

Jefferson County Historical Commission Bi-Monthly Meeting Minutes
Noon, Wednesday, January 22, 2020
Jefferson County Historical Commission Conference Room
Beaumont, Texas 77701

ORDER OF BUSINESS:

1. **CALL TO ORDER – Chair Theresa Goodness** called the meeting to order. In attendance were Jay Camp, Kate Hambright, Bruce A. Hamilton, Brenda Jackson, Steven P. Lewis, Les McMahan, Linda McMahan, Doug Porter, Paul Prosperie, Lynn Simon and Don Smart. It was determined a quorum was met.

There was no Citizens' Communication or Guests in attendance.

ACTION ITEMS:

2. **Secretary's Report** was given by Coordinator Linda McMahan, due to the absence of Secretary Jen Trenbeath. Chair Theresa Goodness asked if there were any additions or corrections to the December 11, 2019 Minutes. There were none. A motion was made by Don Smart and seconded by Jay Camp to accept the Minutes as presented. The vote was unanimous.
3. **Treasurer's Report** – Linda McMahan reported that out of the 2019 – 2020 Budget of \$11,600, \$2,374.42 had been spent with \$9,225.58 remaining. (Please see Attachment # 1)
4. **Chair's Report**

Membership - Theresa Goodness reported because of family commitments, Mary Darbonne had submitted her Letter of Resignation. A motion was made by Jay Camp and seconded by Paul Prosperie to receive and file the Letter of Resignation. The motion was unanimous.

Coordinator Linda McMahan also reported that JCHC member Mike McGreevy had requested his membership status be changed from Active Member to Advisory Committee Member. Because of work commitments, Mike cannot fulfill his Volunteer Hours and Attendance requirements at this time. At a later date, he will reapply for active membership.

Consider and possibly approve 2020 Goals - Chair Goodness reported on the status of the 2019 Goals:

Report on status of 2019 Goals.

- Conduct a project to identify, clean and restore Jefferson County historical markers in need of restoration. By using photographs taken during marker survey, identification of these markers should not be difficult.
STATUS: Little progress has been made on this goal.
- Continue digitization of JCHC files to provide valuable research material to members and the public.
STATUS: Little progress has been made on this goal.
- Preserve original courthouse blueprints for both 1893 and 1931 courthouses received from County Engineer's Office. These drawings need to be humidified so they can be unrolled, and then de-acidified, cleaned, stabilized and protected in archival quality sleeves. Best practices would include scanning these records and keeping copies in multiple locations. A map cabinet is needed to store the preserved blueprints out of direct light.
STATUS: Archival storage boxes and tissue paper have been procured for the project. A map scanner has been donated to JCHC from another department. Maps have been catalogued, but not scanned and stored.
- Design JCHC calendar for 2020 highlighting photographs and important historical events from Jefferson County's history. As we learned in preparation for 2019 calendar, 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.
STATUS: Goal has been accomplished.

After reviewing the Goals for 2019, the following Goals for 2020 were discussed:

Chair Theresa Goodness shared the success of the **2019 JCHC Historical Calendar**. Members volunteered to choose a month to supply a digitized historic picture and five dates for events that happened during that month. Calendars were mailed to Port Neches-Groves ISD, Beaumont ISD, Port Arthur ISD, Hamshire-Fannett ISD, Hardin-Jefferson ISD, Sabine Pass ISD, McFaddin-Ward Historic House Museum, Beaumont Heritage Society, Texas Energy Museum, Museum of the Gulf Coast, Spindletop Gladys City Boomtown, Beaumont Main Street, Nederland Historical Society, Port Arthur Historical Society, Center for History & Culture Lamar University, Ben Roger's Regional Visitor Center, Judge John Stevens, Beaumont Convention & Visitor Center, Nederland Chamber of Commerce and Tourist Bureau, Port Arthur Chamber of Commerce & Visitors Bureau, JCHC Members, Judge Jeff Branick, Commissioner Eddie Arnold, Commissioner Brent Weaver, Commissioner

Michael Sinegal, Commissioner Everette “Bo” Alfred, Amy Hammons-Texas Historical Commission, Nederland Library, Groves Library, Port Neches Library, and Port Arthur Library.

Digitalized Pictures – In 2019, the JCHC purchased five 1921 original prints of the moving of the San Jacinto Life Building in Beaumont, Texas.

The photos were found in the attic of a home built by John Egert who was instrumental in the grade raising of Galveston after the 1900 hurricane. He was a builder, contractor, house raiser, County Commissioner and a Mason. He was deputized right after the 1900 storm. In the years after Galveston's 1900 hurricane, he jacked up homes, schools, churches and businesses several feet into the air so dirt could be pumped in to raise the city's elevation as the seawall was built

The photos show workers moving the San Jacinto Life Building on Saturday, August 13, 1921, a 60-foot trip up Orleans Street.

Blueprint and Map Scanner – Thanks to an update of office equipment in the County Clerk’s Office and a transfer of a Blueprint / Map Scanner, the JCHC will be able to preserve an original set of 1893 Red Brick Courthouse blueprints along with the present 1931 Courthouse and Port Arthur Sub-Courthouse blueprints.

Several **Historical Markers** across the County have been noted as in need of cleaning. Instructions can be found on the County JCHC website. Suggestions were discussed as possibly using local organizations to help.

JCHC Website – It was suggested and discussed sharing of pages from the JCHC Historical Calendar on the Friends of the JCHC webpage.

