



JEFFERSON COUNTY

Historical Commission

Theresa Goodness
Chair

Jen Trenbeath
Coordinator/Secretary

Linda McMahan
Treasurer

Steven P. Lewis
1st Vice-Chair
Don Smart
2nd Vice-Chair

Meeting Minutes

The Regular Meeting of the Jefferson County Historical Commission (JCHC) held on Wednesday, January 18, 2023, at 10:00 a.m. at the Jefferson County Historical Commission Library, 1149 Pearl Street, Third Floor, Beaumont, TX 77701

Order of Business:

1. Call to Order at 10:04 a.m. In attendance were: Jennifer Trenbeath, Lynn Simon, Jay Camp, Brenda Jackson, Paul Prosperie, Steven Lewis, Les McMahan, Linda McMahan, Theresa Goodness, Rayanna Hoeft, Tish Stewart, Kate Hambricht, Don Smart, Candy Hollis, Lynn Simon, Mike McGreevy, Bruce A. Hamilton and Judy Linsley. A quorum was determined.
2. Citizens Communications.
3. Call, Receive Information and Take Appropriate Action on:

Introduction of Guests

ACTION ITEMS:

Secretary's Report – Jen Trenbeath

4. Consider and possibly approve minutes of previous meeting. Jay Camp moved to accept minutes as presented. Seconded by Kate Hambricht. Approved unanimously.

Coordinator's Report – Jen Trenbeath

- Staff report from Coordinator. See attachment A.

Treasurer's Report – Linda McMahan

- Report of Expenditures and remaining Budget. Report submitted. See attachment B.

Chair's Report – Chair Theresa Goodness

Approved unanimously
March 15, 2023
Jennifer Trenbeath
JCHC Coordinator

5. Discuss, consider, and possibly approve JCHC goals for 2023. See attachment C.

Steven P. Lewis moved to approve goals. Seconded by Lynn Simon. Approved unanimously.

Committee Reports

Historical Preservation:

Early African-American Schools and Educators – Lynn Simon

- Report on research of early Beaumont schools and educators. Oral report: Mr. Simon will submit letter of resignation and will consider staying on as an advisor.

Beaumont Historical Landmark Commission – Theresa Goodness

- Report on Applications for Certificates of Appropriateness considered by Beaumont Landmark Commission. Report submitted. See attachment D.

Tyrrell Historical Library – Steven P. Lewis

- Report on activities of the Tyrrell Historical Library Association. See attachment E.

Photos of Historic Buildings - Steven P. Lewis

- Report on historic building photography project. See attachment E.

Sam Houston State Library – Don Smart

- Report on research projects conducted at the state library. No report submitted. Oral report is that library will be upgrading HVAC unit which will require closing of library for approximately 2 weeks.

Tyrrell Park Coalition – Steven P. Lewis

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

Caroline Gilbert Hinchee House Restoration – Bruce A. Hamilton

- Report on status of restoration of the historic home. No report submitted. Oral report- On Dec 13, 2022 The Hinchee house was visited by Lisa Hart, with Texas Historical Commission (THC) who is the project manager for grants administered by the THC for the National Park Service. Grant reimbursements have started. An engineer has been hired to make an

engineer's report. Dohn LaBiche will be the architect on project. The next step is the stabilization of house.

Military History – Kate Hambright

- Report on research projects. No report submitted.

Historical Markers and Research – Kate Hambright- report submitted. See attachment F.

6. Discuss, consider, and receive information regarding a potential correction to the William G. "Bill" Hall marker, changing the address of the Gulf Coast Recording Company from 888 Pearl Street, Beaumont, Texas, to 892 Pearl St., Beaumont, Texas. Discussion was held
7. Consider and possibly approve filing an application for a correction to the William G. "Bill" Hall marker with the Texas Historical Commission. No motion made. Item fails.
8. Consider and possibly approve payment out of JCHC's marker budget for a supplemental correction plaque to the William G. "Bill" Hall marker, provided correction application is submitted by JCHC and approved by the Texas Historical Commission. No consideration made due to lack of action on item 7.
 - Report on Status of Marker Applications/Dedications.
 - Report on Marker Survey/Maintenance.
 - Report of progress on the Recorded Texas Historic Landmark project.

