



JEFFERSON COUNTY

Historical Commission

Theresa Goodness
Chair

Jen Trenbeath
Secretary

Linda McMahan
Coordinator/Treasurer

Bruce A. Hamilton
1st Vice-Chair

Les McMahan
2nd Vice-Chair

**Minutes for JCHC Bi-Monthly Meeting
Noon, Wednesday, January 16, 2019
Jefferson County Courthouse - Third Floor - JCHC Conference Room
1149 Pearl Street
Beaumont, TX 77701**

Call to Order – Les McMahan, 2nd Vice Chairman, called the meeting to order in the absence of Chair Sarah Bellian and 1st Vice Chairman Bruce A. Hamilton.

In attendance were: Sarah Bellian (arrived shortly after meeting called to order), Mary Darbonne, Jessie Davis, Theresa Goodness, Kate Hambright, Steven P. Lewis, Les McMahan, Linda McMahan, Paul Prosperie, Don Smart, Jen Trenbeath, and visitor Jay Camp.

Consideration of Minutes of Previous Meeting – Chair Sarah Bellian asked if there were any additions or corrections to the Minutes. There were none. A motion was made by Jessie Davis and seconded by Theresa Goodness to accept the Minutes as printed. The vote passed unanimously.

Budget Report – Coordinator / Treasurer Linda McMahan gave the budget report. (See attached.) A motion was made by Les McMahan and seconded by Theresa Goodness to approve the Budget Report. Vote passed unanimously.

Chair's Report – Chair Sarah Bellian discussed 2019 Goals including focusing on new membership and building on our current strengths. Tours of the Courthouse were suggested as a way to generate interest in County history and the JCHC.

Coordinator's Report – Linda McMahan requested that all volunteer hours for 2018 be turned in ASAP. This information will be used in the CHC and CLG Annual Reports.

The JCHC was invited to attend Beaumont Main Street's Annual Meeting to receive recognition for their 10-year membership in BMS. The meeting will be held at the former Westminster Presbyterian Church.

The County Engineering Department has shared their 1915 and 1930 original Courthouse blueprints with the JCHC. These can be used in the writing of a new

Master Plan for future work to be done on the Courthouse. Also Engineering is working on a County map that is incorporating recent photos and marker information from our latest marker survey.

Committee Reports

About Town in Pictures – Steven P. Lewis. The 118th anniversary celebration at Gladys City was held January 12, 2019 with a larger celebration to be held in the Spring.

Steven has observed that the Sanders-McNeil House is undergoing work, overseen by owners Barbara and Allen McNeil. They are reportedly targeting hurricane repair work.

Steven has continued to photograph the traffic control boxes around Beaumont.

The Camera Club past president reportedly found negatives at Gladys City of the Tonahill Building, an unknown gas station, McFaddin-Ward House and an unknown saloon. A discussion of the Tonahill building commenced and Theresa stated that she would like to consider redoing the marker. It has been observed that the building recently sold and is undergoing renovations. Discussion of finding out who the new owner is and discussing the marker with them were held.

Archeology Committee – Brenda Jackson No report submitted

Beaumont Historical Landmark Commission – Theresa Goodness. See attached.

Cemetery Committee – Paul Prosperie. Paul reported having visited several cemeteries:

Despite pipeline work on Amoco Road, the Brewer gravesite has been appropriately protected and the work appears to be complete.

Sabine Pass, Greenlawn and Calvary Cemeteries all seem to be in good condition.

Noted is a problem with wild hogs rooting in Magnolia Cemetery and traps have been set. (None was noted at Evergreen.) Paul shared plans to speak to Magnolia staff regarding the Cemetery tours that have been held in the past. He would like to suggest that group tours be by appointment. It is unknown if there is a new chairperson or director of Magnolia. A discussion was held, regarding the intent to draft a formal letter from the Commission to Magnolia Cemetery, with the purpose of finding out who currently holds positions of leadership.

Lincoln Cemetery appears to be becoming overgrown again.

Certified Local Government - Sarah Bellian. Discussion was held that many places that were approached as cultural resources pre-Harvey have suffered damage and their present status is unknown. Follow-up contact was recommended.

Also suggested was a County-wide disaster preparedness program. Grants could be available for this sort of work. A workshop emphasizing digital backup of documents and records should be part of this program. Theresa suggested choose a date, and Sarah has begun drafting a letter reaching out to organizations that may be interested, and addressing potential losses should another disaster happen. Also discussed was the benefit of sharing archiving resources across organizations.

Courthouse Oversight Committee – Linda McMahan. One of the flagpoles in front of the 1931 Courthouse is leaning due to structural issues. THC has been notified concerning the problem and Jefferson County has been given information as how to deal with the problem. Engineering is getting bids for the work. Nothing final has been decided.

The Engineering Department has requested photos of the 5th floor Commissioners Courtroom as it was prior to restoration and building of the annex. Theresa Goodness has suggested members provide any photos they may have or can find of the Courtroom. Commissioner Brent Weaver has shared some photos with Engineering.

Dick Dowling Days / Spindletop Days – Mike McGreevy No report.

Historical Commission Library – Mary Darbonne is doing an up-to-date inventory of the JCHC Library. This will help incorporate donated books, magazines and other materials received since the last inventory four years ago.

Marker Committee – Les McMahan No word has been received on the shipment date of the St. Paul United Methodist Church, Port Arthur, subject marker.

Central Baptist Church, Port Arthur, and Friendship Baptist Church, Groves, have merged. The Central Baptist subject marker will be moved to the Friendship location with an attached plaque with the merger information on it.

Providence Church, formerly Presbyterian Church of the Covenant, will be putting up their original subject marker, with an attached plaque to include information about the move attached.

Markers still in need of surveying were in packet distributed to members.

Port Arthur Landmark Commission – Les McMahan reported the Landmark Commission is presently reviewing the second draft of the Historical District Guidelines.

Sam Houston State Library / Early Sports – Don Smart reported that Bill Quick's collection inventory is completed.

Museum of the Gulf Coast exhibit of early sports and high school sports will be opening soon.

Don's current research is on the Black Oilers aka Smart Set, African American baseball team from Beaumont, which won 34 games straight.

Tyrrell Park Community Building – Bruce Hamilton was attending a meeting in Austin and no report was given.

Tourism / Ben Rogers Visitors Center – Jessie Davis reported TXDoT is removing the Brooks Road overpass. A meeting was held with residents regarding the future of the access road and bridge. More details will be provided from TXDoT as they become available.

Attendance at the Ben J. Rogers Visitor's Center has been down, presumably due to the highway construction. The building will be undergoing Harvey repair and renovation during February and March.

Web Site / Facebook Friends of the JCHC – Jen Trenbeath No report.

Unfinished / New Business

Steven P. Lewis is the new president of the Tyrrell Library Association. Work is being done on the Tyrrell and it will hopefully reopen by June. Carpets and some termite damage are still to be repaired. The Library Association provides cloud storage for the library, and other items requested to achieve the goals of the library. It has been observed that mobile generators could have prevented the extent of the mold damage by keeping the air conditioner on.

Theresa Goodness administered the State of Texas Statement of Appointed Officer and Oath of Office to all members of the JCHC attending the meeting.

Adjournment The meeting was adjourned at 1:28 pm. Next meeting will be Wednesday, March 20, 2019 in the JCHC Conference Room.