

**Minutes for JCHC Bimonthly Meeting
Wednesday, July 17, 2019, at Noon
Jefferson County Courthouse - Third Floor JCHC Conference Room
1149 Pearl Street, Beaumont, TX 77701**

Call to Order – Chair Theresa Goodness

The meeting was called to order by Chair Theresa Goodness at Noon. A quorum was met with members Kate Hambricht, Bruce A. Hamilton, Brenda Jackson, Steven P. Lewis, Linda McMahan, Paul Prosperie, and Jen Trenbeath attending. Visiting were Lynn Simon and Doug Porter.

Secretary's Report – Jen Trenbeath

Members had an opportunity to review the Minutes. With no additions or corrections, a motion was made by Paul Prosperie and seconded by Steven Lewis to accept the Minutes as printed. The motion passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report – Linda McMahan

Linda reported that the JCHC budget showed expenditures of \$4,570.56 with \$7,029.44 remaining. (Attachment # 1) Budget Hearings for the 2019-2020 fiscal year (starting October 1, 2019) were being held. The JCHC did not have to attend as no changes were being requested.

Chair's Report – Chair Theresa Goodness

Report of status of THC sub-grant application for the National Park Service Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria Emergency Supplemental Historic Preservation Fund Grant

On 5/13/19 Commissioner's Court authorized JCHC to submit a grant application from the *Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria Emergency Supplemental Historic Preservation Fund* grant from the National Park Service. The purpose of the grant would be to develop a professional historic survey plan, historic resource survey and a preservation plan. The grant will be administered by the Texas Historical Commission, and does not require matching funds from the county. The minimum grant award is \$30,000 and the maximum grant award is \$250,000.

The grant application was submitted to THC on 5/20/19 well before the deadline of May 24, 2019. According to our confirmation of receipt from THC, the grant applications will be reviewed by staff and the Texas Preservation Trust Fund Advisory Board with action

recommended to the THC Commissioners at their quarterly meeting scheduled on 7/18-7/19, 2019 in Paris, Texas.

Report on legislation passed during the recent Texas 86th Regular Session affecting historic preservation.

The Texas Legislature passed several bills that impact state historic sites, courthouse preservation, and the designation of historic landmarks, as follows:

□ **H.B. 2496**, relating to the designation of a property as a historic landmark by a municipality; amends the Local Government Code to prohibit a municipality that has established a process for designating places or areas of historical, cultural, or architectural importance and significance through the adoption of zoning regulations or zoning district boundaries from designating a property as a local historic landmark unless the owner of the property consents to the designation or the designation is approved by a three-fourths vote of the municipality's governing body and of the municipality's zoning, planning, or historical commission, if any. The bill requires the municipality to allow an owner to withdraw consent at any time during the designation process. Signed by the Governor 5/25/19 and effective immediately.

□ **S.B. 496**, relating to factors the Texas Historical Commission considers in reviewing an application for a grant or loan through the historic courthouse preservation program; S.B. 496 amends the Government Code to include a county's or municipality's local funding capacity as measured by the total taxable value of properties in the county or municipality, as applicable, as a factor the Texas Historical Commission is required to consider in considering whether to grant an application for a grant or loan under its historic courthouse preservation program. Signed by the Governor 6/4/19 and effective 9/1/19.

□ **S.B. 500**, relating to making supplemental appropriations and reductions in appropriations and giving direction, including direction regarding reimbursement, and adjustment authority regarding appropriations; includes for:

- Texas Historical Commission - Deferred Maintenance: \$2,886,250;
- Texas Historical Commission - Nimitz Museum: \$2,149,600;
- Texas Historical Commission - Levi Jordan Plantation: \$2,000,000;
- Texas Historical Commission - Courthouse Grants: \$25,000,000;
- Texas Parks and Wildlife Department - Battleship Texas: \$35,500,000.

Bill was signed by the Governor 6/6/19 and effective immediately.

□ **S.B. 1511**, relating to the operation of the Battleship "Texas". S.B. 1511 amends the Parks and Wildlife Code to require the Parks and Wildlife Department, not later than the later of September 1, 2019, or the 90th day after the bill's effective date, to enter into a memorandum of understanding for a term of 99 years with an appropriate nonprofit foundation for the operation and maintenance of the Battleship "Texas." The bill requires the memorandum of understanding to include provisions:

- governing the preservation, management, and operation of the Battleship "Texas" consistent with the Standards for Historic Vessel Preservation Projects with Guidelines for Applying the Standards published by the Secretary of the U.S. Department of the Interior as those standards existed on January 1, 2019;
- requiring the nonprofit foundation to consult with the state historic preservation officer on matters related to the preservation or repair of the battleship; and
- regarding the protection of the public's interest in maintaining and preserving a priceless historical asset in a manner that ensures the public has access to the asset and an opportunity to provide comment regarding the preservation of the asset.