History Appreciation:

Action Item:

9. Consider and possibly approve any pending Texas Treasure Business nominations. None submitted
 - Report on current Courthouse Mini-museum exhibits and discussion of proposed exhibits. – Linda McMahan, report submitted. See attachment H.
 - Report on updates to JCHC website and social media. – Jen Trenbeath, report submitted. See attachment I.

- Report on events at Spindletop Gladys City Boomtown Museum. – Don Smart-verbal report. New walkway added. Troy Gray has left the museum effective 1/23 new director position has been posted online but has yet been filled.
- Report on Coastal History. – Jay Camp- read report on Gilchrist at rollover pass. Named after Gib Gilchrist. Born 1897, worked for Santa Fe railroad line. Joined army engineers in WWI. Married Vesta Weaver in 1920 and lived in San Antonio. Implemented state farm to market highway system. Served as Dean of Engineering at Texas A&M. He died in College Station 1972. Rollover Pass was originally called 'the rolling over place' because merchants rolled their barrels over the small patch of land to avoid paying taxes.

Archeology Committee – Brenda Jackson

- Report on activities that promote the preservation of archeological resources. Contacted by the Sabine Neches Chapter of Master Naturalists teaching archaeology

Cemetery Committee – Paul Prosperie

10. Consider and possibly approve a project to assist Magnolia Cemetery with their application for an Historic Texas Cemetery designation from the Texas Historical Commission. Bruce moved to approve, Don seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
- Report on pending applications for Historic Texas Cemetery Designations, cemetery surveys, clean-up days or other similar activities. No report submitted.
 - Report on THC Cemetery Inventory Project. Meeting needs to be held to update members.

Courthouse and Sub-Courthouse Oversight Committee – Jen Trenbeath

- Report on status of Jefferson County Courthouse or Sub-Courthouse buildings. Nothing to report.

Certified Local Government (CLG) – Theresa Goodness

- Report on status of Historic Resources Survey and Preservation Plan project being conducted under the National Park Service Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria Emergency Supplemental Historic Preservation Fund Grant. Report submitted.

Other Business

11. Discuss status of book on Jefferson County history by the late, former JCHC Chair, Bill Quick. Theresa gave review on Bill Quick's influence. Judy updated that book is history of Sabine Pass. The book is nearly finished Book needs to be retyped and three or four entries need to be complete.
12. Discuss, consider, and possibly approve request to assist with the completion of Bill Quick's book. No motion at this time. More information is needed on the executor of the Bill Quick estate.
13. Discussion on any other item not on agenda without taking action. Receive reports on matters of community interest from elected officials, staff or members without taking action.

Mike McGreevy shared his research in historical entertainment and Vaudeville, including the history of McGreevy family members who were Vaudeville stars.

Port Arthur Report- celebrating 123rd anniversary as incorporated city. Les McMahan is advisor and will share developments with us.

Adjournment at 12:40 p.m.

Attachment A

Coordinator's Report JCHC Bi-Monthly Meeting January, 18, 2023

I was invited to attend a Courthouse Steward Workshop on November 17, 2022, hosted by Grimes County at the Grimes County Courthouse in Anderson, TX. The workshop was sponsored by the Texas Land Title Association in partnership with the Texas Historical Commission. We were given a tour of the Grimes County Courthouse and learned about the new uses for the building after Grime County restored the courthouse and built a new Justice Center to house most of the government offices. The courthouse is used for a number of community events and is often rented out for meetings for civic groups and other community organizations. The speaker encouraged us to find ways to foster “buy-in” from the community in order to maintain support for our maintenance or restoration projects. The afternoon session was about the actual maintenance and restoration of historic building and dealt with topics such as; masonry buildings, faulting, cracks and other structural damage that can occur to masonry buildings and facades, moisture penetration and insect damage. One of the THC staff members in attendance was Dan Valenzuela, our new Courthouse Reviewer, and I was pleased to get a chance to meet him and introduce myself.

The winter was pretty quiet in the office with only a few public comments or requests for help. On December 21st we were contacted by a homeowner of an historic home in Livingston. She has been facing challenges with locating contractors and craftsmen who will work on historic homes with sensitivity. Bruce Hamilton recommended that I reach out to Dohn LaBiche, and he was incredibly helpful, sharing in detail some of the projects that he has worked on and contractors who have performed extraordinary work on historic buildings. I returned the homeowner's call, but was not able to speak directly to her and have not heard back since. I've kept the notes from my conversation with Dohn, so if she gets back in contact, I'll have information to share.

