



JEFFERSON COUNTY

Historical Commission

Theresa Goodness
Chair

Linda McMahan
Secretary/Treasurer and Coordinator
Brenda Jackson

Leslie McMahan
1st Vice-Chairman
Paul Prosperie
2nd Vice-Chairman

JCHC Bi-Monthly Meeting January 18, 2017 JCHC Library 12:00 Noon

Call to Order – Theresa Goodness - The meeting was called to order by Chair Theresa Goodness at Noon. In attendance were Sarah Bellian, Bill Cummings, Jessie Davis, Brue Hamilton, Brenda Jackson, Steven Lewis, Mike McGreevy, Les McMahan, Linda McMahan, Paul Prosperie, Don Smart, Jimmy Sparks and Jean Trenbrath, Guests attending were Kate Hambright and Jan Blackwell. Theresa asked everyone to introduce themselves to our two visitors.

Introduction of Speaker Bruce Hamilton – Chair Theresa Goodness – Bruce Hamilton was appointed to the JCHC in 1985. He served as Vice Chairman from 1989 to 1991 and as Chairman from 1991 – 1995. Every year under his leadership, the JCHC received the THC Distinguished Service Award for work in the areas such as Veterans, Save Outdoor Sculpture, Cemeteries, Historical Markers and Archives. During his two terms as Chairman, ten (10) Official State Historical Markers were dedicated in Jefferson County. Through the years, Bruce has remained an active member of the JCHC contributing hundreds of volunteer hours each year to such areas as Cemetery Tours, researching Tyrrell Park CCC Building, Businessmen's Photography Studio organization, Sons of the Confederate Veterans / Anniversary of Battle of Sabine Pass and many, many other preservation efforts.

Bruce discussed the historic charge of the County Historical Commission in Texas. He gave an overview of the work accomplished by the JCHC over the past several years and his personal view of the potential of the Commission and local historic preservation in the future.

Consideration of Minutes of Previous Meeting – Minutes for the December 9, 2016 meeting were emailed to each member for their review before the meeting. Mike McGreevy made a motion, seconded by Paul Prosperie, to accept the Minutes as printed. The motion was passed unanimously.

The Budget Report was given by Treasurer Linda McMahan. Both Linda and Theresa mentioned that the Texas State Historical Association would be meeting in Houston in March if anyone was interested in attending. The JCHC has travel money in the budget for that use.

Chairman's Report – Theresa Goodness - Theresa reported the JCHC has two boxes of cleaning and painting supplies in the office for cleaning and refinishing historical markers. When the weather gets better, we will have a working Saturday. Someone suggested that the Coast Guard might be approached to volunteer to help.

Commissioners Court contacted Theresa about the County Sub-Courthouse in Port Arthur. The Court wanted to know whether the County must first seek approval from the Texas Historical Commission before embarking on any restoration or other major renovation such as energy efficiency projects. Lydia Woods, East Texas Project Review, THC Architecture Division, said that since the building was constructed and has always functioned as a sub-courthouse it is not subject to Section 444.008. However, because it is owned by Jefferson County it is subject to the Antiquities Code of Texas. Any alterations to the building should be submitted to THC.

Coordinator's Report – Linda McMahan shared that Judge Stevens had donated a 1929 edition of "The Raven: A Biography of Sam Houston."

The JCHC has thirteen (13) oral histories from as far back as the 1970's that need to be transcribed or put on digital. It was suggested to contact Penny Clark at Lamar University to see if she has any suggestions of someone who could help do this.

We have had several inquiries from outside Jefferson County in regards to an inventory of original courthouse furniture. Several years ago we talked with the Purchasing Department about doing this. We need to revisit with them and request this be included in the yearly inventory of each department.

Linda reminded everyone to turn in their Volunteer Hours. Each member is required to turn in at least 50 hours per year.

Committee Reports

- **About Town Photographs – Steven Lewis** has found more photo negatives of the 1977 SPARE Survey and will do a power point presentation which will include these pictures at the March meeting.
- **Archeology Committee – Brenda Jackson** reported a project that Kerry Nichols talked about during his visit to the JCHC in October is beginning to come together. He talked about a significant cultural resource management project in SE Texas that included McFaddin Beach. The JCHC has received a FYI copy of

a Request for Proposal for Marine and Terrestrial Archaeological Monitoring in Support of McFaddin NWR Beach Ridge Restoration in Jefferson County. This is for a beach nourishment project at McFaddin National Wildlife Refuge scheduled for construction in March – April 2017.

- **Beaumont Historical Landmark Commission – Jessie Davis** reported that because a lack of quorum, there was no January meeting.
- **Cemetery Report – Paul Prosperie** reported that plans are in the making for a 130th Anniversary Celebration for Magnolia Cemetery in August 2017. Also the Beaumont Heritage Society will have a Happy Hour at the Magnolia Cemetery on April 20, 2017. Les McMahan reported on the re-surveying of McGaffey Cemetery and added that he has been working on preparations for the installation of crosses on identifiable gravesites in the cemetery.
- **Certified Local Government – Sarah Bellian** brought copies of the Robert and Paul Noyola oral history interview by Theresa Goodness, the oral history Sarah and Bruce Hamilton did with Lottie Davidson and the oral history of Floyd Frank by Sarah and Linda McMahan to be included in JCHC files. Sarah also reported that the Museum of the Gulf Coast has a lot of transportation pictures that need identifying. Help is always appreciated at the Museum.
- **Courthouse Oversight Committee – Linda McMahan** reported no new work is going on at the Courthouse. For information on the Sub-Courthouse, please see Chair Theresa Goodness' report.
- **Dick Dowling Days / Spindletop Days – Mike McGreevy** shared the success of the recent Spindletop Gusher event. He reported on the research being done to apply for grave markers for two Civil War soldiers buried in Magnolia Cemetery. One soldier is from the Confederate Army while the second soldier is from the Union Army. There will be a special dedication of the markers in 2018.
- **Marker Committee – Les McMahan** reported that the JCHC is waiting for the approval of a historical marker application for the St. Paul United Methodist Church, Port Arthur. He also reported that he has been working with the history files at the Port Arthur Library and has found a number of pictures that can be included in several of our marker files.
- **Port Arthur Landmark Commission – Les McMahan** reported that he took part in a Witness Seminar on the Relations between Port Arthur / Beaumont and their Petrochemical Industries. The Seminar is sponsored by Stony Book University, the Port Arthur Public Library and the Baylor Institute of Oral History. Various topics were discussed by knowledgeable people in different walks of life. Twelve participants took part in the seminar.

- **Sam Houston State Library / Bill Quick Papers – Don Smart** reported that he and Bruce Hamilton had been working with Bill Quick's papers. There is approximately eight hours of box inventory work left to be done.
- **Tourism / Ben Rogers Visitors Center – Jessie Davis** – No report given.
- **Website / Facebook Friends of the Jefferson County Historical Commission – Jen Trenbeath** reported that the Friends of the JCHC is up and running. If you have something you would like to include or a subject to be discussed, please contact her.

New / Unfinished Business - None

Adjournment / Next Meeting – The meeting was adjourned. The next meeting will be Wednesday, March 15, 2017 in the JCHC Library.