Report on efforts to preserve courthouse blueprints.

- We have received the unbuffered archival boxes and tissue paper for storage of the blueprints of the 1893 and 1931 courthouses received from the County Engineer.
- Also a small map cabinet has been transferred to our inventory from another department.
- Linda and Les McMahan compiled an inventory of the blueprints.
- Volunteers are needed to work on sorting, labeling, and storing the blueprints. Also we will attempt to scan the documents that are not too fragile.

Committee Reports

Beaumont Historical Landmark Commission – Theresa Goodness

Report on Applications for Certificates of Appropriateness considered by Beaumont Landmark Commission.

The Beaumont Landmark Commission has met once since my last report, as the June meeting was cancelled due to lack of a quorum.

On July 8, 2019, the Beaumont Landmark Commission met to review the following Requests for a Certificate of Appropriateness:

CA-3060: Request for a Certificate of Appropriateness to replace a front door.
 Applicant: Saeed Daniali
 Location: 2574 McFaddin Avenue **The request was denied.**

CA-3066: Request for a Certificate of Appropriateness to paint a house.
 Applicant: Raul Barajas
 Location: 2240 Rusk Street **The request was approved.**

CA-3071: Request for a Certificate of Appropriateness to remove bay windows and replace with two windows.
 Applicant: Kawana Dixon
 Location: 2280 Hazel Street **The request was approved.**

Port Arthur Landmark Commission – Les McMahan

Report on Applications for Certificates of Appropriateness considered by Port Arthur Landmark Commission.

No meetings have been held so no applications for Certificates of Appropriateness have been considered.

Tyrrell Historical Library – Steven Lewis

Report on status of the library renovation and re-opening.

Tyrrell Historical Library—Photographed interior of library on 12 June 2019 for documenting the progress on the repair and renovation. Circulated photos showing repairs to spiral staircase and general area, including bell tower. Have no official update of re-opening date but probably September or October. Circulated two photos from Business Men's Studio of library interior after 1950 renovation.

Photos of Historic Buildings - Steven Lewis

Report on historic building photography project

Café Del Rio panorama taken June 18, 2019—circulated photograph to members. Significance of image is the mural on the building and the metal sculptures in front of the restaurant.

Sam Houston State Library – Don Smart

No report submitted

Tyrrell Park Coalition – Bruce A. Hamilton

Report on status of plans by the City of Beaumont to renovate the Tyrrell Park Community Building built by the Civilian Conservation Corps.

Members of the Coalition met with newly elected Beaumont City Councilman, Randy Feldschau, to express their concern with the importance of the building and to request his support.

Caroline Gilbert Hinchee House Restoration – Bruce A. Hamilton

Upcoming workday was announced for July 20, 2019 to work on yard maintenance. Arborist Chuck Morris has volunteered his services to advise on the preservation and maintenance of existing trees.

Historical Markers and Research – Les McMahan

Report on Status of Marker Applications/Dedications.

Central Baptist Church, Port Arthur and Friendship Baptist Church, Groves have merged to form Grace Baptist Church located at the former Friendship Baptist location. Deacons from Central Baptist relocated their historical marker to the new location. The marker is in storage at the church and will be installed and dedicated at a later date.

Commissioner Weaver has been notified that help will be needed to install the historical marker for Providence Church, Nederland. This church was previously known as Presbyterian Church of the Convenient, Port Arthur, but relocated to Nederland and changed its name. After the marker is installed, a dedication service will be held by the church. No date has been set at this time.

Attachment # 2 is a letter dated July 3, 2019 from Mark Wolf, Executive Director of the Texas Historical Commission sharing the news that in May, the THC received the unexpected news that the owners of Southwell Company, the business that has produced our historical markers for more than fifty years, sold their firm. While Southwell is completing markers already in various stages of the casting process, the company will not be taking new orders. Markers that have not entered that process, including those that have yet to go before the Commission, will have to be cased at a different foundry. THC is working hard to find solution to this problem.