I attended the Beaumont Main Street annual meeting on January 17, 2023 and was pleased to hear about what Main Street has accomplished over the past year. One of the “feathers in their cap” was their participation in our marker dedication for the William G. “Bill” Hall marker. I was unaware until I received the notice of their annual meeting, that they also nominate and facilitate Texas Treasure Business awards, though they mostly limit their awards to Main Street members. It is worth keeping in mind though and we may want to request a list of the businesses that they have recognized so our efforts aren't wasted. They also discussed the new app, Distrx, that they are working with to present an app-based walking tour of downtown Beaumont. They anticipate the roll-out to be in the next two months. The new City Manager of Beaumont, Mr. Kenneth Williams was their featured speaker and he gave a presentation on the challenges and benefits of downtown revitalization.

Also on January 17, 2023 I was visited by Mr. Calvin Williams, Jr. who is a descendent of the LeBlanc family, an early Black Beaumont family. Mr. Williams was inquiring about the difference between cemetery designations and subject markers. We spoke to a cousin of his, Mrs. Barbara LeBlanc over the phone while he was here, and I gathered a small amount of information from them about their family cemetery. It is located near Bigner in North Beaumont and is currently overgrown. I passed the information on to Kate and Paul since a cemetery designation would involve both committees.

After Commissioner's Court I had a chance to speak to Mr. Gordon Williams, who shared with me that his most recent film project will be screened at Lamar on February 2, 2023 at 5:30 p.m. at the Dishman Art Gallery. His film is titled "Beaumont's Black History in Moving Pictures". I'll also send out an email with the time and date for everyone.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jennifer Trenbeath

Coordinator- Jefferson County Historical Commission

Attachment B

**Jefferson County Historical Commission
2022 – 2023 Budget Report
January 18, 2023**

Line Item	Budget	Spent	Remaining
30-10 Books	\$250	\$0	\$250.00
30-78 Supplies	\$2,000	\$85.00	\$1915.00
30-90 Education	\$3,000	\$0	\$3,000.00
50-05 Mileage	\$500	\$0	\$500.00
50-12 Markers	\$4,800	\$0	\$4,800.00
50-21 Dues	\$850	\$60.00	\$790.00
50-62 Travel	\$1,500	\$851.54	\$648.46
40-52 Postage	\$300	\$116.00	\$184.00
Totals	\$13,200	\$1,112.54	\$12,087.46

The Jefferson County Historical Commission's 2022-2023 budget year started with \$13,200. As of Wednesday, January 18, 2023, \$1,112.54 has been spend with the remaining balance of \$12,087.46. The budget year ends on September 30, 2023.

Attachment C

Chair's Report 1/18/2023 Jefferson County Historical Commission

Discuss, consider and possibly approve 2023 Goals for JCHC

1. *Proposed Goal* - Partner with local Boy Scouts of America troops to clean and restore historical markers.
2. *Proposed Goal* – Work closely with historical resources firm, HHM, Inc. to complete our historic resources survey of Jefferson County and preservation plan project under the HIM-ESHPF sub-grant from THC.
3. *Proposed Goal* - Design JCHC calendar for 2024, highlighting photographs and important historical events from Jefferson County's history. The process takes time to complete, and ideally the project should be ready to send to the printer by September 1st to allow time for proofing and printing.
4. *Proposed Goal* – Work towards obtaining Texas Historic Cemetery status for Magnolia Cemetery and potentially other cemeteries.
5. *Proposed Goal* – Work towards obtaining National Register of Historic Places designation for Temple to the Brave.
6. *Proposed Goal* - Continue to support the effort to bring the battleship Texas to Beaumont.
7. *Proposed Goal* - Creating video of county history to display in mini-museum.
8. *Proposed Goal* - Continue to support the reroofing of the rest of the CCC Building (Nature Center) at Tyrrell Park.
9. *Proposed Goal* - Include local media in meeting notices.
10. *Proposed Goal* - Reach out to local museums and preservation partners to invite them to create mini-museum exhibits.

The above 2023 goals were proposed, discussed, and approved by JCHC at this meeting.

