

Hays County Historical Commission

Minutes of June 22, 2023

The meeting of the Hays County Historical Commission was held June 22, 2023 at the Kyle Railroad Depot and Heritage Center, Kyle, Texas. Linda Coker, chair, called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m. (CST).

Roll Call

A quorum was present at roll call.

Present: Cynthia Allison, Frank Arredondo, Delbert Bassett, Marie Bassett, Linda Coker, Anita Collins, Nico Costilla, Anthony Davis, Robert Frizzell, Faye Haskins, Jim Herbert, Katee Johnson (ex-officio), Lila Knight, Jo Landon, Cindy Meyer, Ralph Meyer, Robert Rizo, Rosina Valle

Absent: Jonafa Banbury, Johnny Flores, Irma Gaitan, Jeremy Garrett, Hoot Gibson, Ryan Patrick Perkins, Sally Ramirez, Echo Uribe,

Citizens Present: None

Citizen Comments

There were no Citizen Comments.

Announcements:

- Chair Linda Coke announced the HCHC would be presented with the THC Distinguished Service Award (DSA) on July 11th by Commissioners Court at 9:00. She encouraged everyone to attend. The HCHC has received this award annually for over 20 years.
- The La Sociedad Cuauhtemoc will dedicate their historical Marker July 1st at 10:00 am. This is one of the activities planned for their 81st anniversary celebration. The marker dedication is being organized by the Council for the Indigenous and Tejano Culture. (address: Cuauhtemoc Hall, 1100 Patton St, San Marcos)
- There will be no HCHC meeting in July
- Chair Coker urged members to report their volunteer hours. This is one of the areas the THC considers when awarding the DSA award. She also urged committee chairs to take roll at their meetings and report the information, including the number of meetings held during the year, to the chair.
- Possible future field trips:

- (1) Plum Creek Symposium, August 12, in Lockhart (9:00 to noon). It will focus on the role of women in Caldwell County history. A donation of \$15 is requested, which the HCHC will pay. Lunch is on your own. Linda will email information to everyone.
- (2) The Smithsonian is sponsoring a traveling exhibit on the development of main streets. It will travel to Bandera and Brenham, with dates to be available in the future. Only Main Street towns in Texas with a population of 50,000 were eligible to receive the exhibit.

Approval of Minutes

Ralph Meyer moved to approve the minutes from April 27, 2023. The motion was seconded by Robert Rizo and passed unanimously.

Rosina Valle moved to postpone the minutes from May 25, 2023. The motion was seconded by Jo Landon and passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report

Cynthia Allison reported \$13,555 in general fund; \$149,781 in publications fund (dedicated), and; \$667,683 in the Historic Jail fund (dedicated). Chair Coker reported that she is getting bids for exhibit cases for the Depot and Courthouse museums.

Delbert Bassett moved to accept the treasurer's report. The motion was seconded by Ralph Meyer and passed unanimously.

Marker Committee

Chair Linda Coker read the Marker Committee report from Jeremy Garret, who is out of town visiting family. Since the last meeting, the marker committee reviewed the first drafts of three marker inscriptions and submitted our edits to the THC. All of these inscriptions were in rough shape. Relevant historical information was excluded, the inscriptions were riddled with errors and bad syntax, and there was an overall disregard of the historical information included in markers' original narratives. These inscriptions did not even adhere to the THC's own style & content guide!

We requested a significant rewrite of the marker for the Vaqueros, Ranch Hands & Stock Raisers of Hays County. As it is, the text is a rudimentary definition of the subject, with little insight into our local history.

We likewise requested significant additions and revisions to the text of the San Vicente Cemetery marker. Specifically, we asked that the marker highlight the fact that cemetery was established during segregation, when Mexican-Americans in the area had no other cemetery to bury their loved ones. We also requested that the THC include mention that more than several generations of the Blas Mendez family have served as custodians of the cemetery.

The last marker reviewed was for the Danforth-Kerbow House in Wimberley. This is one of the smaller markers we've worked with. Our focus here was to whittle down redundancies and

erroneous information, so that the next draft could speak more to Susie B. Danorth, who was entirely left out of the text. For an inscription that bears her name, this first draft was very sloppy work.

We're waiting to review two more inscriptions this spring: 108 S. Nance St. in Kyle and the Max E. Schwietz Homestead in Uhland.

