



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

Bi-Monthly Meeting March 16, 2016 Ben Rogers Regional Visitors Center Beaumont, TX

Call to Order / Greetings – Chair Theresa Goodness

The meeting was called to order by Chair Theresa Goodness. All JCHC members were in attendance: Sarah Bellian, Bill Cummings, Jessie Davis, Theresa Goodness, Bruce Hamilton, Brenda Jackson, Steven Lewis, Mike McGreevy, Les McMahan, Linda McMahan, Paul Prosperie, Don Smart and Jimmy Sparks.

Consideration of Minutes of Previous Meeting – Chair Theesa Goodness

Chair Goodness shared that the Minutes for the Friday, January 22, 2016 meeting had been emailed to each member on Tuesday, March 9, 2016 for review. She asked if there were any additions or corrections. There were none. A motion was made by Jessie Davis and seconded by Bill Cummings to accept the Minutes as printed. The motion passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report – Linda McMahan

Treasurer Linda McMahan reported that out of the JCHC budget of \$11,600, \$2,370.49 has been spent leaving a remaining balance of \$9,229.51.

Chair Report – Theresa Goodness

In March, 2015, the JCHC reviewed our By-Laws and the membership approved some changes including adding a requirement that all members must perform at least fifty (50) volunteer hours and attend at least two (2) meetings per calendar year. This is in accordance with THC guidelines. In May, 2015, the amended By-Laws were approved unanimously.

Chair Goodness shared that many times during the year members are reminded to turn in their volunteer hours:

1. Linda McMahan, JCHC Coordinator / Secretary, sends out emails to members before each meeting with the reminder of the requirement to submit volunteer hours and to attend at least two meetings annually. On the sign-in sheet for each meeting a box is listed to check whether the member has submitted volunteer hours, and each newsletter also has reminders. A Volunteer Hours Form is always included in the Bi-Monthly Minutes Packet.
2. On December 29, 2015, Linda emailed the final reminder to members letting them know their hours had to be turned in by January 4, 2016. (This information is

required for our Annual Report to Commissioners Court and also to THC.) All but two JCHC members fulfilled this commitment.

On February 8, 2016, JCHC submitted to the Jefferson County Commissioners Court the 2015 Annual Report and the list of JCHC members in good standing for reappointment in 2016. The two above mentioned members were not submitted for reappointed pursuant to the JCHC By-Laws, Article III, Section 6, requiring members to submit at least fifty volunteer hours of service each calendar year.

On February 9, 2016, a letter was sent to each of the two members, Ron Ellington and Ramona Hutchinson, informing them their memberships had lapsed and their memberships were not submitted to be reappointed pursuant to the JCHC By-Laws, Article III, Section 6, requiring members to submit at least fifty (50) volunteer hours of service each calendar year. They were thanked for their service.

On February 12, 2016, Commissioner Eddie Arnold contacted Chair Goodness about a call he received from one of the two former members who was upset about the letter of February 9, 2016. Theresa explained the reasons why the letter was sent. In addition, Linda immediately sent Commissioner Arnold (cc: Judge Branick) an email with more details of what led up to the non-reappointment.

During the meeting of March 16, 2016, questions were presented to the JCHC membership for discussion. The questions and answers follow below:

1. Are the service requirements in our By-Laws reasonable? If not, should the JCHC consider amending the By-Laws?

All agreed they were reasonable and should be left as is.

2. Did the former members receive notice of the service requirements?

Yes, they received numerous notices and were also present when the By-Laws were being discussed and also voted on. They had opportunities to voice their opposition, if any. There was no opposition.

3. Should the former members have been recommended for reappointment to JCHC?

No. They did not meet requirement of membership as stated in By-Laws.

4. In the future should the issue of members not meeting the service requirements as set out in the By-Laws be handled differently?

They should be handled the same as mentioned above. It was also suggested that a formal letter be sent the first of December letting members know how many volunteer hours have been turned in and meetings attended. This would clear up any question as to who would be reappointed.

Coordinator Report – Linda McMahan

Linda reminded members to please turn in their volunteer hours for January – March, 2016 as soon as possible if not already done so.

With the recent appointment / approval of JCHC members by Commissioners Court, it is again time for each member to sign the Oath of Office / Statement of Appointed Officer form. Chair Goodness will notarize each completed form and file / record forms in County Records.

