

Hays County Historical Commission

Minutes of October 27, 2022

The meeting of the Hays County Historical Commission was held October 27, 2022 at the Eckols House and the Driftwood Community Center in Driftwood. Kate Johnson, chair, called the meeting to order at 5:41 p.m. (CST) at the Echols House.

Roll Call

A quorum was present at roll call.

Present: Cynthia Allison, Delbert Bassett, Marie Bassett, Eric Beckers, Anthony Davis, Robert Frizzell, Jeremy Garrett, Hoot Gibson, Kate Johnson, Lila Knight, Jo Landon, Cindy Meyer, Ralph Meyer, Sally Ramirez, Rosina Valle, Vanessa Westbrook

Absent: Linda Coker, Cindy Hunter, Ryan Patrick Perkins, Daphne Tenorio, Willie Tenorio

Citizens Present: Shelby Echols, Pam Gibson, Joe Ramirez, David Valle

Citizens Comments

There were no citizens comments. Commission member Jeremy Garrett thanked the Hays County Historical Commission for sending flowers to his mother's funeral.

Following a presentation on the history of the Eckols House and Driftwood by Shelby Eckols, the Commission reconvened at the Driftwood Community Center at 6:32 p.m. (CST)

Approval of Minutes

The minutes from September 22nd are not yet complete. Lila Knight, secretary, will have them completed along with the October minutes for approval at the next meeting. Delbert Bassett moved to postpone the approval of the minutes. The motion was seconded by Rosina Valle and passed unanimously.

Appointment of Ad Hoc Committee for Applications to the HCHC for 2023-2024

The Chair appointed the following members to an Ad Hoc Committee to seek members for the next two-year term of the Hays County Historical Commission: Marie Bassett, Eric Beckers, Hoot Gibson, Jo Landon, Rosina Valle, Vanessa Westbrook. Hoot Gibson will serve as chair of the committee. Jeremy Garrett has offered to send information to the area newspapers.

Ralph Meyer moved to approve the appointment of the committee. The motion was seconded by Delbert Bassett and passed unanimously.

Committee Reports

1884 Hays County Jail Restoration Committee

No report from the committee.

African American Heritage Committee

Committee Chair Vanessa Westbrook reported the committee will meet December 3 at 2:30 at the Kyle Depot.

Cemetery Committee

Committee Chair Jo Landon reported she is working on the Historic Texas Cemetery for Skyview. At the Antioch Cemetery, a gate has been installed and secured with a combination lock. The County has mowed the addition to the back of the cemetery and the appearance is much improved.

Vanessa and Jo met with Minnie Nelson to discuss the Antioch Community and improvements the developer may be willing to help with.

Certified Local Government Committee

No report from the committee.

Courthouse Museum Committee

No report from the committee.

Hispanic Heritage Committee

Chair Rosina Valle reported that the committee plans on a Dia de los Muertos altar in the courthouse, but she has not been able to find any of the decorations from last year.

She also reported that the chapel for St. John's Catholic Church in San Marcos (located off Guadalupe Street behind the Sonic) is endangered and may be sold. There will be a meeting November 2nd concerning its future. The Hays County Historical Commission may want to pass a resolution in support of saving the building at our next meeting.

Sadly, the building which once housed the Tenorio Grocery has been demolished following its damage by fire some months ago.

Rosina also announced Centro Cultural Hispano de San Marcos will hold its annual gala on October 29th at 6:00 at the San Marcos Conference Center (in the Embassy Hotel).

Historical Marker Committee

Committee Chair Marie Bassett reported the following:

1. Kyle Depot Marker Dedication Ceremony

On October 8th, in coordination with the City of Kyle's "Kyle on Track" celebration, the Kyle Depot historical marker was unveiled. HCHC is grateful to Chris Deichmann of the Hays

County Facility Maintenance Department who installed it (the first of the new two-part markers) apparently with no difficulty.

The planning efforts of Kate Johnson and Hoot Gibson resulted in the ceremony that was a fitting tribute to this very important Recorded Texas Historical Landmark (RTHL). Marie would like to thank Kate for paying tribute to the work of the Historical Marker Committee in her remarks. The ceremony was well attended, with Hays County Commissioner Mark Jones, Mayor Pro Tem Robert Rizo, Rev. Kenneth Bell of AMVETS Post #115, and the Honor Guard of VFW Post 12058 participating. Thanks go to Hoot Gibson, as the Kyle Depot and Heritage Center Committee chair; Historical Marker committee member Vanessa Westbrook for producing the program; Historical Marker Committee member, Cindy Hunter, for baking cookies, embellished with the depot logo, as part of the refreshments; and all HCHC members who supported the event.

2. 2022 Marker Applications

THC has informed us that the Danforth-Kerbow House in Wimberley has been designated as a RTHL. Unfortunately, the Old Mill in San Marcos was not approved. THC suggested that it be resubmitted next year as a subject marker on San Marcos' wool industry in San Marcos.

3. Bunton Branch Bridge Marker

THC was informed via Twitter that the Bunton Branch bridge marker had been damaged. Kate, accompanied by a representative of City of Kyle's Public Works Department, surveyed the damage and concluded it is beyond repair. It has been taken to the public works office for safekeeping, and THC has been notified. It will be necessary to pay for a replacement marker. The damaged marker is currently located at the City of Kyle Public Works Department.

4. Peal-Pleasant Valley Cemetery

The HTC date and name plaque has been cast and is ready for shipment.

5. THC's RTHL Mobile App

THC is collecting photographs for a mobile app of Recorded Texas Historical Landmarks with a deadline of December 1. The marker committee is already aware of this, but if anyone else is interested in participating, contact Marie for full instructions.

6. Driftwood Cemetery

This cemetery has a subject marker but has not been designated a Historic Texas Cemetery. Marie and Jo have submitted an application for this designation.

Kyle Railroad Depot and Heritage Center Committee

Committee Chair Hoot Gibson thanked Marie for doing such a good report on the dedication of the historical marker at the Depot. The ceremony was a great success with good attendance. The City of Kyle made a video of the ceremony and Vanessa will post it to our website.

The committee decorated the Depot on October 15th for the annual Halloween event. Last weekend was the Halloween on the Square event and members brought in people from the Square. Work will commence in November for decorating the Depot for Christmas.

Natural Heritage Committee

Committee Chair Delbert Bassett reported the recent issue of the newsletter of “What’s Happenin on the Hill” by Eric Beckers was completed and is now posted to the website. The newsletter has been published monthly for two years now and is extremely popular. Eric has approximately 250 native plants on his property. The newsletter has documented about 45 of them. He hopes to begin on native grasses soon.

Report on Technology and Website

Vanessa Westbrook reported that there are no quarterly usage reports as of this date. She has found a volunteer, Grant Bowling, who is willing to video record oral histories. Please contact her if anyone is interested.

Announcements from the Chair

The Chair announced the next meeting will be held December 1st on Zoom.

Adjourn

Delbert Bassett made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Hoot Gibson seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 7:10 p.m. (CST)

Submitted by Lila Knight, Secretary