I want to thank the marker committee for all the hard work they've put into these edits. We'll be happy to get these inscription edits behind us so we can focus on the upcoming marker application windows this fall and next spring.

This past Tuesday, Commissioners Court read a Proclamation to formally recognize the Texas Historical Marker for La Sociedad Mutualista Cuauhtemoc. This is a marker the HCHC and the Board of Cuauhtemoc Hall worked very hard on, so I was a bit confused that neither the HCHC nor the Cuauhtemoc Board were thanked for our efforts with this marker. The proclamation read that the Council for the Indigenous and Tejano Community was responsible for the marker, which is a bit strange, considering the CITC did not exist in 2019, when the HCHC's marker application was approved.

I'm not too familiar with how proclamations work. Maybe there wasn't room to thank us. So let me give it a try, with what I feel was left out:

Whereas, HCHC member Irma Gaitan first put forth the idea of a historical marker for La Sociedad Mutualista Cuauhtemoc.

Whereas, former HCHC member and head of the Tejano Committee Gina Alba Rogers assisted in the research and writing of a narrative for Cuatemoc Hall.

Delbert noted three misspellings in the Proclamation.

Whereas, Marie Bassett, then head of the Historical Marker Committee, was the sole liaison between the Texas Historical Commission and the board of Cuauhtemoc Hall, and lent her valuable expertise to the writing of the narrative for this marker, shepherding the application from its infancy to completion.

Whereas, Marie Bassett and the Historical Marker Committee, in conjunction with the board of Cuahatemoc Hall, diligently edited several drafts of the marker inscription for La Sociedad Mutualista Cuauhtemoc, ensuring that the soon-to-be-unveiled marker is polished, professional history of this historic place.

Gotta give thanks where thanks is due. Irma, what an excellent idea, to get a marker for Cuauhtemoc Hall. And Marie Bassett, our former marker chair, I never realized how much work the position of marker chair entails. I appreciate all the countless hours spent on this marker's narrative, application, and edits, not to mention all the work you did as the liaison between the THC and the board of Cuauhtemoc Hall.

Irma and Marie deserve a round of applause. [audience applauds]

Marie and Jo Landon recently participated in a Zoom meeting to discuss a future historical marker for the Wallace Mountain Cemetery organized by Zebulon Long, a great-great-great-grandson of Dr. Joseph Pound. He and others have recently formed a cemetery association.

Cemetery Committee

Cemetery Committee Chair Jo Landon reported she had correspondence with Edward Coronado regarding how his great grandfather died (earliest grave in the Coronado Cemetery).

She also participated in the Zoom meeting for a future historical marker for the Wallace Mountain Cemetery.

Chair Coker reported she was recently contacted by Anna Juarez regarding damage to the fence around San Pedro Cemetery. She requested the HCHC make a site visit to view the damage.

Robert Rizo mentioned his family had organized a clean-up of San Vicente Cemetery with Eagle scouts about ten years ago. Last year, Dr. Michelle Cohen organized another clean-up. He believes the county could help with the maintenance. Chair Coker has requested an additional \$2,000 in the next budget to add more cemeteries to the maintenance list.

Information Technology and Social Media Report

Anthony Davis reported the HCHC website received 1,958 visits and 18,164 hits. This decrease is likely due to the school year ending and not as many of the recent edits added to the website. The HCHC Facebook page had no new posts this month, with average daily views of 4.3. The Train Depot Facebook page concerned the Kyle Arts Commission art project held at the Depot with 126 users. The sharing of the Free Press article reporting on the event reached 90 users. Our new You Tube channel received 71 views for a total of 1112 hours of viewing time. The most viewed videos were Captain Jack (30 views), Larger than Life (16 views), and the 101 Ranch (7 views). Anthony encouraged all the members to “subscribe” to the channel and “like” the videos they view.

CLG Committee

There was no report, but a number of members attended the THC/TxDOT regional CLG training June 12th in San Marcos

African American Committee

There was no report.

Hispanic Committee

Committee Chair Frank Arredondo reported there have been no committee meetings. The committee will meet in the future, but no date was given. His additional comment was drowned out by a passing train.

Depot Committee

Anthony Davis reported 34 visitors during June with the busiest day being the Kyle’s Juneteenth Market Days on June 10th in the Downtown Park.

Historic Jail Restoration Committee

No report. There will be a meeting of the committee on July 12th at 6:00 at the Courthouse.

Lila Knight moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Anthony Davis and passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:04 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Lila Knight, secretary