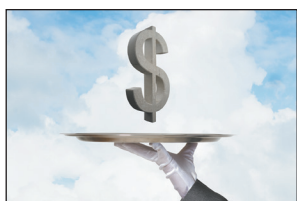




## Blockchain building

Company funds project with cryptocurrency technology. **Page 15**



## Billions served

Food and beverage brings in billions to South Carolina, supporting more than 200,000 jobs. **Page 2**

## Buy now, pay later

South Carolina among states with lowest average credit card debt nationally. **Page 15**

## Electric assets

Duke Energy proposes program to deploy electric infrastructure for transportation. **Page 3**

## INSIDE

Upfront.....	2
SC Biz News Briefs.....	3
Best Advice.....	4
<b>In Focus:</b>	
<b>Financial Services</b> .....	15
<b>List: Credit Unions</b> .....	21
<b>Bonus List:</b>	
<b>Accounting Firms</b> .....	22
At Work.....	25
Hot Properties.....	27
Peer to Peer.....	28
Viewpoint.....	29
Day in the Life.....	30

# 'We just haven't kept up': Report quantifies housing woes

By Patrick Hoff  
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A new report from the Charleston Metro Chamber of Commerce puts data behind what many Lowcountry residents have known for the past few years: Attainable housing is hard to come by in the Charleston region.

Ian Scott, senior vice president of advo-

cacy at the chamber, said the report uses the word "attainability" rather than "affordability" because the government has definitions of what constitutes affordable housing, which Scott said is important but isn't what the chamber is trying to address with this report.

"Really, what we're looking for is everybody to be able to attain housing that meets their needs," Scott said. "If you're working in this region, we think you should be able to

afford a house here, also. That seems like a pretty reasonable goal."

The Charleston metro region is growing by 38 people a day, 10 of whom are born here and 28 who move from elsewhere. Many of the migrants are moving from other Southeastern locales, such as Columbia, Greenville, Spartanburg, Charlotte and Atlanta. This

See HOUSING, Page 6 ►

Photo/Nick Morrish/British Airways



# CALLING ON LONDON

When British Airways launches twice-weekly nonstop service between London and Charleston in April, South Carolina begins its first ever trans-Atlantic commercial flight. The seasonal flights run through October, although customer demand could increase the frequency.

PAGE 10



Photo/File

# Medal of Honor museum to look at other locales

By Patrick Hoff  
phoff@scbiznews.com

When Joe Daniels took over as CEO of the Medal of Honor Museum Foundation, one of his main goals was to get public input on the design of the museum.

"We want to do this right from the first time," he said in a June interview. "So our intention is to listen, and it's going to be reflective of how we're going to build this museum going forward. It's going to be a much more open, transparent, collaborative endeavor with the folks from Charleston, Mount Pleasant, and then the surrounding counties and state."

Six months later, though, his focus, and the foundation's, has shifted gears from finding a design to finding a new location. At the beginning of the month, the foundation's board of directors voted to begin a targeted national search of potential new sites for the museum.

The search will consider market size, proven tourism — both overall and "patriotic" — and community support for U.S. history.

"All I can say is I had zero intention, the organization had zero intention, of coming in and kind of taking the project away because we still think this is such a special place,"

See MEDAL OF HONOR, Page 8 ►

## Building 787s

Take a look behind the scenes at Boeing's assembly facilities in North Charleston.

Page 30







Co-owners Mary Barrineau and Pam Thompson

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### MEDAL OF HONOR, from Page 1 ►

Daniels said at the Oct. 9 meeting of Mount Pleasant Town Council. "It does come down to the numbers."

Daniels said at the meeting the decision came out of conversations he and board members had with several Medal of Honor recipients, who questioned why Mount Pleasant was chosen and how the market could support the number of annual visitors they feel are needed.

He said another factor is that the foundation has been adding new board members to replace those who resigned in February 2017, and those board members have no specific geographic ties.

"They're just sitting there saying, 'We have a fiduciary responsibility to create this museum that is going to be what we call America's next national treasure,'" Daniels said. "And that means we need a lot of people, as many people as possible."

Daniels declined interview requests from the Business Journal but provided written answers to questions via email.

Mount Pleasant Councilman Tom O'Rourke said he was "surprised and disappointed" when he heard about the foundation's decision.

"The subject of the Medal of Honor Museum being here at Patriots Point is almost a 10-year-long discussion and commitment by not only the state, by the Patriots Point Development Authority and the town of Mount Pleasant," he said. "So I just thought that the commitment was there by all the groups."

Daniels said that Mount Pleasant and Charleston are welcome to submit proposals and the foundation would "seriously evaluate it," but O'Rourke said he didn't understand what that meant.

"Anything that we'd put in the bid has already been put on the table by the state, by the Patriots Point Development Authority and by the town," he said. "So I wasn't really sure what that would mean. Does that mean we should go back and try to find more incentives for them?"

