

Hays County Historical Commission Minutes of February 24, 2022

The meeting of the Hays County Historical Commission was held February 24, 2022, via Zoom. Kate Johnson, chair, called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m. (CST).

Roll Call

A quorum was present at roll call.

Present: Cynthia Allison, Delbert Bassett, Marie Bassett, Linda Coker, Anthony Davis, Jeremy Garrett, Hoot Gibson, Cindy Hunter, Kate Johnson, Lila Knight, Jo Landon, Cindy Meyer, Ralph Meyer, Ryan Patrick Perkins, Sally Ramirez, Daphne Tenorio, Willie Tenorio, Rosina Valle, Vanessa Westbrook

Absent: Eric Beckers, Robert Frizzell

Guests: Councilman Dex Ellison, Susan Reyna

Citizens Comments

Dex Ellison spoke in favor of the Proclamation for the re-dedication of the Cock-Burleson House. The Secretary, Lila Knight, read two letters of support into the record. The Dunbar Heritage Association submitted comments strongly supporting the Proclamation for the re-dedication of the Cock-Burleson House. In addition, a letter from the Board of the Calaboose African American History Museum expressed their enthusiastic support for the re-dedication of the Cock-Burleson House to broaden our understanding of the historical and cultural contributions of all of Hays County.

Approval of Minutes

Delbert Bassett made a motion to accept the minutes from January 27, 2022. The motion was seconded by Daphne Tenorio and passed unanimously.

Proclamation in Support of the Re-dedication of the C. S. Cock House as the Cock-Burleson House

Daphne Tenorio made a motion to approve the Proclamation. The motion was seconded by Rosina Valle.

Lila Knight read the text of the proposed Proclamation (The Proclamation is attached at the end of the minutes). She offered some additional information on the background for this proclamation, emphasizing the additional research that is now available to document the entire history of the house.

The motion on the Proclamation of the Re-dedication of the Cock-Burleson House passed unanimously.

Committee Reports

1884 Hays County Jail Restoration Committee

Committee Chair Ryan Patrick Perkins reported on the February meeting of the committee which focused on the need for a review of the preservation easement on the property. In addition, the group is working on shorting up the copper roofed carport; seeking an historic archeological assessment of the jail site and a three-dimensional scan of the interior.

African American Heritage Committee

Committee Chair Vanessa Westbrook reported that celebrations occurred throughout the county for Black History Month which has kept everyone very busy. Vanessa, along with Marie and Delbert, attended the THC Real Places Conference. There was a brief discussion on why the term "Black" History Month was used instead of "African American" History Month. [Black History Month is the term used by the national organization which first established the celebratory month].

Cemetery Committee

Committee Chairman Jo Landon has no report this month. She thanked everyone for their words of support for her husband who is doing much better. The committee did complete the resurvey work of inscriptions in the San Vicente Cemetery. Linda Coker added that the DAR (Daughters of the American Revolution) recently approved taking over the maintenance of the Hector Cemetery.

Certified Local Government Committee

Committee Chair Lila Knight reported no new activity since January. Our annual Hays County CLG report will be submitted to the THC tomorrow. Lila commended the members of the CLG Committee for the extensive training they enthusiastically undertook this past year. Each member went above and beyond the minimum training requirements.

Courthouse Museum Committee

Committee Chair Linda Coker reported there has not been much activity during February except for a Valentine's Day events at the Courthouse. Much will be a busy month. The committee is currently working with the Hispanic Heritage Committee on a new exhibit.

Hispanic Heritage Committee

Committee Chair Willie Tenorio reported the committee is working on an exhibit on La Sociedad Mutualista Cuauhtémoc for April. In addition, Rosina Valle is organizing an oral history of Ramona Rodriguez. She needs access to our recording and video machines. Vanessa will get the camera, tripod and microphone to her.

