

Hays County Historical Commission

Minutes of February 25, 2021

The meeting of the Hays County Historical Commission was held February 25th virtually on ZOOM. Kate Johnson, chair, called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm (CST).

Roll Call

A quorum was present at roll call.

Present: Cynthia Allison, Delbert Bassett, Marie Bassett, Eric Beckers, Linda Coker, Anthony Davis, Jeremy Garrett, Patrick Gibson (arrived shortly after roll call), Cindy Hunter, Kate Johnson, Lila Knight, Jo Landon, Cindy Meyer, Ralph Meyer, Jennifer Pack, Ryan Patrick Perkins (arrived shortly after roll call), Sally Ramirez, Trish Randow, Daphne Tenorio, Willie Tenorio, Alison Tudor, Rosina Valle, Vanessa Westbrook

Absent: Robert Frizzell

Guests: Anita Miller and Sharon Lippke

Citizens Comments

There were no Citizens Comments.

Approval of Minutes

Allison Tudor made a motion to accept the minutes from February 4, 2021. The motion was seconded by Anthony Davis and passed unanimously.

Announcements

Members can still register for the Texas State Historical Association's annual conference (online). If you are interested in attending, please contact Kate Johnson and she will sign you up.

Officers' Reports

There were no officers' reports. Daphne Tenorio, treasurer, stated she would have a report next month.

Committee Reports

African-American Heritage Committee

Committee_Chair Vanessa Westbrook stated she will hold a committee meeting in March to review the strategic plan.

She discussed all of the events that occurred to celebrate Black History Month. The events were listed on our website. Plans will begin immediately for the Juneteenth celebration.

Cemetery Committee

Committee Chair Jo Landon stated she attended the THC Real Places Conference and is now attending the Texas State Historical Association meeting by reviewing videos ahead of time.

An application for a Historic Texas Cemetery designation has been submitted to THC for the San Vicente Cemetery. Review of the application will take 3 to 4 months. She will be in contact with Cindy Dally on how to proceed with a new inventory of gravestone inscriptions.

Certified Local Government Committee

Committee Chair Lila Knight stated the February 19th meeting was cancelled due to the dramatic weather. The meeting will be rescheduled in March.

Courthouse Committee

Committee Chair Linda Coker announced the museum is still closed due to Covid-19. But Committee members will be refurbishing the rotunda displays. A Courthouse Committee meeting will be held mid-March and she will be contact members regarding the schedule.

Hispanic Heritage Committee

Committee chair, Willie Tenorio had to reschedule the Feb. 17th meeting to Feb. 24th due to the bad weather, lack of power, and internet failures. All members were in attendance at the meeting on the 24th.

Tenorio stated there was a back log of potential projects. The committee compiled a list of 15 topics that need to be researched. The committee will prioritize these at their next meeting.

Historical Marker Committee

Committee Chair Marie Bassett stated she attended the THC Real Places Conference and will begin attending the TSHA annual meeting next week. During the third week of February, local newspapers carried the article on the upcoming March 1 through May 15 window for submitting regular historical marker applications.

She praised Jeremy Garrett who so efficiently and quickly compiled a spreadsheet of all the RTHL properties in Hays County.

As everyone is aware, there have been numerous delays in the marker program for quite some time due to the loss of their foundry contract (took a year to get a new contract), the pandemic, and the tragic tornado at Caddo Mounds. If people contact you regarding a marker application, please let them know it is a very long process. The Texas Historical Commission recommends that marker-dedication ceremonies should not be planned until the marker has been delivered. The sponsor of the William B. Travis League marker (awarded about six months ago) had hoped to have a ceremony in April, but the marker will not be ready by then.

Kyle Railroad Depot and Heritage Center

Committee Chair Trisha Randow explained that the Depot is still closed due to the pandemic. But she was happy to report that the County staff did an outstanding job of wrapping pipes and dripping faucets quickly to winterize the building before the storm hit.

The City is reporting that 96,000 gallons were used, so there is a leak somewhere. Repairs will be made as soon as plumbing supplies are available. The water is currently turned off to the flower beds, but there is water available in the building.

Natural Heritage Committee

Committee Chair Delbert Bassett went off subject by praising Willie Tenorio's Hispanic Committee meeting held yesterday. It was well-organized and there was much enthusiastic participation in the meeting. He admired the positive attitude and spirit of all the members. Chair Bassett stated he has been on the HCHC for ten years and this is the best committee meeting he has ever attended.

Chair Bassett reported that not much had been accomplished during February due to the weather and the pandemic. But committee member Eric Beckers sent out his second edition of the newsletter called "What's Happenin' on the Hill" (which refers to Beacon Hill where he lives). If anyone would like to receive this monthly newsletter, please let me know and we will add you to the list of recipients.

Old County Jail Committee

Chair Kate Johnson reported they had been contacted by Colin Browen who has a You Tube series on the paranormal (with over two million followers). He is currently investigating a number of county jails (Llano, Palestine, Georgetown, and Gonzales). He spent a day at our historic county jail last Saturday. He also did an overview of the roof of the African-American Baptist Church for Kate for a roof inspection. He later returned to the Church and spent time inside of the building, in addition to the San Marcos Cemetery. Committee member Linda Coker reported he was at the jail until almost midnight. The video of the jail will be available in the next month. She will send the link to everyone. (<https://www.youtube.com/c/TheParanormalFilesOfficial-Channel/videos>)

Oral History Committee

Committee Chair Vanessa Westbrook reported that former chair Knight had sent her the list of potential candidates for oral histories. Although the pandemic is ongoing, it might be possible to do a limited number of people who are in our “bubble.” She talked to Willie Tenorio about working with the Hispanic Heritage Committee on doing some oral histories.

Technology and Website

Vanessa Westbrook requested that everyone RSVP to the Zoom meeting by the Wednesday before our meetings. Everyone used to RSVP for meetings to our former secretary Luanne Cullen. But since we are doing Zoom meetings now, everyone should RSVP to Vanessa.

She said that if any committee chairs need to hold a Zoom meeting, they should contact Vanessa. But she requests that the chairs send out the Zoom meeting links. Vanessa asked to try and not do a Zoom meeting the same week as our regularly scheduled monthly meeting of the HCHC.

The website featured Black History this month. In March, it will feature the Historical Marker process. She suggested that she would put together a webinar with Marie if she would like, so people can submit questions as they watch. Marie liked the idea and said she will consider the suggestion.

Linda Coker also suggested that the San Marcos Library might be interested in doing a webinar with them as well.

Adjourn

Chair Johnson thanked everyone for attending and announced the next meeting will be March 25th. Delbert Bassett moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Allison Tudor. The meeting was adjourned at 6:43 pm (CST)