O'Rourke also pointed out, as Mayor Will Haynie also has, that the museum is a project spearheaded by the Patriots Point Development Authority and the Medal of Honor Museum Foundation. O'Rourke said he doesn't know what the town's position would be in a proposal.

"I don't see the town actually leading on any kind of a proposal that would be put in, but again, I'm one person; I'm not nine," he said, referring to the number of members on Town Council. "I don't know what we could put together for the foundation to consider that's more than what they already have committed by us as a town and by the Patriots Point Development Authority and by the state."

Ray Chandler, chairman of the authority's board, said he was upset when the foundation decided to look for alternative locations.

"I was very disappointed that they were not committed to Patriots Point and

to Mount Pleasant after Patriots Point Development Authority has spent literally hundreds of hours and a vast amount of dollars in attempting to ensure that this project was an integral part of Patriots Point and Mount Pleasant," he said.

Haynie, who as mayor is a member of the Patriots Point Development Authority board, said the board has stuck with the foundation "through its darkest hours," including board resignations and turnover at the executive level.

"There is a long and rocky history for the museum foundation, and Patriots Point and the town of Mount Pleasant and the state of South Carolina have been steadfast with them through their own, self-generated turmoil," he said. "Four executive directors in five years and mass exodus of their board, dwindling financial resources — all of those things — and then it seems like when it suited them to pull the plug on us, they did so with very little warning and very little collaboration."

Haynie and O'Rourke also pointed out that Town Council was never given the opportunity to vote on whether to allow the museum to be taller than town ordinances allow. Daniels asked the planning committee for a deferment in April but never resubmitted the museum's plans after three public input sessions over the summer.

The only public body to vote on the Medal of Honor Museum plans was Mount Pleasant's planning commission, which is populated by citizens. That panel unanimously rejected the design in January based on its height, which is one of the reasons the foundation went back to the drawing board.

"When we see it, then we can have an opinion," O'Rourke said. "But we haven't been presented with anything yet. Nothing."

### 'The fundamentals are here'

At the Oct. 9 Town Council meeting, most council members expressed confusion over the Medal of Honor Museum Foundation's decision. The body spent more than an hour discussing the museum and hearing from Daniels and Mount Pleasant resident Maj. Gen. James Livingston, a Medal of Honor recipient who was one of the founders of the Medal of Honor Museum Foundation.

"This is the most information I've gotten on the Medal of Honor Museum since it started," Councilman Gary Santos said at one point. "I know there's been a couple of council members that's been involved, some of our folks up here. But the rest of us really had no idea what was going on."

Livingston was one of seven board members who resigned in February 2017 when Mark Updegrave was hired as CEO.

"The board was a pretty dysfunctional outfit when I was a member of the board," he said. "And the reason I left that board is when they hired a CEO for \$400,000 plus benefits. And I didn't think I could look ... a man in the eyes of the

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American people and ask them for money.”

Livingston said the divisive nature of the Medal of Honor Museum over the past six months “is an affront, almost, to the service and sacrifice of the men who went to war and became recipients of the Medal of Honor, and I am terribly disappointed, almost to the point of being emotional about it.”

He said he was confident that the Charleston region has a large enough tourism population to provide the Medal of Honor Museum with patrons.

“The fundamentals are here,” he said. “The beauty of this community’s here, the spirit is here, the history is here. And the kind of people that we all expect to come to the museum will come here. All we have to do is build it, and they will come. Trying to count numbers now is the biggest mistake I ever heard of.”

Haynie and Livingston previously discussed the idea of building the physical museum through a public-private partnership, allowing the foundation to focus on the exhibits, but Haynie said the foundation turned that proposal down.

“I’m not saying there was anything rude or anything condescending, but the polite answer was that they needed to proceed in a way that really gave them total control over everything, and so the message that came back was that they really weren’t that open to a public-private partnership,” he said.

### Moving forward

Haynie asked O’Rourke, who chairs the Town Council finance committee, and Councilwoman Kathy Landing to undertake a fact-finding mission about what the agreement between the Medal of Honor Museum Foundation and Patriots Point Development Authority entails.

“We just need to know what are going to be our commitments going forward, because we’ve put a heavy commitment on the moving of a road, and so that’s our only involvement right now,” O’Rourke said.

Mount Pleasant has committed \$1.5 million to moving Patriots Point Road to create the site where the Medal of Honor Museum had been planned.

“I don’t think there’s much for us to do until Patriots Point and foundation decide where they are,” O’Rourke said. “Then once that’s done, we can move from there as it relates to the road.”

Haynie scoffed when asked what would happen if the foundation decided to locate the museum elsewhere.

“This idea originated in Mount Pleasant, it has always been based in Mount Pleasant, the Medal of Honor Society office is on the Yorktown in Mount Pleasant, and it’s not as if some national museum with \$150 million and all of this reputation looked all around and decided to land in Mount Pleasant,” he said. “This idea generated in Mount Pleasant and the heavy lifting was done in Mount Pleasant. ... To act like this is something that can

summarily be withdrawn from Mount Pleasant because they didn’t get everything they want, just look at that long list I gave you of all the things they have gotten.”

