

Hays County Historical Commission

Minutes of October 28, 2021

The meeting of the Hays County Historical Commission was held October 28th at the Memorial Miniature Golf and WW II Museum located at 1710 N. FM 1626, just outside of Buda, Texas. Kate Johnson, chair, called the meeting to order at 5:50 pm (CST).

Roll Call

A quorum was present at roll call.

Present: Cynthia Allison, Delbert Bassett, Marie Bassett, Eric Beckers, Linda Coker, Anthony Davis, Robert Frizzell, Jeremy Garrett, Hoot Gibson, Cindy Hunter, Kate Johnson, Lila Knight, Jo Landon, Cindy Meyer, Ralph Meyer, Ryan Patrick Perkins, Sally Ramirez, Trisha Randow, Daphne Tenorio, Rosina Valle

Absent: Jenny Pack, Willie Tenorio, Alison Tudor, Vanessa Westbrook

Citizens attending: Karen Davis, Michele Frazier, Brian and Rachel McKinney, Joe Ramirez, David Valle.

Citizens Comments

There were no citizens comments.

Kate Johnson, chair, introduced Brian and Rachel McKinney, owners of the Memorial Miniature Golf and WW II Museum. They described how they established the museum and miniature golf course and their future plans.

The members took a break from the meeting to play a round of miniature golf. The meeting began again at approximately 7:50 pm (CST). Chair Johnson awarded first through fourth place winners of the golf tournament to Hoot Gibson (1st place), Eric Beckers (2nd place), Karen Davis (3rd place) and Ryan Patrick Perkins (4th place). Several members commented on the difficulty of the course.

Secretary Lila Knight had to leave the meeting and deputized Anthony Davis to record the meeting in her absence.

Approval of Minutes

Ryan Patrick Perkins made a motion to accept the minutes from September 23, 2021. The motion was seconded by Marie Bassett and passed unanimously.

Action on a Resolution

A Resolution in Support of the Preservation of the Southside School (Recorded Texas Historic Landmark) for Continued Use by Centro Cultural Hispano de San Marcos was introduced and read by Anthony Davis for consideration by the Hays County Historical Commission. Ryan Patrick Perkins made a motion to approve the Resolution. The motion was seconded by Hoot Gibson and passed unanimously. (The Resolution is attached to these minutes).

Announcements

Chair Johnson made the following announcements:

She encouraged everyone to attend the public meeting on November 1st at 7:00 pm at the historic Ulysses Cephas House in San Marcos. This meeting will explain the efforts of the San Marcos Historic Preservation Commission to place the Dunbar Historic District on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). Ryan Patrick Perkins added, if successfully listed on the NRHP, it will be the first African American historic district in both San Marcos and Hays County.

Chair Johnson also reminded everyone that the THC Real Places conference will take place February 2-4 in Austin. The registration fee for HCHC members will be paid, but not food and lodging. She urged everyone to contact her as soon as possible if they will be attending.

There will be no meeting in November as the 4th Thursday will be Thanksgiving. We will hold our annual Christmas party in December.

Treasurer's Report

Daphne Tenorio will email the approved budget to everyone.

Committee Reports

1884 Hays County Jail Restoration Committee

Committee Chair Ryan Patrick Perkins is gathering all the necessary information to move forward on the interior restoration. He will be meeting with the county's general council soon. The next committee meeting will be Wednesday, November 10th at 6:00 at the Calaboose African American History Museum.

African American Heritage Committee

There was no report as chair Vanessa Westbrook was absent.

Cemetery Committee

Committee Chair Jo Landon reported that Hays County is now maintaining the Pitts Cemetery. In addition, all of the gravestones in the San Vicente Cemetery have been transcribed. These will be input into a spreadsheet, including the section of the cemetery for easier location. Lila Knight has offered to help with this process and additional volunteers are needed. Daphne

Tenorio responded she would help. When completed, this information will be placed on the HCHC website.