Committee Reports

Historical Preservation

Early African-American Schools and Education – Lynn Simon reported on several projects he is working on in regards to early African-American schools and educational leaders in the Beaumont community. Mr. Simon expressed his appreciation for the help and encouragement he is receiving from JCHC members.

Beaumont Historical Landmark Commission – Theresa Goodness reported: (1) At the December, 2019 meeting, CA-3148 Request for a Certification of Appropriateness to install solar panels on a roof (by applicant Ramon Reyna at 2250 Long Street) was denied because the proposed solar panel placement would be visible from the street right-of-way.

For an historic property, solar panels must not be visible from the street according to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. (2) The January meeting was cancelled because no Request for a Certificate of Appropriateness was submitted before the submittal deadline.

Port Arthur Historical Landmark Commission - Les McMahan reported no meetings have been held as no applications for Certificates of Appropriateness have been submitted.

Tyrrell Historical Library - Steven Lewis reported on the status of the Library's renovation and re-opening plans.

Photos of Historic Buildings - Steven Lewis reported on several historic building photography projects he is involved in.

Sam Houston State Library - Don Smart shared work going on at the Library and reminded everyone the East Texas Historical Association would be holding their Spring Conference at the Library on February 8, 2020. It was still possible to make reservations.

Tyrrell Park Coalition - Bruce A. Hamilton reported 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 Hinchee House Restoration - Bruce A. Hamilton reported on the status of restoration of the historic home.

Military History - Kate Hambricht reported on a research project she has been working on regarding the 161st Assault Helicopter Company in Vietnam. This brought back memories of several JCHC members who fought in that war.

Historical Markers and Research - Les McMahan reported on the status of Marker Applications / and Dedications that will be coming up in the near future. He also reported about Marker Survey / Maintenance that is one of the 2020 JCHC Goals.

History Appreciation:

Courthouse Mini-Museum - Linda McMahan reported the Forest Park High School exhibit has received good feedback from the community. The Beaumont Enterprise did a write up on the exhibit with pictures. The exhibit will stay longer than the original January 30, 2020 removal date unless we have someone volunteer to put in an exhibit for February / March.

Report on updates to the JCHC Website and Social Media – Committee Chair Jen

Trenbeath was absent but sent word that she would like to meet with the web committee sometime in the first quarter to review the goals for the website, the progress made over the last year and to determine the committee's next steps. The Facebook page continues to have some engagement, and Jen has begun to add "On This Day" posts that coordinate with the dates on the JCHC calendar. Posts through February have been scheduled in advance, so if members have photos or details to add to these events, please feel free to email Jen. She also shares events related to local Historical Preservation, so if your organization has an event, please let her know.

Report on Spindletop Days Event at Spindletop Gladys City Boomtown

Museum – Don Smart reported that the Spindletop Anniversary event went well with good attendance. He also handed out a flyer listing events happening at the Museum during 2020.

Report on Coastal History – Jay Camp shared several projects he is working on concerning upper Gulf Coast history. He will have another article to share at the next meeting.

Archeology Committee – Brenda Jackson reported she had no new information to share at this time.

Cemetery Committee – Paul Prosperie reported this is a slow time of the year due to the weather. Linda McMahan shared the JCHC / Beaumont Heritage Society has been contacted by a Hillebrandt family member concerning the Hillebrandt Cemetery. He will be visiting in the area in the very near future and had several questions. Linda and JCHC Advisory Committee member, Marianne Petry are working on information for the family.

Courthouse and Sub-Courthouse – Linda McMahan reported work is ongoing in the **Courthouse** with production of an Energy Management Update. This includes work on the heating / air conditioning, lighting and updating some of the older machinery in the building.

Things are quiet at the **Sub-Courthouse**.

The LaBiche Architectural Firm is about 90% complete on the **Courthouse Master Plan**. The JCHC has not had any additional information request or notification of any meetings scheduled to review work thus far.

Certified Local Government (CLG) – Theresa Goodness, Historic Preservation Officer –
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 December 10, 2019, Lisa J. Hart, Program Specialist, with the Texas Historical Commission met with Theresa Goodness, HPO, and Linda McMahan, JCHC Coordinator, to discuss the approximate timeline for our HIM ESHPF Grant.

THC will be sending JCHC a supplemental application which basically will confirm the information already submitted. After receipt of the supplemental application we should receive a formal grant approval in two to four weeks.

THC is working on drafting a financial agreement with the grant recipients. The National Park Service was initially tasked with drafting these agreements, but the task has since been delegated to THC. An official financial agreement should be ready for the county to approve sometime in late February or early March.

The grant is supposed to end on 3/31/2022 but THC can extend it for two years, one year at a time.

A first draft of a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for this project has been prepared and submitted to THC for review and comments. Lisa Hart will have experienced THC personnel, such as Leslie Wolfenden give us some pointers as to what, if any additional language and requirements should be added to the RFQ.

Adjournment – The next JCHC meeting will be held Noon, Wednesday, March 11, 2020 in the JCHC Conference room.

**Jefferson County Historical Commission
2019 – 2020 Budget Report
January 22, 2020**

Line Item	Budget	Spent	Remaining
30-10 Books	\$250	\$22.50	\$227.50
30-78 Supplies	\$1,500	\$0	\$1,500.00
30-90 Education	\$1,500	\$912.50	\$587.50
50-05 Mileage	\$500	\$469.57	\$30.43
50-12 Markers	\$5,000	\$0	\$5,000.00
50-21 Dues	\$850	\$105.00	\$745.00
50-62 Travel	\$2,000	\$864.85	\$1,135.15
Totals	\$11,600	\$2,374.42	\$9,225.58