Attachment D

Report of Theresa Goodness, JCHC Designee for Beaumont Landmark Commission January 18, 2023

Beaumont Landmark Commission has met once since my last report. On January 9, 2023, the Beaumont Landmark Commission met to review the following Request(s) for a Certificate of Appropriateness:

1. PZ2022-466: A request for a Certificate of Appropriateness to construct a greenhouse.

Applicant: Gustavo Garcia

Location: 2335 North Street

Action: Approved

2. PZ2022-480: A request for a Certificate of Appropriateness to remove and resize a window to a house.

Applicant: Danica Moreno

Location: 2480 Evalon Avenue

Action: Approved

3. PZ2022-484: A request for a Certificate of Appropriateness to paint a house.

Applicant: Carter and Company

Location: 2320 Long Avenue

Action: Approved

4. PZ2022-485: A request for a Certificate of Appropriateness to replace a roof.

Applicant: Brandon Smith

Location: 2575 Pecos Street

Action: Approved

5. PZ2022-508: A request for a Certificate of Appropriateness for a new construction.

Applicant: Ramiro Nunez

Location: 2627 Hazel Avenue

Action: Approved

Attachment E

Tyrrell Historical Library: The THLA had its annual election meeting on 13 December 2022. Tina Kibbe was elected the new president.

Ryan Smith, director of the Texas Energy Museum, made the photos from the Weber collection available to the Tyrrell. Some of them were added to the Tyrrell online collections. I have looked at all the 535 photos on the Tyrrell website and have found numerous errors in the descriptions. I asked Bill Grace who had written the descriptions and he said that he had. He could not remember where he had gotten the information. I had included in the metadata of each image a description, some of which he had used in annotating the content of the images. My research on those scans was ongoing, so it is possible that he was using earlier images that did not have the more recent information. He is willing to meet with me to make corrections but that will be a very labor-intensive project. I would have to look at the online description and then locate the image in my files to see what metadata that I have. He said that we could get together after his vacation.

Historic Buildings Photography: I have continued my weekly visits to Tyrrell Park to check on the progress on the CCC building, now referred to as the Nature Center. The only structural work being done is the laying out of a new sidewalk around the western side of the building. Rebecca Woodland oversees the building which now houses the Gift Shop from Cattail Marsh. The city has been looking into getting the fountain and pool in the courtyard working. The only exhibit present is a temporary display of the CCC history of Tyrrell Park. Rebecca is working on finding funds for the exhibits.

The bridge over Hillebrandt Bayou on Hwy 124 is nearing completion—date set for 1 February. I do not think that it will be open that soon. Work still to be done is to pour the concrete in the roadbed leading up to the bridge. There seems to be an extra lane on the west side (incomplete) of the bridge; maybe a bike lane.

The FEMA house on Wilbur Avenue off Florida Street has been finished. I have found two new FEMA houses, one at 660 Campus Street and another at 1280 Avenue A. The one on Avenue A is the typical house on wooden pilings. However, the house on Campus is a new type—concrete panels on a slab. I talked to the superintendent who was supervising the project and he says that their company has built two others of the style in Beaumont. I would like to locate those houses.

The pursuit of photographing the interior of the old Beaumont High is at a standstill. I was given the name of Hannah O'Toole as a contact person who could get me into the building. I have left two phone messages and have not been called back.

Attachment F

Report on Status of Marker Applications/Dedications

We are still awaiting a draft inscription for the C. Homer and Edith Fuller Chambers House, which, as of October 11, the THC marker department stated was yet to be drafted. They hope to get it out “soon.” Thankfully, the THC finally hired a new historian for their history department in November, Alicia Costello, so hopefully it will not be not too much longer before we receive same.

The William G. “Bill” Hall marker was dedicated on Saturday, December 10, at 2:00 p.m. at Pearl and College. We had a great JCHC turnout; thanks to everyone who attended. Drs. Jimmy Simmons and Sam Monroe each spoke and provided some fascinating insight on the workings of the music industry here in Beaumont back in the early 1960s. Jimmy Simmons even singled out our own Lynn Simons, who used to play bass at Bill Hall’s recording studio. The event was standing room only and attended by legendary songwriters Allen Reynolds, Dickey Lee and Bob McDill from Nashville. Local luminaries, representative of a broad spectrum of artistic endeavors, were also in attendance, including musicians Mark Chestnut, Drew Kimura and “Jivin’ Gene” Bourgeois; Greg Busceme from the Art Studio; and photographer Keith Carter.

