



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 Noon, Thursday, March 23, 2017 JCHC Conference Room – Third Floor

Call to Order – Chair Theresa Goodness – The meeting was called to order by Chair Theresa Goodness at Noon. In attendance were Sarah Bellian, Bill Cummings, Jessie Davis, Bruce Hamilton, Brenda Jackson, Steven Lewis, Les McMahan, Linda McMahan, Paul Prosperie, Don Smart, and Jimmy Sparks. Visitors were Judy Linsley, Jan Blackwell, Richard Gachot and Tom Bell.

Introduction of Speaker Steven Lewis – Chair Theresa Goodness - JCHC Member Steven Lewis shared about his work with the SPARE 1977 Survey. Out of 542 sites, 357 were demolished (66%). Steven photographed all the listed sites plus fourteen that had photographs but were not listed in the inventory. Lamar Professor Richard Gachot is beginning work on the SPARE Update IV.

Consideration of Minutes of Previous Meeting – Chair Theresa Goodness shared that the Minutes of the January 18, 2017 meeting had been emailed to members for their review. Bruce Hamilton made a motion, seconded by Jessie Davis to accept the Minutes with minor corrections. Motion passed unanimously.

Budget Report – Secretary Linda McMahan reported that \$1,653.99 has been spent with \$9,946.01 remaining in the 2016 / 2017 budget.

Chair's Report – Theresa Goodness reviewed a list of Goals for 2017. After discussion, one additional Goal was added:

“JCHC become more involved in sharing County history through presentations to history organizations, civic groups and more regional workshops.”

A motion was made by Les McMahan and seconded by Don Smart to accept the Goals presented with the additional Goal listed above. The Motion passed unanimously.

Coordinator's Report – Linda McMahan thanked all members for signing and returning their completed Statement of Appointed Officer and Oath of Office forms. They have been notarized and recorded in County records.

Linda reminded everyone to turn in their volunteer hours. All members must turn in at least 50 hours per year.

The JCHC 2016 Annual Report has been sent to THC after being approved by Commissioners Court on February 27, 2017. The approved Annual Report has been received and filed in County Records. We are waiting to hear from THC if we will receive our 35th Distinguished Service Award. Years of previous DSA awards are 1978 – 1981 and 1986 – 2015.

A reminder was made to those who wish to attend the Memorial Service for persons lost on eight ships attacked by German U-boats in March 1942 sailing from or to Southeast Texas will be held at the Seafarers' Center at the end of Procter Street in Port Arthur at 6 PM tonight (March 23, 2017).

Committee Reports

About Town – Steven Lewis reported that from 1949 to 1981 the Beaumont Marble Works was located at 3505 Port Arthur Road (next to the Texas Coffee Company). Some grave markers were left at that location because of mistakes or were unclaimed. Jimmy Sparks (Magnolia Cemetery) says that the policy for having markers made was to pay half the cost on ordering and the other half on completion, so some may be unclaimed. The owner of the monument company was Ludovic T. Landry, who died September 23, 1961. His widow ran the company after his death, marrying W. I. Walls around 1971. Both she and Mr. Landry are buried in Magnolia Cemetery.

Steven got a list from the Fire Marshall's office of 54 locations that were supposed to be the oldest hydrants in Beaumont dating from 1919. However, the list apparently has not been updated when hydrants were replaced. Steven has photographed hydrants at 28 of the locations on the list plus five others. All the replacement hydrants are made by American Valve & Hydrant at 3525 Hollywood in Beaumont. Steven was given a tour of the facility. He has also visited the Beaumont Water & Sewer Services on Langham Road. Steven has talked with two of the men that replace hydrants and they said they would see if they can find the oldest hydrant and notify him.

Archeology Committee – Brenda Jackson said work is scheduled to begin in the next few weeks for the beach nourishment project at McFaddin National Wildlife Refuge. This work will replace some of the sand lost in recent hurricanes and help prevent salt water getting into fresh water marshes.

Beaumont Historical Landmark Commission – Jessie Davis reported due to lack of need to meet, there was no report.

Cemetery Committee – Paul Prosperie and Jimmy Sparks reported on the upcoming Heritage Happy Hour at Magnolia Cemetery, an event presented by the Beaumont Heritage Society. Some JCHC members will be volunteering their time for a short cemetery tour, introducing Beaumont's history through the lives of some of its early residents. They also mentioned there are two other Magnolia Cemetery tours being planned for the year. The first is

planned for August 3, 2017, and is in commemoration of the Cemetery's 130th anniversary. The second tour is the annual October cemetery tour. Currently, no dates have been set for the second event.

Certified Local Government / Museum of the Gulf Coast – Sarah Bellian reported that she has interviewed Buddy White, a muskrat trapper from Sabine Pass. She is in the process of editing the interview and when complete, the JCHC will be given a DVD of the interview.

Sarah is need of docents for May 11 when 120 – 140 6th grade students will be taking a tour of the Museum. Any help would be appreciated.

Lamar University Professor of Public History, Josh Howard, has students out contacting people on Sarah's oral history list. More information will be shared at a later date.

Marker Committee – Les McMahan reported the St. Paul United Methodist Church marker has been approved by the THC, and the sponsor has paid the required marker fee to THC. Because the St. Paul payment was 149 out of 150 on the latest marker process report, and inscriptions are written by THC in the order payment is received, it may be a while before a draft inscription is ready for review by the JCHC and the sponsor.

Les and Linda talked with Mr. Preston Frank regarding a 2018 marker application for the Cheek Rodeo Association, and provided him information and forms for the process.

Port Arthur Landmark Commission – Les McMahan reported a special meeting was held on February 9, 2017, when the PALC received a refresher course on the THC historical preservation guidelines. The Commission was also informed that the PALC was approved for a grant to help establish preservations guidelines for the City's historic district. To date, the PALC has had only loose guidelines and our perceptions of standards to determine cases coming before us for approval to rebuild/refurbish/alter buildings in the historic district.

Sam Houston State Library / Early Sports – Don Smart reported that a recent Open House at the Sam Houston State Library in Liberty was a success. There were 45 visitors in attendance. Don also reported that Bill Quick's papers, books, etc. are still being inventoried. It will be a tremendous help when this is complete due to little known facts about Jefferson County that are included in his papers.

Don also reported that he would like to suggest that alumni from local high schools no longer in existence be invited to place exhibits in the mini-museum to remind people of the early educational history of the area. French High, represented by Don Smart, would like to be the first to place an exhibit. After discussion among members, Don was given the OK to begin work on placing the exhibit in the Jefferson County Mini-Museum located in the lobby of the historic Courthouse.

Tourism / Ben Rogers Visitors Center – Jessie Davis reported that I-10 is open and the Visitors Center is again easy to reach. She also reported that while some updating and routine

repairs are being done at neighboring Ford Park, their staff is being housed at the Visitors Center. Summer hours for the Visitors Center will be 10 AM to 7 PM.

Web Site / Facebook Friends of the JCHC – Jen Trenbeath reported that the new Facebook page has received 150 likes. She shared this is not a huge amount but that she was pleased. If members or the public have topics of discussion to be placed on the page, please let her know. Jen is contacting different museums for information on upcoming events. It was suggested to Jessie Davis (Visitors Center) to contact Jen about the START meetings made up of local and regional events for possible posting on the JCHC Facebook page.

Unfinished Business / New Business – None

Adjournment – Next meeting is scheduled for Noon, Wednesday, May 17, 2017 in the JCHC Conference Room. The meeting was adjourned.