

Regular Meeting
Jefferson County Historical Commission (JCHC)
Wednesday, January 20, 2021, at Noon
Agriculture Auditorium, 1225 Pearl Street, Suite 200,
Beaumont, TX 77701

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Call to Order – Chair Theresa Goodness called the meeting to order. Attending were Theresa Goodness, Bruce A. Hamilton, Brenda Jackson, Steven P. Lewis, Doug Porter, Paul Prosperie, Lynn Simon, and Don Smart. It was determined a Quorum was met. There were no citizens' communication. No guests were in attendance.

ACTION ITEMS

Secretary's Report – Jen Trenbeath was absent. Chair Goodness asked if there were any additions or corrections to the November 18, 2020 Minutes which had been emailed to members for their review. There was one correction, after which Steven Lewis made a motion to accept the corrected Minutes. The motion was seconded by Don Smart and passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report – Linda McMahan was absent but had forwarded a report to Chair Goodness. It was reported there had not been any changes since the November 18th meeting. Out of the 2020 - 2021 Budget of \$11,700, only \$130 has been spent with a remaining Budget of \$11,570. Several memberships / subscriptions will be coming up for renewal in the next month.

Chair's Report – Chair Theresa Goodness presented goals for the Jefferson County Historical Commission. After time for discussion, the 2021 Goals listed below were adopted by the JCHC at this meeting.

- Proposed Goal - Conduct a survey of all Jefferson County historical markers to ascertain whether they are missing or damaged from Hurricanes Laura and Delta, and whether restoration is warranted for any of them.
- Proposed Goal – Work closely with historical resources firm to conduct an historic resources survey of Jefferson County under the HIM-ESHPF sub-grant from THC.
- Proposed Goal - Design JCHC calendar for 2022, highlighting photographs and important historical events from Jefferson County's history. The process takes time to

complete, and ideally the project should be ready to send to the printer by October 1st to allow time for proofing and printing.

- Proposed Goal – Develop a public outreach via podcasts and video on government and other media channels to share historical information with Jefferson County residents.
- Proposed Goal – Research possibility of displaying a military history exhibit at the City of Beaumont's Fourth of July celebration.

Committee Reports

Historical Preservation

Early African-American Schools and Educators – Lynn Simon - No report was submitted to be included in the Minutes.

Beaumont Historical Landmark Commission – Theresa Goodness reported the Beaumont Landmark Commission met once since her November 2020 report. On December 14, 2020, the Beaumont Landmark Commission met to review the following Request for a Certificate of Appropriateness:

PZ2020 - 156: Request for a Certificate of Appropriateness to replace siding with 6" siding, reduce the number of windows on the front and side from eight (8) to four (4) and change the style of the windows. Applicant: Nguyen Thanh Van. Location: 2275 Angelina Street. The request was approved as to the siding and windows on the sides of the house, but denied as to the replacement windows on the front elevation. The front windows will have to be returned to the four (4) over one style window in the dimensions seen in the original design on the home.

Port Arthur Landmark Commission – Les McMahan was absent but sent word that the Port Arthur Landmark Commission had not met thus there was nothing new to report.

Tyrrell Historical Library – Steven Lewis reported the library is open Monday through Friday from 9 am to 6 pm. A large collection of 100 boxes of genealogy books has been donated to the library by Jackie Barnes of Humble, Texas. States covered are Texas, Tennessee, South Carolina, Florida, et al. The staff is rearranging the book shelves in the Genealogy room for the new additions. Other donations are from Sally Keith, the Beaumont Heritage Society, Arrington-Becker, and more papers for the Gordon Baxter collection.

Photos of Historic Buildings - Steven Lewis reported every Sunday he makes a photo run to Tyrrell Park to check on the progress on the CCC building. The installation of new roofing timbers is complete and the decking and membrane is done. This work is on the east and west wings of the building. There is no activity on the entrance part of the building or the "courtyard." Steven has continued to document new FEMA home construction. Since the last meeting, the new house on Steven's street has been completed and he has seen two more under construction, one on Lavaca Street and one on Hollywood Street. He found a completed house on Neches Street that has stainless steel screws on the window frames for attaching hurricane shutters. So far, Steven has found 40 new homes on pilings.

The 120th anniversary of the Lucas Gusher was held at Gladys City on January 9, 2021. The Beaumont Camera Club sponsors the Edgerton Photographic Studio at the site. Steven had an exhibit of old cameras to show to visitors. He also took 134 photographs of the activities, including JCHC members Don Smart, Doug Porter and former member Mike McGreevy shooting / being shot in reenactments.