Chandler, chairman of the Patriots Point board, said the foundation’s 99-year land lease for \$1 a year stipulates certain benchmarks that the foundation has to meet, including having all of the money necessary for the museum’s construction in escrow by 2020, “including the money to tear it down if they don’t finish.”

If the benchmarks aren’t met, Chandler said, use of the land reverts back to South Carolina.

Landing, who put together a fact sheet for council members before the October meeting, estimates that over the life of the lease, the value of the waterfront property is “well north of \$250 million.”

Chandler said he doesn’t think a \$100 million museum, which is a conservative estimate of how much the museum would cost to build, has a base large enough to sustain itself in the market.

“I think the concept of the Medal of Honor Museum land site is a wonderful concept, and I think it can be achieved in Mount Pleasant,” he said. “But that board wants it achieved to a scale, and they’ve done that — the Medal of Honor (Museum) Foundation has voted to take a vision to such a scale that it cannot be sustained in this marketplace. So it’s not that the town lost it, and it’s not that Patriots Point Development Authority didn’t do everything personally and financially it could to make it a reality.”

Chandler said given the board’s vision, it makes good business sense to look at other locations.


“That’s not a personality issue, that’s not a taste issue,” he said. “It’s simply reality.”

O’Rourke said the most important aspect is that the museum is meant to honor the recipients of the Medal of Honor.

“I’m very biased, and I think it can be done at Patriots Point better than anywhere else,” he said. “I don’t know of another place in the country that has that much acreage totally devoted to our patriots.” He added that even if such a place exists, “Government wheels move really slow, and at Patriots Point, we’re already around third base on this thing.”

“If they start over in another location, I just hope this thing gets done before people (don’t) get a chance to see it and really be a part of it,” he said.

Haynie agreed, pointing out that should the foundation leave South Carolina, it loses \$5 million that the state has donated. Daniels said in his email that the state’s donation remains untouched and would be returned in full to the state if the foundation were to relocate.

“You just have to wonder what strengths and what resources they think they would be leaving from here with,” Haynie said. 

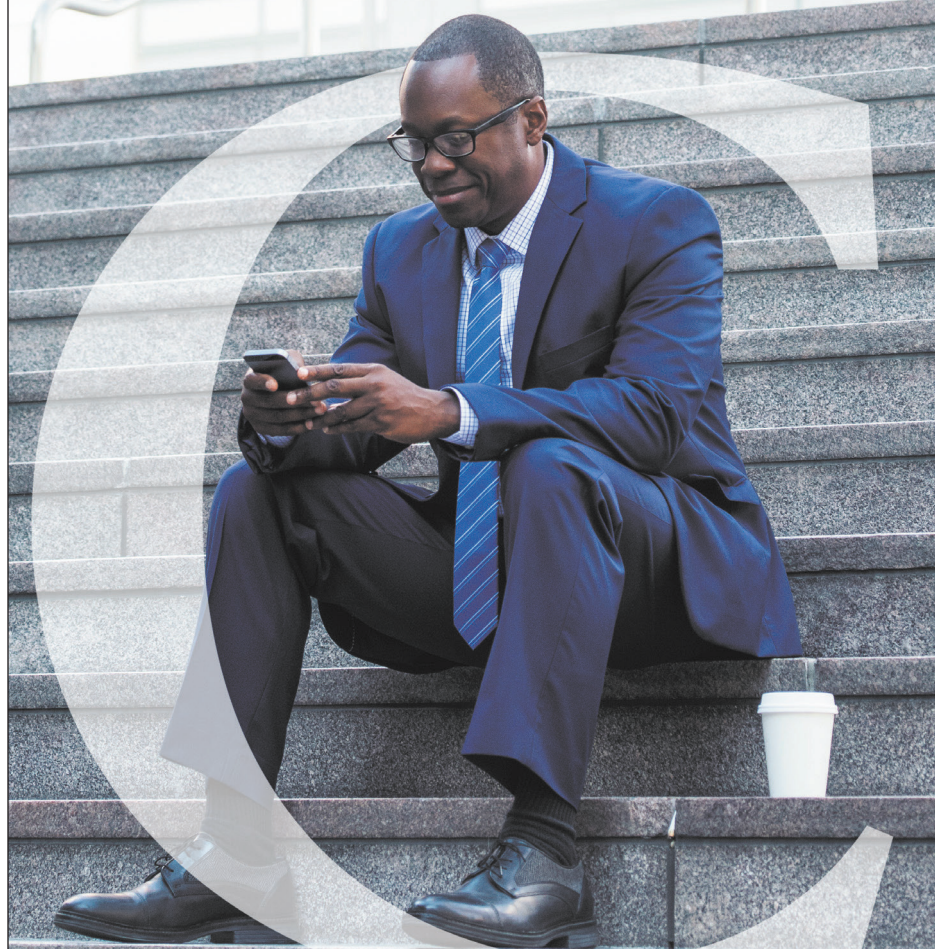
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