

# Bylaws of the Hays County Historical Commission

## Article I

### *Name*

Section I The name of this organization is the Hays County Historical Commission, hereafter referred to as HCHC. The organization also serves as the Hays County Certified Local Government Commission for Hays County. The address is 111 East San Antonio Street, San Marcos, Texas, 78666.

## Article II

### *Purpose*

Section I: To preserve the historic and cultural resources of Hays County and promote an understanding of the diverse heritage of Hays County.

Section II: To serve as the county-wide organization, as a part of Hays County government, to promote the goals of the Texas Historical Commission, hereafter referred to as THC. The various activities conducted by the HCHC will be consistent with the THC Statewide Preservation Plan in addition to any State Statutes pertaining to historic preservation.

Section III: To actively participate in the Texas Historical Marker Program and the National Register of Historic Places Program.

Section IV: To furnish leadership and cooperation with other heritage associations, historical societies, local preservation groups and individuals interested in the preservation of the county's historic and cultural resources.

Section V: To carry out a continuing survey of the county's historic buildings and historic sites, compile this survey data in a publicly accessible source, and submit all survey information to the THC. The system used to survey the county's historic buildings and historic sites will be in accordance with the standards established by the THC.

Section VI: To encourage interest and participation in preservation activities throughout Hays County by promoting the educational and economic benefits of the preservation of the county's historic and cultural resources.

## Article III

### *Membership*

Section I Members are appointed during odd numbered years by the Hays County Commissioners Court and shall be appointed by January 31. The Chair of the HCHC may select an ad hoc committee to review applications and make recommendations to the Hays County Commissioners Court, but all HCHC members must be confirmed by the Commissioners Court. A maximum of 25 members will be appointed for a two year term, but vacancies may be filled at any time by the Hays County Commissioners Court. The statutory minimum of 7 members must be appointed, all of which must be Hays County residents. Members may be reappointed without limit.

Section II In appointing members, the Hays County Commissioners Court shall seek to maintain a reasonable diversification and balance including, but not limited to, gender, age, ethnicity, and county precinct. Membership should broadly reflect the demographics of Hays County.

Section III Members must have a demonstrated active interest in historic preservation and an understanding of local history and resources.

Section IV Each member is expected to attend meetings regularly. If a member must be absent from a meeting for reasons of business or personal necessity, that member must notify the Secretary in advance of the meeting. Any member who has three unexcused absences within a period of 12 months may be recommended by the HCHC Chair for removal by the Hays County Commissioners Court. In addition, HCHC members must actively participate in a minimum of two committees. Failure to do so may result in a recommendation by the HCHC Chair for removal by the Hays County Commissioners Court.

Section V All HCHC members must reside in Hays County. Our meetings are open to the public and historical marker or cemetery applications may be submitted by anyone. In addition, the HCHC welcomes the participation by the public as docents at any of the museums operated by the HCHC, but they are not voting members of the HCHC and may not hold any office nor be a committee chair. Training will be provided to all docents.

Section VI Certain members may be elected by the HCHC membership as an “ex-officio member” due to their past contributions and expertise to the HCHC. Former Chairs of the full HCHC membership who have served a minimum of two consecutive terms (four years) may automatically become an ex-officio member, if they so choose. Ex-officio members will not vote, will not be counted in establishing a quorum, and will not be counted in the maximum number of members allowed on the HCHC as they serve in an advisory capacity only.

Section VII The Hays County Commissioners Court, or their representative, will submit a list of all members (including addresses) to the THC following their appointments.

## Article IV

### *Officers*

Section I The officers of the HCHC will be: Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, and Parliamentarian. These officers will comprise the HCHC Executive Committee. In addition, the chairs of the Marker Committee, Cemetery Committee and the CLG Committee will be voting members of the Executive Committee. Any ex-officio members may also participate in the HCHC Executive Committee, but they will not be a voting member. The purpose of the Executive Committee is to provide organizational direction and facilitate decision-making between HCHC meetings. Any actions taken by the Executive Committee will be confirmed by the entire HCHC membership.

