

Hays County Historical Commission

Minutes of January 27, 2022

The meeting of the Hays County Historical Commission was held January 27, 2022, via Zoom. Kate Johnson, chair, called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m. (CST).

Roll Call

A quorum was present at roll call.

Present: Cynthia Allison, Delbert Bassett, Marie Bassett, Eric Beckers, Linda Coker, Anthony Davis, Robert Frizzell, Jeremy Garrett, Hoot Gibson, Kate Johnson, Lila Knight, Jo Landon, Cindy Meyer, Ralph Meyer, Ryan Patrick Perkins, Sally Ramirez, Daphne Tenorio, Willie Tenorio, Rosina Valle, Vanessa Westbrook

Absent: Cindy Hunter (With no objections Ms. Hunter's absence was excused).

Citizens Comments

There were no citizens comments

Approval of Minutes

Hoot Gibson made a motion to accept the minutes from October 28, 2021. The motion was seconded by Jo Landon and passed unanimously.

Committee Reports

1884 Hays County Jail Restoration Committee

Committee Chair Ryan Patrick Perkins reported the committee met November 10th. Discussion was held regarding a letter from the current jail architect to Kate Johnson and other members of the committee in response to their concerns regarding proposed interior and exterior details. The committee consented to postponing any official reply until after the committee had the opportunity to review the contract between Hays County and the architect, Hutson & Gallagher. A copy of the contract, including the current budget and other information was received last week. The committee will meet on February 11 to discuss the best course of action going forward.

African American Heritage Committee

Committee Chair Vanessa Westbrook announced that the committee would be compiling a list of events from around the county for Black History Month which would be posted on the HCHC website. It should be finalized by next week.

Cemetery Committee

Committee Chair Jo Landon announced the updated inventory of San Vicente Cemetery has been combined with the older inventory into a spreadsheet. The committee will meet January

29th at the cemetery to define the sections which will be added to the spreadsheet. When completed, the revised inventory will be added to the HCHC website.

Chair Landon also reported that Tim Van de Vorde, Hays County Transportation Department, is obtaining estimates to repair the fence at the San Marcos-Blanco Cemetery.

Certified Local Government Committee

Committee Chair Lila Knight reported that the committee is currently focusing on conducting a resurvey of the historic buildings in Kyle to be accomplished by volunteers. Anyone who is interested in joining us, please contact me. We would love to have you. The committee will meet in early February following the THC annual conference, where many of us will be attending a special workshop on conducting surveys

We have two teams of people who will soon visit the historic preservation commissions in Buda and Dripping Springs to discuss the CLG program. Both of those cities are eligible for participating in the program.

Our CLG annual report to the THC is due next month. It should be completed very soon.

Courthouse Museum Committee

Committee Chair Linda Coker reported that the committee hosted a meeting of the San Marcos Chamber of Commerce Youth Leadership group at the courthouse. For the celebration of Martin Luther King Jr. Day, our conference room was utilized as a waiting room for those waiting on COVID-19 test results.

The Day of the Dead altar in the courthouse rotunda was a huge success and will be continued each year. The Hays County Veteran Services Office's display case has been upgraded and there are new cases on the Calaboose African American History Museum and the GI Forum. Plans are underway to update the exhibits at the Courthouse Museum.

The Road Department found an old scythe which will be the impetus for an exhibit soon on agriculture in Hays County.

Hispanic Heritage Committee

Committee Chair Willie Tenorio reported the committee collaborated with the Courthouse Committee on the Day of the Dead celebration. There will be a meeting of the committee next Monday.

Historical Marker Committee

Committee Chair Marie Bassett gave updates on the following markers still in progress:
Kyle Depot — order at foundry.

La Sociedad Mutualista Cuauhtémoc — the text was approved at the THC quarterly meeting.

Don Felipe Roque de la Portilla — two direct descendants of Don Felipe had noticed the marker was missing. One sent an application for replacement, so THC was happy to tell her that a free one had been granted. They will be included in editing the text.

Alba Ranch — still awaiting THC edits.

William B. Travis — still awaiting THC edits.

Eagle Sign and Design had caught up with the backlog from the former foundry closure, but is now beset with COVID-19-related problems, such as rapid sudden turnover of staff. It was having difficulty securing raw materials for the markers, especially aluminum for the posts. It was expected that by the end of the year fabrication and shipping processes should be back on track. A new shipper had to be found, due to the non-standard lengths of the markers. Then, along came Omicron.

Regarding the Undertold Marker Program, Chair Bassett reported that no applications were submitted through the HCHC for Undertold Markers in the fall. One had been received the afternoon before the deadline for “The Beat,” too late to be reviewed by the committee. The submitter was advised to send it directly to THC. He decided to wait until the next Undertold Marker window. Two were sent directly to THC: “Ranch Hands, Vaqueros, and Stock Raisers” and “Old First Baptist Church.” After receiving copies from THC, the marker committee and the cemetery chair reviewed them and sent THC their comments. If they are selected in early February, the marker committee will deal with them through the normal editing process.

Chair Bassett gave information on the upcoming “Regular Marker Window.” Application forms are now available at the THC website. The window opens on March 1, 2022, and closes on May 16 at 2 p.m. (CST). Regular markers must be submitted through the HCHC. Themes earning extra points this year are: Communications; Industry, Business & Commerce; and Natural Resources. Applicants should contact us as early as possible, but no later than April 30, in order for the committee to review applications and narratives. Several potential applicants have been given all the necessary information. The Historical Marker Committee section of the HCHC website has been updated with information, including application form and instructions.

Chair Bassett announced that Lila Knight joined the marker committee in December. Her knowledge and research skills will be invaluable. Two meetings were held, with one involving a visit to a possible RTHL applicant in Kyle. The committee members communicate regularly by email.

Kyle Railroad Depot and Heritage Center Committee

Committee Chair Patrick (Hoot) Gibson reported that Christmas at the Depot was a huge success. He thanked the county for the help with the outside decorations and the entire Depot Committee for help in decorating and staffing. Mr. and Mrs. Claus (Willie and Daphne Tenorio) have our heartfelt thanks, as well as our musicians who added to the holiday spirit. He announced we received many compliments on the festive appearance.

Chair Gibson also thanked the Kyle VFW Post 12058 and Ben Courtney for fixing our 1908 Sessions Regulator wall clock. It is finally running accurately and is more than a wall ornament. These men fixed it for free and Chair Gibson can't thank them enough. He asked all the volunteers to please see him first before winding or resetting the time as the clock is touchy and delicate.

January began slowly with approximately 20 visitors so far. With the construction finished in the downtown park, we can expect more activity and foot traffic in the near future. We are all looking forward to a more active year in bringing the history of Kyle to our visitors.

There has been a problem with mice in the Depot, but thus far five had been caught. The problem may be under control now.

Natural Heritage Committee

Committee Chair Delbert Bassett reported the Omicron threat curtailed all NHC's field surveys and visits to Hays County sites of significant floral collections. Eric Beckers published two editions (December 2021 and January 2022) of his excellent monthly newsletter, "What's Happenin' on the Hill." These are posted on our website for all to enjoy.

Report on Technology and Website

Vanessa Westbrook gave statistics on the website wherein 2,534 views were made in the last quarter of 2021. She does not yet have statistics for the Facebook page.

Adjourn

Hoot Gibson made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Jo Landon seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 6:37 p.m. (CST)

Submitted by Lila Knight, Secretary