Mike	By next meeting (April 14th)	Provide average word count and dimensions for existing markers to Victor.
Assist Victor with Sons of Elijah verbiage	Brooks, Mayor, Other members	Before next meeting (April 14th)	Offer assistance in refining the marker text for submission.
Attend Commission Retreat	All	March 14th, 1:00 PM	Discuss ideas for future markets (next year/fall) and other commission objectives.
Meet with Maggie for flagpole landscaping	Mayor	TBD	Plan landscaping for the flagpole area.
Attend next regular meeting	All	April 14th (Second Tuesday of April)	

IV. Follow-up Actions

- **St. James Marker:** Bill and Mike to clarify the text approval status from St. James.
- **Simeon Pinckney Gravestone:** Follow up with Mary regarding a plan for beautification.
- **Sons of Elijah Lodge Marker:** Victor to work on verbiage for the next meeting. Mike to provide marker dimensions and word count. Brooks, Mayor, and other members to assist Victor.
- **Commission Retreat:** Bill to confirm food arrangements.
- **Budget Amendments:** Mayor to present to Town Council at the workshop.
- **Richardson House:** Brooks to contact the owner for photos and information.
- **"President's House" (USC/MUSC):** Jay to explore further and potentially arrange a visit for other members.