Section II The HCHC membership may nominate and make a recommendation for the Chair of the HCHC to the Hays County Commissioners Court. The Chair must be formally appointed and confirmed by the Hays County Commissioners Court. All other officers will be appointed by the Chair and confirmed by a majority vote of the HCHC. There are no term limits for serving as an officer and an individual may hold more than one office, with the exception that the vice-chair may not serve concurrently as the chair.

Section III: The Chair will preside over the meetings of the HCHC, including the preparation of the agenda. The Chair will also appoint all committee chairs. The Chair, or their appointee, will be the primary contact with THC, the Hays County Commissioners Court, and other organizations for official business of the HCHC. The Chair, or their appointee, shall have authority in contacting the media for all activities and actions of the HCHC. The Chair, or their appointee, will serve as the Marker Chair and will be the sole contact with THC regarding marker applications. The Chair, or their appointee, also will serve as the Hays County Historic Preservation Officer for the Certified Local Government program. Notification of any appointees for Marker Chair and/or Hays County Historic Preservation Officer will be sent to the Texas Historical Commission by the Chair of the HCHC. The Chair will fulfill all the obligations as defined by the THC.

Section IV: The Vice-Chair will preside at meetings of the HCHC in the event the Chair is absent and will officially represent the HCHC at all related functions upon the request of the Chair.

Section V The Secretary will record the minutes of each monthly meeting of the entire membership of the HCHC. These minutes will be submitted by the Secretary to the THC on a quarterly basis. The Secretary will be responsible for the posting of the agenda with the County Clerk's office and distributing all necessary information to other members of the HCHC, including the agenda. The Secretary will accept all correspondence to the HCHC and forward it to the Chair or to the appropriate Committee Chair; comply with the Public Information Act; and preserve the Commission's permanent records

Section VI The Treasurer will work in cooperation with the Chair to prepare an annual budget and submit all necessary purchase orders and invoices to the Hays County Auditors Office. The Treasurer will work with the County Treasurer and County Auditor to insure compliance with county accounting practices. The HCHC is forbidden from operating a separate bank account outside of Hays County Government.

Section VII The Parliamentarian will ensure the meetings are conducted according to the Texas Open Meetings Act and Robert's Rules of Order, Revised.

Section VIII The Chair will serve as the Hays County Historic Preservation Officer for the Hays County Certified Local Government program, but the Chair may appoint someone else for the position if they meet the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualification Standards. Notification of any change in the person serving as the Hays County Local Preservation Officer will be submitted in writing to the THC.

Section IX The Chair will serve automatically as the Marker Chair of the HCHC unless the Chair submits, in writing, an alternative appointment of Marker Chair to the THC.

## Article V

### *Meetings*

Section I The HCHC will meet the fourth Thursday of the month and the full membership will meet at least 6 times a year. The Chair may change the date of a meeting as necessary. Meetings may take place in the Hays County Courthouse or in other locations around the county. Any member may submit an agenda item to the Chair for consideration of future placement on the agenda.

Section II A simple majority of all members appointed to the HCHC will constitute a quorum authorized to transact business for the organization.

Section III Written minutes will be kept for all HCHC meetings in which all members appointed to the HCHC participate. The minutes will accurately reflect the decisions of the HCHC. All minutes will be permanently maintained and made available for public review upon request.

Section IV All meetings of the full membership of the HCHC appointed by the Commissioners Court will be held in conformance with the Texas Open Meetings Act and will be conducted according to Robert's Rules of Order, Revised. In addition, the Certified Local Government Committee will comply with the Texas Open Meetings Act. Citizens Comments will be received at the beginning of each meeting.

Section V Each member of the HCHC must take the online training on the Open Meetings Act provided by the Office of the Texas Attorney General following the biannual session of the Texas Legislature to incorporate any changes to the law. Each member should review any changes made to the Open Meetings Act following a special legislative session. In addition, the Secretary shall take the the online training on Open Records provided by the Office of the Texas Attorney General.

