

Hays County Historical Commission

Minutes of March 24, 2020

The meeting of the Hays County Historical Commission was held March 24, 2022 at the EmilyAnn Theatre and Gardens in Wimberley. Kate Johnson, chair, called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m. (CST).

Roll Call

A quorum was present at roll call.

Present: Delbert Bassett, Marie Bassett, Eric Beckers, Linda Coker, Robert Frizzell, Jeremy Garrett, Hoot Gibson, Kate Johnson, Lila Knight, Jo Landon, Ryan Patrick Perkins, Rosina Valle, Vanessa Westbrook

Absent: Cynthia Allison, Anthony Davis, Cindy Hunter, Cindy Meyer, Ralph Meyer, Sally Ramirez, Daphne Tenorio, Willie Tenorio,

Citizens Comments

There were no citizens comments

Approval of Minutes

Ryan Patrick Perkins made a motion to accept the minutes from February 24, 2021. The motion was seconded by Linda Coker and passed unanimously.

Confirmation of Officers

Chair Kate Johnson appointed Rosina Valle as Vice-Chairman. Ryan Patrick Perkins moved to confirm the appointment. The motion was seconded by Lila Knight and passed unanimously. Chair Kate Johnson appointed Ralph Meyer as Treasurer. Vanessa Westbrook moved to confirm the appointment. The motion was seconded by Jo Landon and passed unanimously.

Announcements from the Chair

There were no announcements.

Committee Reports

1884 Hays County Jail Restoration Committee

No report. On Sunday March 27th (after 1:00), volunteers will sort through materials stored in the jail and determine what is historic and what is not.

African American Heritage Committee

No report. there is a meeting tentatively scheduled for April 2nd at the Depot (2:30).

Cemetery Committee

Committee Chair Jo Landon reported that Dr. Ben Alexander (K9 cadaver dog training program at the Forensic Anthropology Center at Texas State and the director for FIRST Detection K9) asked to train his dogs at Pitts Cemetery. He was given permission to do this, but was not able to gain entrance due to the two locks on the gate. They did, however, pick up trash that had been dumped at the gate. Dr. Alexander has offered to do a presentation and demonstration for us with his dog Rip in the future.

Sarah Marshall, second grade teacher from Elm Grove Elementary, has a student, Marlie, in the gifted and talented program. Marlie is working on a project about Antioch Cemetery and interviewed Landon via Zoom. As part of her project, she wants to raise money for the Historical Marker.

Certified Local Government Committee

Committee Chair Knight reported on our meeting held in March. The committee is beginning work on a re-survey of the historic buildings in Kyle. The last such survey is almost 30 years old and needs updating. This month, members did a practice run on a few buildings to familiarize everyone with the survey form, photography, and the process of looking and analyzing buildings. They did an outstanding job.

If anyone wants to participate in this re-survey, we can certainly use the help. It's not difficult and everyone who volunteers will receive training. It is also excellent exercise. Jo Landon and Vanessa Westbrook expressed their interest in joining the effort.

Courthouse Museum Committee

Committee Chair Linda Coker reported the Hispanic Heritage Committee is working on a new exhibit. Also, the exhibit of "Faces of Hays County" is being updated by members of the Courthouse Committee.

Coker is looking into organizing a summit for all of the museums in Hays County. The purpose will be to promote each other and support heritage tourism throughout the county. The THC will provide a video from their museum education seminar. The date of the event will be announced in the future.

Hispanic Heritage Committee

Co-Chair Rosina Valle reported on the exhibit being organized at the Courthouse on La Sociedad Mutualista de Cuauhtémoc. She has spoken with the organization and they are very excited and will loan photographs and artifacts. The tentative date for its completion is mid-April.

Judge Becerra will be holding a Cinco de Mayo celebration with the Downtown Heritage Association in May.

The committee is also doing an oral history with Ramona Rodriguez.

Co-Chair Rosina Valle read a letter from Kate Johnson at a recent San Marcos ISD school board meeting regarding the donation of the Southside School to Centro Cultural de San Marcos. The details of the transfer are currently under negotiations. She also suggested the HCHC have a table at the annual Cinco de Mayo celebration at El Centro.

Historical Marker Committee

Committee Chair Bassett reported the committee has been working on narratives submitted for several 2022 regular marker applications. A proposed in-person meeting was cancelled, but work continues by email correspondence.

The William B. Travis League marker has received final approval and should be headed for the foundry. Unfortunately, the marker to be displayed at the Driftwood Heritage Festival on April 10, 2022 will not feature the final version of the text.

The THC is working on incorporating all the comments on the Alba Marker. It currently exceeds the maximum number of words.

The Washington County Historical Commission contacted THC for advice on how to handle the marker process. They were directed to Chair Bassett by THC because our county commission is similar in size to their's and because we might have some helpful information to share. I gave a rundown of how we handle the application process, with helpful tips garnered from experience, in time for their March meeting.

We were contacted by a descendant of Don Felipe Roque de la Portilla (through one of his sons). He was concerned when he drove by and noticed the marker was not in its usual place. I explained the situation and shared with him our successful Request for Review narrative, with which he agreed. I contacted THC to ask that he be included in the edits of the marker text.

Kyle Railroad Depot and Heritage Center Committee

Committee Chair Patrick (Hoot) Gibson reported the number of visitors is picking up after the pandemic. Market Days, sponsored by the City of Kyle, is moving back to the downtown square, so this will increase the number of visitors.

He will need more volunteers during the month of April since there are five Saturdays and the Easter Bunny will be visiting. April 2nd and April 9th are critical days.

Chair Gibson encouraged everyone to contact him if they have ideas for future events at the Depot. He has visited with the New Braunfels Depot and they are still interested in doing the model train exhibit in the near future. This was scheduled in the past, but the pandemic caused the event to be cancelled at the very last moment.

Vanessa Westbrook added that she is now on the Market Days Committee of the City of Kyle. Market Days will be held on the second Saturday of each month between June and September. Each month will have a different theme.

Natural Heritage Committee

No report. Committee Chair Delbert Bassett stated it has been too cold for outside events. But the committee will be active now that spring has arrived. Eric Beckers has continued his popular monthly newsletter, "What's Happenin' on the Hill."

Report on Technology and Website

Vanessa Westbrook reported that the quarterly report on statistics for the website traffic will not be available until April. We now have 955 followers on Facebook.

She has added some contact information for some committees. She invited the chairs to add any information to the website.

In March, the website highlighted women for Women's History Month.

We can no longer sell publications through the website. She will be working on an alternative.

Chair Johnson introduced our host for the evening, Ann Rawlins of the EmilyAnn Theatre and Gardens. She gave an overview of their programs and announced she may have volunteers for our Kyle Railroad Depot and Heritage Center.

Adjourn

Delbert Bassett made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Marie Bassett seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 7:01 p.m. (CST)

Submitted by Lila Knight, Secretary