Attachment #3 is from Charles Sadnick, Director of the History Programs Division of THC stating that anyone that feels they cannot wait for THC to find a solution to the foundry problem may cancel their order and their money will be refunded. The CHC can always resubmit during another marker application cycle, though the cost of production is likely to increase for future markers.

You may ask how this will affect the JCHC. A check for \$3,800 and application forms for two replacement markers lost during Tropical Storm Harvey were mailed to THC in August, 2018. The markers were Nancy Tevis and Beaumont: Lumber Mill City of the Nineteenth Century and were located in Riverfront Park. Since we do not have a deadline as to when we need to receive the markers, we will leave things as is until we learn how THC is going to handle the foundry problem.

Report on Marker Survey/Maintenance.

After the July 10, 2019 Webinar on “Markers, Heritage Tourism and Surveys” interest was shared on Maintenance of some of our historical markers. Suggestions were made as how and who might be of help in cleaning / painting some of our faded markers.

History Appreciation:

Report on current Courthouse Mini-museum exhibits and discussion of proposed exhibits. – Linda McMahan

Don Smart has an exhibit in the Mini Museum through the end of August called "Odds and Ends". It is a trivia game about Beaumont history. We have had very good feedback on the exhibit. Attachment # 4 is a page about the exhibit that came out in the Jefferson County Line - Summer Edition.

The Beaumont DAR will be putting in an exhibit during the month of September in honor of Constitution Week September 17-23. This chapter has been very active in communicating the importance of the Constitution in our community. They will not display any items promoting any political party.

October is Archeology Month.

November, Brenda Jackson will put in an exhibit about Forrest Park High School.

Report on Historic Tourism – Jessie Davis

No report given.

Report on Updates to JCHC Website and Social Media – Jen Trenbeath

Facebook involvement continues to grow by a few people each month. All JCHC members are encouraged to submit content to be shared.

Report on Dick Dowling Days/Spindletop Days plans – Mike McGreevy

No report given.

Archeology Committee – Brenda Jackson

No report given.

Cemetery Committee – Paul Prosperie

Magnolia Cemetery appears to be maintained currently, wild hogs have hopefully been remedied. Evergreen Cemetery is overgrown. Forest Lawn appears to have continuing problems. Private tours of Magnolia Cemetery can be arranged for interested groups by contacting Paul Prosperie.

Courthouse and Sub-Courthouse Oversight Committee – Linda McMahon

Report on status of Jefferson County Courthouse or Sub-Courthouse buildings.

- The County Engineering Superintendent, Don Rao, has made a special effort to restore the former Commissioner's Courtroom on the fifth floor of the historic courthouse to reflect the manner in which the room looked when it was used for this purpose.

On June 26, 2019, Commissioner Brent Weaver and several former County Judges who held court in this room were invited to tour the restored courtroom and to reminisce about their time on the bench. Former County Judges, Leonard Giblin, Jr. (1974-1978), Richard LeBlanc, Jr. (1978 - 1996), Robert Stroder (1/8/96 - 11/12/96), Carl Griffith, Jr. (1996 - 2010) and current County Judge Jeff Branick were on hand for the tour.

- Work continues on the flag poles in front of the historic courthouse. The job was not as easy as originally thought, which means it was more expensive. The hold-up has been additional money needed to complete the project and that request had to go through Commissioners Court.
- Several months ago, I was contacted by two professors at Lamar, Beaumont (Mahmoud Salimi and Frank Sun). They are working on a documentary film that focuses on the social and economic significance of both oil discoveries in Beaumont that took place in 1901 and 1925. It highlights efforts of Frank Yount and Marrs McLean and how they contributed to the development of Beaumont and the US economy.

A segment of the film discusses the construction of the buildings in Beaumont during both eras. The Courthouse is one of them. Two weeks ago, these two gentlemen spent almost four hours filming the exterior and interior of the building for this documentary film.

To do this they had to get permission from Commissioner Arnold, who is over the courthouse and also courthouse security. Mr. Salimi and Mr. Sun were very appreciative of the Historical Commission doing all that was necessary for them to film our beautiful building.

Report on Courthouse Master Plan Update.

After things settled down after two bomb threats, Theresa and I met with Don LaBiche and Engineering to discuss the area of the Courthouse where the JCHC is housed. That includes the Mini-Museum on the first floor, the JCHC office, Library, Conference Room and Storage Room on the third floor.