Committee Reports

Archeology – Brenda Jackson

Jefferson County Historical Commission will be hosting a Regional Archeology Month meeting on Wednesday, October 12, 2016 in the Jefferson County Jury Impaneling Room. Kerry Nichols, Ph.D., from the Texas Historical Commission will be the speaker. Special invitations will be sent to surrounding counties in our region and the meeting will also be open to the public. More information will be available as time gets closer.

About Town – Steven Lewis

Steven shared some “then and now” postcards of Beaumont. It was amazing to see early photographs of Beaumont and learn new history of old places. Included in the Bi-Monthly Packet each member received was a copy of the Tyrrell Library “Journal” magazine which included the article “Investigations of Beaumont History” by Steven Lewis.

Cemetery – Paul Prosperie, Jimmy Sparks, Mike McGreevy

Beaumont Heritage Society / JCHC Magnolia Cemetery Tour will be held Thursday, April 28, 2016 from 5:30 – 7:30 PM. This is open to the community and lots of planning and research have gone into preparing for this special event.

Paul shared he has audios of the Nederland Heritage Society Annual Meeting “Early Nederland History” and also sessions from the East Texas Historical Association Spring Meeting. If you would like a copy, please check with him.

Certified Local Government / Museum of the Gulf Coast – Sarah Bellian

Sarah reported on the first Certified Local Government Informational Meeting held at the Port Neches Library on Tuesday, March 8, 2016. There was a good turnout with the Beaumont Enterprise interviewing several attendees. Two local gentlemen agreed to be interviewed for an oral history on early Hispanic history in South County.

The next meeting will be held at the Precinct 1 Service Center at a date to be announced.

Courthouse Oversight – Linda McMahan

Linda reported on the restoration work being done in the 317th District Court and Commissioners Court.

Dick Dowling – Mike McGreevy

Mike reported there will be a Dick Dowling Day Memorial Commemoration Service and Picnic on September 10, 2016 at 10:00 AM at the Sabine Pass Battleground Historic Site.

Historic Markers – Les McMahan

St. Paula United Methodist Church marker – Application was rejected by the Texas Historical Commission due to lack of sufficient documentation. Les talked with the applicant sponsor regarding the stronger competition for fewer markers made available each year, and that all applications are rated and scored against each other and that approval is not automatic any more. The sponsor is to meet with Isreal Chapel AME and Rock Island Baptist Church in Port Arthur to review the level of documentation for their approved applications.

Port Arthur Landmark Commission – Les McMahan

The Commission met on February 25, 2016 to review one application for a Certificate of Appropriateness for a porch modification to a house in the historic district. The Commission voted to approve the Certificate with conditions that the property owner construct railings and posts with features that would be similar to a particular house cited as an example. The Commission also appointed a committee of three members (Dohn LaBiche, Les McMahan, and Sam Monroe) to meet with the City's Planning Director to develop construction/ reconstruction guidelines for the historic district. Beaumont's historic district's guidelines will be used as a start for Port Arthur's.

Bill Quick's Book – Bruce Hamilton

Bruce reported that help was needed in inventorying Bill's papers housed at the Sam Houston State Library in Liberty. If you are interested in helping, please check with Don Smart to learn the dates that JCHC members can help on Saturdays.

Web Site – Bill Cummings

Bill reported that work continues on the JCHC county web site. Work is being done on consolidating historic marker information and pictures of markers. The list includes THC Subject Markers, Recorded Texas Historic Landmarks, State Archeological Landmarks and National Register of Historic Places Markers. Jefferson County has a total of one hundred forty-six (146) markers.

Sam Houston State Library / Early Sports – Don Smart

Don said some progress is being made in inventorying Bill Quick's papers. Don also reported that Liberty was not having floods as Newton, Orange and some of Jefferson County was due to heavy rains in North Texas. The Sam Houston Library was lucky to not experience what the other areas were suffering.

Tourism / Ben Rogers Visitors Center – Jessie Davis

Jessie reported tourism is down at the Ben Rogers Visitors Center due to work construction on Interstate 10. This will continue for several months to come.

Beaumont Landmark Commission – Jessie Davis

Coordinator McMahan reported that Jessie was waiting approval from the Beaumont City Council to allow her to serve on the Beaumont Landmark Commission as the JCHC representative.

Unfinished / New Business – None

Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned at 1:25 PM. The next meeting will be Wednesday, May 18, 2016 at the Visitors Center.