## Article VI

### *Committees*

Section I The Chair of the HCHC shall appoint all Committee Chairs. There are no term limits for Committee Chairs. The general membership of all committees is open to any member of the HCHC by volunteering to serve. The Chair of any Committee may, if they deem it necessary, determine a maximum number of members of a specific committee. Committees whose membership represents a quorum of the full HCHC membership will comply with the Open Meetings Act. If a member of any committee resigns or joins another committee, they shall notify the Chair and the Secretary, in addition to the chairs of the respective committees.

Section II The Standing Committees are: Executive Committee, Historical Markers Committee, Cemetery Committee, and the Certified Local Government Committee. Any additional committees shall be determined by the Chair, with the exception of the Standing Committees.

Section III A Certified Local Government Committee has been established and approved by THC and the Hays County Commissioners Court in compliance with State and Federal laws. This committee will be composed of at least 5 members who have demonstrated an interest, competence or knowledge in the field of historic preservation. The responsibilities of this committee shall include: (1) Oversee and implement the process of surveying, evaluating, documenting, and protecting properties according to the U.S. Secretary of the Interior Guidelines. (2) Review, at least every two years, the inventory of surveyed properties for any necessary updates or amendments. (3) Review at least every two years all Recorded Texas Historic Landmarks, State Archeological Landmarks and properties listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The appropriate authorities will be notified of any changes in these properties when necessary. (4) Follow the U. S. Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation as the standard for all preservation activities.

The Chair will serve as the Hays County Historic Preservation Officer for the Hays County Certified Local Government program, but the Chair may appoint someone else if they meet the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualification Standards. Notification of any change in the person serving as the Hays County Local Preservation Officer will be submitted in writing to the THC.

Section IV The Markers Committee will be chaired by the HCHC Chair unless the Chair appoints an alternate chair, in writing, to the THC. The Chair of the Marker Committee will be the sole authorized point of contact with the THC regarding all marker applications throughout the marker process. The Chair of the Marker Committee will comply with the THC "Marker Chair Job Description." The members of the Markers Committee will review and comment on all applications for Official State Historical Markers in Hays County in compliance with all THC Marker Policies, including applications for Subject Markers and Recorded Texas Historic Landmarks.

Section V The Chair of the HCHC will appoint the Chair of the Cemetery Committee. The Chair of the Cemetery Committee will be the sole authorized point of contact between the HCHC and the THC Cemetery Program. The members of the Cemetery Committee will submit applications for Historic Texas Cemetery (HTC) designations to the THC, in addition to working with any individuals or organizations that may submit a HTC application directly to the THC. In addition, the Cemetery Committee will supervise the maintenance and repairs to any abandoned cemetery approved as such by the Hays County Commissioners Court. The Cemetery Committee may include any other activities that promote the preservation of historic cemeteries in Hays County.

## Article VII

### *Public Relations and Communications*

Section I All significant projects and events sponsored by the HCHC will be promoted in all forms of media.

Section II The Chair, along with the Chair's appointee(s), shall have the sole authority in contacting the media for all activities and actions of the HCHC. Any additional appointee(s) by the Chair for media contacts will coordinate closely with the Chair. When appropriate, press releases will be issued through the Office of the Hays County Communications Director. Although members of the HCHC may contact the media as an individual citizen, they should not represent the HCHC or Hays County without prior approval.

Section III The HCHC will seek to involve the public in the nomination process for the National Register of Historic Places and will seek to keep the public informed of any important impacts on the county's historic and cultural resources.

## Article VIII

### *Amendments to the Bylaws*

Section I These Bylaws may be amended at a regular or called meeting of the HCHC by a three-fifths (60%) affirmative vote based on the number of all appointed members.

Section II Any amendments to the Bylaws approved by the members of the HCHC must subsequently receive the formal approval of the Hays County Commissioners Court before being considered officially adopted.

Revised March 25, 2021. (previously revised: April 26, 2018)

Approved by the Hays County Commissioners Court April 13, 2021.