Certified Local Government Committee

Committee Chair Lila Knight had to leave the meeting at 8:00 pm before giving her report.

Courthouse Museum Committee

Committee Chair Linda Coker announced the Christmas Lighting of the Courthouse will be held on December 2nd at 5:00 pm. There will be music and Brown Santa will be there. They are asking for people to bring an unwrapped present or make a donation.

Main Street has been having concerts on the Courthouse grounds every Thursday. These are very well attended with an average of 200 to 300 people each time. The last one will be on November 5th.

The Dia de los Muertos (Day of the Dead) Altar in the rotunda of the Courthouse has been a humongous success with people adding their own photos and objects to it. This should become an annual event, but we need a larger table. The American GI Forum exhibit in the rotunda is also very popular.

Hispanic Heritage Committee

Rosina Valle gave the report in the absence of chair Willie Tenorio. The committee has been involved with the Dia de los Muertos Altar and the GI Forum exhibit.

The committee will be holding a meeting in November. Their primary goal is to produce a second volume to Sueños y recuerdos del pasado, a history of the Mexican American Community in San Marcos, which included oral histories. This needs to be expanded to include all of Hays County with additional oral histories. Ryan suggested it also be available in a digital format.

Historical Marker Committee

Committee Chair Marie Bassett reported that the Undertold Marker Window is open until November 15. Reminders were sent to possible applicants who had contacted her in the past. She recently received an interest in a marker for “The Beat,” the former African American commercial district in San Marcos, from Dr. Elvin Holt of the Calaboose African American History Museum.

The marker process is moving extremely slowly at the moment due to many complications including the pandemic and the new foundry. The following are updates from THC:

Kyle Depot — the marker was approved at THC’s quarterly meeting in July. The order was then sent to the foundry. In mid-October a final proof had been received by THC. Once the proof is returned to the foundry, expected delivery time is three to four months.

La Sociedad Mutualista Cuauhtémoc - according to THC, this marker is up for approval at this week’s quarterly meeting of the THC (Oct 28-29).

William B. Travis League - Errors were found in the marker text that needed to be corrected, so this has delayed its progress. The earliest it would be approved by THC at their quarterly meeting is in January.

Kyle Railroad Depot and Heritage Center Committee

Before Trisha Randow made her committee report, Chair Johnson announced that this will be Trisha's last meeting as she is moving soon. She expressed HCHC's deep gratitude to and affection for Trisha and presented her with a plaque celebrating her successful efforts as the first chair to serve the Kyle Railroad Depot and Heritage Center; a framed photograph of the depot; a bouquet of flowers; and a plant for her new home. A hearty round of applause followed. The HCHC will be sad to see her depart Hays County.

Committee Chair Randow reported October was a wonderful month at the Depot. We opened the Depot for National Night out on October 5th, organized by Hoot Gibson. The Kyle Police Department served hot dogs at the VFW and then sent folks over to the Depot for dessert and tours. Kate had beautifully decorated cookies and "bundtinis" made for the occasion. We had a lot of visitors come through the Depot that evening.

The City of Kyle held their Founder's Day Parade on October 9th. The additional traffic from the parade drew more visitors to the Depot.

Last Saturday, October 23rd was the City of Kyle's Trick or Treat on Center Street. It was held from 9am to 12pm. Burlison Street was blocked off from Miller Street to Center Street for the event. Lila, Cindy Meyer, Jo Landon, Anthony, Hoot and I gave out candy to trick or treaters until 2pm. It is such fun to see the kids come through in their costumes.

On November 13th the City of Kyle, along with the VFW and AMVETS will host a Veterans Day Parade. Again, we expect to have additional traffic through the Depot because of the parade.

On November 30th, we will be decorating the Depot for Christmas. The guys from the County will come on the 29th to get the Christmas decorations down from the attic for us and put up the trees. We will be decorating the trees and putting up the lights and garland on the railings. All volunteers are welcome.