Potential New Marker Requests

We were contacted by Gordon Williams of Lamar about a potential marker for the Beaumont Race Riots. As a matter of interest, the 80th anniversary of the riots is in June 2023. I explained the untold stories and regular marker programs to him and he is currently digesting all of this information. He may have potential funding for the marker through the Buffalo Soldiers Museum in Houston.

We have been contacted by BSA Troop Leader Chad Myzell about the possibility of listing the Temple to the Brave in the National Register for Historic Places. Jen, Bruce and I had an initial meeting with Chad; Maj. Dennis White, curator of the Temple’s museum; and Ed Touchet of the Hinchee House this past Saturday at the American Legion Hall to discuss the nomination process. One item noted is that the Temple is located on city property, and that we would need to have city permission to move forward with this process. Also, does the JCHC want to form an official committee for this project, and if so, may we place this on the agenda for discussion at our next meeting?

Marker Relocation updates:

Spindle Top Hill Confederate Camp, Site of: We have some exciting news at last. I visited with Taylor Westpuhl on Thursday, January 12. The Humane Society's renovations are finally complete. Taylor told me that their Board of Directors met on January 11 (the previously evening) and the reinstallation of our marker was discussed at that time. Arrangements are being made with a contractor to properly set the stone in the dog cemetery, as previously discussed, within the next month. I will continue to monitor progress, and obtain photos and GPS coordinates upon completion of the project. Good things really do come to those who wait.

Miscellaneous:

BSA Troop Leader Chad Myzell inquired about cleaning markers. He actually wanted to know how to clean stone markers (for example, the World War monument), but I emailed him back and asked if his offer also extended to historical markers – if so, we would love the help - and I provided the link to the THC's page on how to refinish markers. I stated that I would bring up the subject at our meeting today. If the Boy Scouts are potentially willing to undertake such a project, is an action item required? Naturally, we would want them to let us know what markers had been cleaned/refinished. Also, the THC has a page devoted to the cleaning of stone monuments, including things not to do, which I will send him following our discussion today.

Status of 2021 Marker Survey

The last two remaining surveys to be completed are both downtown Beaumont NHRP sites (also originally assigned to another one of our members to survey):

2. Beaumont Historical Commercial District: roughly bounded by Orleans, Bowie, Neches, Crockett, Laurel, Willow, Broadway, Pearl, Main, and Gilbert Streets; and

3. Beaumont Historic Commercial District Extension: roughly bounded by Willow, Neches, Gilbert and Main Streets.

I have made a couple of requests for a volunteer to snap some photos of any particularly historic buildings in these two districts. Did anyone have a chance to do so?

Please be reminded that it has now been over one year since the 2021 marker survey project was assigned, and we still have not completed same. Your help in bringing this important assignment to a close would be greatly appreciated.

Attachment G

Certified Local Government Committee Report January 18, 2023

1. Report on status of Historic Resources Survey and Preservation Plan project being conducted under the National Park Service Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria Emergency Supplemental Historic Preservation Fund Grant.

On November 10, 2022, our vendor, HHM, Inc., completed Task 9, the draft Historic Survey report, available for download at https://dmoore.egnyte.com/fl/OewKX5CqSr/Task-09_Draft-Survey-Report.

JCHC submitted our comments following a special meeting held on December 7, 2022.

Invoices received and approved through January 4, 2023, total \$199,894.51, with a remaining grant fund balance of \$50,018.49.

The next task due under our contract is Task 10, Draft Historic Preservation Plan which is due from the vendor by June 16, 2023.

Attachment H

Jefferson County Courthouse Mini-Museum Exhibit

We want to thank Dr. Steven P. Lewis for hosting the new exhibit in the mini-museum. The exhibit is entitled “Floods in Beaumont” and will run through the end of February. You might want to go by and view the exhibit before leaving the Courthouse today. We appreciate Dr. Lewis’ hard work putting the exhibit together and the detailed information and pictures on exhibit.

At present, there is no one signed up to place an exhibit in March and April. If you or someone you know would like to place an exhibit in the mini-museum, please contact Linda McMahan at 409-498-0533 for more information.

Attachment I

Web Committee Report

Very little to report, with the exception that all of Mildred Wright's Cemetery Books are now scanned in OCR with searchable text.

I plan to work on the website redesign with MIS now that my software issues have been resolved.