Steven saw a posting on Facebook of the demolition of a beloved store at 1377 Laurel. On January 12, 2021, Steven went to the location and found there was no activity but the back of the building had been razed. The last use of the building was as a beauty shop and arcade. Inside the building were hair dryers and video games. He went back on January 15, 2021 and only the slab and scattered debris were left. Steven has not thoroughly researched the location but the 1935-36 Beaumont City Directory list 1377 Laurel as the Joseph Giardina Grocery. In the 1981 and 1988 directories, it was listed as the Laurel Street Grocery with Felix Read as the owner in 1981.

Texas Energy Museum Project: After finishing the unmounted photographs, Ryan Smith provided Steven a dozen RPPC. He returned the postcards and all the documentation to Ryan on January 6, 2021. The total scanned items were 2,444.

Steven's brother David, a Lamar graduate and mycologist, had donated many photographs to the Special Collections at the University. Among the items to be donated were slides of a trip to Baja, California. Steven scanned 296 slides for his donation.

Sam Houston State Library – Don Smart – No report was submitted to be included in the Minutes.

Tyrrell Park Coalition – Bruce A. Hamilton – No report was submitted to be included in the Minutes on the status of plans by the City of Beaumont to

renovate the Tyrrell Park Community Building built by the Civilian Conservation Corps.

Caroline Gilbert Hincees House Restoration – Bruce A. Hamilton – No report was submitted to be included in the Minutes on the status of restoration of the historic home.

Military History – Kate Hambright was absent. No report was submitted to be included in the Minutes.

Military History – Doug Porter – No report was submitted to be included in the Minutes.

Historical Markers and Research – Les McMahan was absent but sent word there was nothing new to report on markers or dedications. The list of Jefferson County historical markers is being updated and more information will be forthcoming at the March meeting on a new marker survey.

History Appreciation:

Courthouse Mini-Museum Exhibits – Linda McMahan sent word that several people had been contacted about putting in a new exhibit but no feedback was received.

JCHC Website and Social Media – Jean Trenbeath was absent – No report was submitted to be included in the Minutes.

Spindletop Gladys City Boomtown Museum. – Don Smart reported the Museum is very optimistic about 2021. This is the 120th Anniversary and the event was attended by nearly 500 people. This year more money than ever before was made in the store for an anniversary event. The weather was great. This was the first time this event was sponsored, and ExxonMobil really enjoyed the event.

The Museum has restructured its Advisory Council. Four new committees have been added and they have already started to meet. Great things are being planned which you will hear more about later. We are raising \$300,000 to get new siding for the buildings; and with grants and fundraising, we are optimistic we will raise that this year.

Coastal History – Jay Camp was absent and no report was submitted to be included in the Minutes.

Archeology Committee – Brenda Jackson reported the Texas Archeological Society is offering three academy sessions in 2021. The sessions offer opportunities to learn skills for fieldwork, analysis and reporting. Each will be taught by experts in the field. The topics are titled Ceramics Academy: The Stories Found in Pottery, Archeology 101 Academy and Archeobotany Academy.

- The Ceramics Academy is scheduled for February 20-21, 2021 via Zoom. Registration deadline is February 6, 2021.
- Archeology 101 will be held March 13-14, 2021. There will be two days of virtual learning via Zoom and ½ day on site instruction at San Felipe de Austin.
- The Archeobotany Academy is scheduled for April 24-25, 2021 via Zoom. Registration deadline is April 10.

The cost for each is TAS membership plus \$200. Full details can be found at <https://www.txarch.org/tas-academics>.

Cemetery Committee – Paul Prosperie - No report was submitted to be included in the Minutes.

Courthouse and Sub-Courthouse Oversight Committee – Linda McMahan – No report was submitted to be included in the Minutes.

Certified Local Government (CLG) – Theresa Goodness reported on the status of the Historic Resources Survey and Preservation Plan project to be conducted under the National Park Service Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria Emergency Supplemental Historic Preservation Fund Grant.

- Commissioner's Court has authorized the Purchasing Agent to enter into contract negotiations with the highest scoring firm as determined by the Evaluation Committee.
- A draft contract has been submitted to THC for review and their comments forwarded to the firm for revisions of the draft.
- Once contract negotiations are complete, the county attorney must review the contract before it may be placed on the court's agenda for approval.

Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned. The next meeting will be Wednesday, March 10, 2021 at noon in the Agriculture Auditorium, 1225 Pearl Street, Suite 200, Beaumont, TX 77701.