December 11th Mr. and Mrs. Santa will come to the Depot for pictures with the children. The Lehman High School Drama class will be unavailable for the Polar Express this year, so another event will be planned. Trisha urged everyone to get the word out on the December 11th event. Once again, Willie Tenorio will be Santa Claus with his wife Daphne assisting as Mrs. Claus.

We are in final negotiations in acquiring an authentic pot belly stove from a Missouri Pacific caboose to install in our own.

Natural Heritage Committee

Committee Chair Delbert Bassett reported Eric Beckers produced another issue of his popular monthly newsletter, "What's Happenin' on the Hill" which is entitled "A Different Hot" for October. These are posted on our website for all to enjoy.

The committee will make another attempt to take a road trip to the S.M. Tracy Herbarium during the first couple weeks of November. We may also attempt to visit a segment of original tract of prairie near Kyle that has never been under a plow.

Report on Technology and Website

Vanessa Westbrook was absent, but texted Chair Johnson the following information:

There were 14,550 visitors to the HCHC website for the second and third quarters of the year. The information on the website is current to date, including agendas, minutes, edited descriptions of cemeteries, and newsletters provided by the Natural Heritage Committee. Committee chairs are encouraged to contact Vanessa if they need anything updated or added to the website.

The Facebook has 825 followers and the recent post on the Day of the Dead exhibit in the Courthouse Rotunda received 484 views.

Adjourn

Delbert Bassett made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Jo Landon seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:32 pm (CST)

Submitted by Lila Knight, Secretary, with the assistance of Anthony Davis.

Resolution in Support of the Preservation of the Southside School for Continued Use by Centro Cultural Hispano de San Marcos

WHEREAS, the Southside School in San Marcos is an important monument to the struggle to end segregation of the schools in San Marcos, and the significance of this building is recognized by the Texas Historical Commission with its designation as a Recorded Texas Historic Landmark in 2011, and;

WHEREAS, the first “Mexican” school was established in 1901 and occupied several substandard buildings at 211 Lee Street until a bond was passed in 1948 to build a new school in the community, known as Southside School. Following desegregation in 1965 this school, located in the heart of the Mexican American neighborhoods, was renamed Bonham Elementary and;

WHEREAS, the architect for the Southside School, Harvey P. Smith, was a noted San Antonio architect whose work included the restoration of many of the San Antonio Missions, the design of the San Antonio Riverwalk, and many other important buildings in Texas, and;

WHEREAS, Southside School contributed to the education of the people of the community through the efforts of courageous teachers, including Hermelinda Murillo, Felipe Reyna, Bert Hernandez, Petra Nicola, Solia Rodriguez, and;

WHEREAS, Southside School was one of the first schools in Texas to offer bilingual education beginning in 1969 through the efforts of Hispanic school board members including Celestino Mendez, Augustine Lucio, Eleazar Salinas, and Ofelia Vasquez, and;

WHEREAS, Centro Cultural Hispano de San Marcos was incorporated as a non-profit in 2006 and in 2010 opened its doors in the Southside School to preserve and celebrate Hispanic culture and traditions by offering numerous educational opportunities in the fields of the visual arts, theater, dance, literature, music and the culinary arts, including the Ofelia Vasquez Mexican American Cultural Museum and the Marcos and Fidela Garza Library, and;

WHEREAS, the founders of Centro Cultural Hispano de San Marcos - Ofelia Vasquez-Philo, Gloria Salazar, Lupe Costilla, Dr. Rosina Ruiz Valle, and Margie Villalpando - represent the leaders in the preservation of our cultural heritage and the Hays County Historical Commission is proud to have two of the founders serve on our commission, and;

WHEREAS, Centro Cultural Hispano de San Marcos celebrated its 10th Anniversary at Southside School in 2020, celebrating its many achievements over the decade and is an established institution in our community;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED: that the Hays County Historical Commission urges the continued preservation of this school building by the San Marcos Independent School District and its continued occupation by Centro Cultural Hispano de San Marcos as an important educational center for the preservation of Hispanic Culture in San Marcos.