We were asked if we thought the JCHC would need more room in the next 5 years, next 10 years and we said no. If more space is needed, we can add additional storage shelves, etc.

Certified Local Government (CLG) – Theresa Goodness

Report on information learned during webinar training conducted by Texas Historical Commission for Markers, Heritage Tourism & Surveys.

On July 10, 2019, Jefferson County Historical Commission (JCHC) members attended a workshop for webinar training conducted by Texas Historical Commission for Markers, Heritage Tourism & Surveys. The webinar covered ways to promote history through historical markers, especially heritage tourism. Six (6) members attended the workshop. The handouts for this training have been printed, and a copy is available for all members.

Report on Open Meetings Act training compliance.

All members of the Certified Local Government (CLG) Committee should attend Open Meetings Training. This training is available online from the Texas Attorney General's website. To date only four (4) members have submitted a certificate as proof of attendance.

Theresa Goodness
Don Smart
Linda McMahan
Jen Trenbeath

The Texas Historical Commission requires members of Certified Local Government committees to submit a resume. To date only seven (7) members have submitted their resumes:

Theresa Goodness
Linda McMahan
Les McMahan
Bruce A. Hamilton
Steven P. Lewis
Jay Camp
Don Smart

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned. The next meeting will be Wednesday, September 18, 2019 at Noon in the third floor JCHC Conference Room.

**Jefferson County Historical Commission
Budget Report
July 17, 2019**

| Line Item | Budget | Spent | Remaining |
|--------------------|----------|------------|------------|
| 30-10 Books | \$250 | \$50.00 | \$200.00 |
| 30-78 Supplies | \$1,500 | \$1,359.36 | \$140.64 |
| 30-90 Education | \$1,500 | \$918.81 | \$581.19 |
| 50-05 Mileage | \$500 | \$422.56 | \$77.44 |
| 50-12 Markers | \$5,000 | ----- | \$5,000.00 |
| 50-21 Dues | \$850 | \$400.00 | \$450.00 |
| 50-62 Travel | \$2,000 | \$1,419.83 | \$580.17 |
| Totals | \$11,600 | \$4,570.56 | \$7,029.44 |

TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
real places telling real stories

July 3, 2019

Dear CHC Members,

In May, the THC received the unexpected news that the owners of Southwell Company, the business that has produced our historical markers for more than fifty years, sold their firm. While Southwell is completing markers already in various stages of the casting process, the company will not be taking new orders. Markers that have not yet entered that process, including those with text approved at the May 2019 THC Quarterly Meeting, and inscriptions and applications that have yet to go before the Commission, will have to be cast at a different foundry.

The THC Commissioners have directed staff to make it a top priority to contract another vendor to complete the 2019 markers. We intend to finish these markers for the price already paid. Sponsors are being notified that it will take longer than usual for this current batch of markers to be cast and shipped.

The Texas Historical Commission is also searching for a vendor that can accept the volume of markers ordered annually, develop a quality product, and create and deliver markers in a reasonable amount of time. We will not be accepting new marker applications until we know what the production cost and schedule will be. While the agency must follow state guidelines and processes in selecting a new vendor, staff is working to find a solution in an expedient manner.

We thank you for your patience and understanding, and apologize for any inconvenience the holdup causes as we search for a successor which will produce markers reflective of the nation's leading historical marker program. We welcome any comments or questions you may have. Please direct them toward Charles Sadnick, Director of History Programs Division (charles.sadnick@thc.texas.gov).

Sincerely,



Mark Wolfe
Executive Director



JeffCo Historical Commission

From: Lynnette Cen <Lynnette.Cen@thc.texas.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, July 10, 2019 12:18 PM
Subject: 2019 Historical Marker Application Cancellation Option

Dear 2019 Marker Sponsors,

You received a note last week from our Executive Director, Mark Wolfe, explaining the situation involving the Southwell Company and the THC's search for a new foundry. While staff continues to work toward finding a solution for this year's markers, we also want to offer you another option. If you would like to cancel your order, you may do so; we will refund your marker payment. While we hope you will stick with us until we find a solution, we also understand that cancellation may be a better choice for you at this time. You can always resubmit during another marker application cycle, though the cost of production is likely to increase for future markers.

Please contact Lynnette Cen (lynnette.cen@thc.texas.gov; 512-463-6063) if you decide to work through the marker cancellation process.

Thank you,
Charles

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