Historical Marker Committee

Committee Chair Marie Bassett reported the regular window for submitting applications for historical markers opens on March 1. All applications must be submitted through the HCHC and require a non-refundable \$100 application fee which is used to fund the Undertold marker program. The marker committee is already working with several prospective candidates. THC has advised the county historical commissions that there will most likely be an increase in the prices for markers. We will not have information on the new prices until the April quarterly meeting of the THC.

She reported no new information is available on the status of pending markers. The Driftwood Historical Conservation Society (DHCS) is planning a Driftwood Heritage Day on April 10th at Vista Brewing south of Driftwood. As THC's William B. Travis League marker will not be available, the society has decided to unveil a replica of the proposed text. Probably because of delays due to current difficulties besetting the foundry, THC does not have too strong an objection, as the DHCS marker cannot easily be confused with an official THC one. The audience can be told to expect the authentic THC marker later in the year.

Committee Chair Bassett announced that "Ranch Hands, Vaqueros, and Stock Raisers" has been selected for a 2021 Undertold marker. The application for the "Old First Baptist Church" marker was not selected.

She recently received a request from the Dr. Joseph Pound Farmstead for corrections for their markers.

No in-person meetings have been held this month but information has been disseminated via email. Several members of the committee attended the THC Real Places conference from February 2 through 4 in downtown Austin. In spite of the disruption due to the freeze, it was a well-run event. It is always a good opportunity to meet interesting people and other CHC members, and to pick up useful information.

Kyle Railroad Depot and Heritage Center Committee

Committee Chair Hoot Gibson reported February was a slow month but several dozen people visited the museum. In addition, the mice problem has been eliminated, with no new mice caught in the last few weeks. Gibson participated in a video the City of Kyle produced for National Pie Day.

Natural Heritage Committee

Committee Chair Delbert Bassett stated that, due to COVID-19 and bad weather, he had nothing to report.

Report on Technology and Website

Vanessa Westbrook reported that we have 940 Facebook followers. The recent post on our January Zoom meeting was viewed by 184 people. During Black History Month, the website highlighted two oral interviews with an easy link (Ollie Giles and Minnie and Winnie Harper). She can do similar links for other committees if they so desire. The newsletters by Eric Beckers of the Natural Heritage Committee continue to be popular on our website.

Adjourn

Delbert Bassett made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Vanessa Westbrook seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 6:52 p.m. (CST)

Submitted by Lila Knight, Secretary

A Proclamation in Support of the Re-dedication of the C. S. Cock House as the
Cock-Burleson House

WHEREAS, Charles S. Cock, who served as the fourth mayor of San Marcos from 1882-1885, constructed a limestone house c. 1867 on lot 5, Block 2 in San Marcos; and

WHEREAS, Charles S. Cock resided in the home until his death in 1897 and subsequently his wife Susana continued to occupy the house until her death in 1906; and

WHEREAS, William (“Doc”) Burleson purchased the house in 1942 and resided there with his family for 28 years, during which time he maintained and preserved the house for future generations; and

WHEREAS, William Burleson received a Recorded Texas Historic Landmark designation for the house from the Texas Historical Commission in 1968; and

WHEREAS, under the rules of the Texas Historical Commission, a historic landmark may not be named for a current owner at the time the designation is granted; and

WHEREAS, the Cock House was acquired by the City of San Marcos in 1970 from William Burleson; and

WHEREAS, William Burleson and his wife, Macon Callahan Burleson, should be recognized for the role they played in the preservation of this iconic home by re-dedicating it as the Cock-Burleson House; and

WHEREAS, such a re-dedication would boost heritage tourism in San Marcos by acknowledging the African American connection to the house, thus making the Cock-Burleson House a destination for many African American tourists; and

WHEREAS, a Cock-Burleson designation would create one of the few house museums in Texas that recognizes both a white and a black family that lived in the same property at different periods, thus revealing a fascinating story deserving to be told.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Hays County Historical Commission hereby proclaim its support for the re-dedication of this architectural and cultural gem as

“The Cock-Burleson House”

And calls upon the citizens of Hays County to help us support and recognize our rich and diverse heritage during Black History Month of 2022