

## HAYS COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes—June 25, 2020

The June 25, 2020, meeting of the Hays County Historical Commission (HCHC) was called to order by Chairman Kate Johnson at 6:09 p.m. on ZOOM. After the roll call by HCHC Secretary Luanne Cullen, a quorum was determined as being met. The following HCHC members were in attendance: Delbert Bassett, Marie Bassett, Eric Beckers, Linda Coker, Luanne Cullen, Irma Gaitán, Dorothy Gumbert, Eddie Gumbert, Kate Johnson, Quincy Kennedy, Jo Landon, Jo Ann Lowe, Cindy Meyer, Ralph Meyer, Jerry T. Moore, July Moreno, Henry Oles, Marian Oles, Trisha Randow, Gina Rogers, Daphne Tenorio, Vanessa Westbrook, and ex officio member Lila Knight. One guest, Anita Collins, attended.

**Vote on accepting the minutes from February 28, 2020, and May 28, 2020.** After discussion to address the minutes separately, Daphne Tenorio moved to accept the February minutes; Lila Knight seconded the motion. The February minutes were accepted as written and delivered through email. After discussion about the May 28 minutes, Daphne Tenorio moved to hold the vote until the August meeting in order for HCHC members to read the additional information requested by Gina Rogers to be included in her Tejano History report; Gina Rogers seconded the motion. The members voted, and it was decided to vote on the May minutes at the August 27 meeting after members were able to read the additional information.

**Chair Report**—Kate Johnson announced that Lila Knight had accepted the assignment of Oral History Chairman, and the next HCHC meeting would be held by ZOOM on August 27, 2020. She also described the actions taken to find ways to protect the markers on CR 266 near the San Marcos de Neve site. She spoke with Aaron Jones, Hays County Road Superintendent, who recommended a weathering steel guardrail, called Cor-ten. Its rusted finish would be more visually appealing than a shiny one. These rails will be placed in front of the markers closer to the fence. Reflectors can be added that are specifically made for these rails. Also, saw-toothed curbing can be added in order for water to drain away from the markers. He said that speed bumps do not do well for high traffic areas and can cause accidents.

### **Committee Reports:**

1. Historic Kyle RR Depot & Heritage Center Committee—Trish Randow said that the Depot Committee held a ZOOM meeting on June 17 to discuss the possibility of opening the Depot to visitors in July, but, because of the increase in COVID-19 numbers, no plan was implemented. Guidelines for opening in the future were discussed. In light of the Black Lives Matter movement, the committee also discussed whether or not they should make changes in the handling of the Black Waiting Room. In the past, they had discussed the Jim Crow laws with visitors and how it affected the construction of the Depot and its passengers. They decided to continue handling the issue in the same

manner as in the past. Vanessa Westbrook had suggested doing a virtual tour of the Depot for the HCHC website and plans were being formulated. Lila Knight also suggested looking at the Pound House's website for education modules. Trisha was hoping that a day could be scheduled to weed the flower beds around the Depot. Kate Johnson said that the outdoor furniture purchase would be included on the next agenda of the Hays County Commissioners' Court.

2. Technology Report—Vanessa Westbrook reported that no stats were provided for website usage as the last quarterly report was provided at the May meeting. HCHC chairmen have the ability to the ZOOM account for committee meetings and can contact her to set up ZOOM meeting such as the one for the Kyle Railroad Depot committee in June. She can also attend meetings to provide technical support as needed. With updates made to HCHC Facebook, the number of “Likes” had increased by 50%. Planning was underway for the design of a virtual tour of the Kyle Depot. Equipment will be purchased to record a docent-based tour of the Depot. The Historic Courthouse is also on the list for virtual tour recording.
3. Old Hays County Jail Committee—Kate Johnson reported that our architects, Tracy and Chris Hutson, said that the construction documents were 95% finished and needed to be 100% completed before we go out for bid. A separate bid would be submitted for restrooms and landscaping. The site survey was completed and would be kept in the County Clerk's office. The museum consultant, Erin McClelland, sent her fundraising brochure to the Old County Jail Committee for comments. The Restrooms and Landscape Scope are in the Construction Documents as “Add Alternates,” so the contractor will provide a separate bid for the restrooms and landscaping due to our budget restraints. The committee members would provide their comments by June 28 in order for Erin to close out her consulting contract with the county.
4. Cemetery Committee—Jo Landon said that she had replied to Mary Suniga from Corpus Christi about her questions about Cementerio del Rio access and inventory of inscriptions. Jo had finalized the HTC (Historic Texas Cemetery) application and submitted it to THC for the Byrd Owen-Payne Cemetery. Richard Gomez had recently cleaned the cemetery. A call from Jane Ashburn, Preservation Texas, had been received asking if a workshop could be presented in a Hays County cemetery in September, and the Kyle Cemetery had been selected. Kate Johnson added that the speaker, Jonathan Appell, is a well-known monuments conservator and speaker in gravestone studies, and that having him would be a special event. Since these workshops were being presented as part of the 48 State Tour, this event would

represent Texas. All HCHC members would be invited to register to attend.

5. Historical Markers Committee—Marie Bassett said that the regular marker window had closed, and only one had been submitted, the William B. Travis League. Application forms for the 2020 Undertold Markers would be online beginning on September 1 and would be accepted from November 1 through December 15, 2020. Marie described Undertold Markers and Replacement Markers and explained their purposes, costs, requirements, etc.

The Committee had edited the first drafts of the Kyle Depot and La Sociedad Mutualista Cuauhtémoc texts. They were joined by the Kyle Railroad Depot and Heritage Center Committee in the Depot text. Quincy Kennedy and Kate Johnson were working with Hays County Road Superintendent, Aaron Jones, on options for improving the safety of the markers at the San Marcos de Neve site. Also Freddy (Alfredo) Medina of Main Street, San Marcos, would like to refurbish markers in downtown San Marcos. Marie directed him to THC's website and indicated the only permission needed was to step onto private property. She also gave him contact information for Joan Sabol, of Jacob's Well DAR, who had recently finished a couple of markers in Wimberley.

6. Natural Heritage Committee—Delbert Bassett said that, because of the COVID-19 pandemic, no field trips or meetings had been held and all projects were on hold. Eric Beckers described his meeting with the Texas Parks and Wildlife and UT staff at the Halifax Ranch to locate and video several plants and to make plans to gather seeds from some of the endangered species. Lila Knight said that the large oak tree on Old Stagecoach Road in Kyle had been saved from removal because of the many people who had signed the online petition. Linda Coker said that County Commissioner Lon Shell wants HCHC to do a study of the cultural landscape of the land at El Rancho Cima. This would include the historical and prehistorical features, topography, etc. that would enhance information for future grant proposals and other projects.
7. Tejano History Committee—Gina Rogers described her actions in contacting the courthouse chair and requesting the utilization of El Centro and Dr. Espinoza in preparing an exhibit in the museum. Dr. Espinoza shared updates of ongoing improvements to El Centro including photos of the new media center. The proposed text for the Cuauhtémoc Hall marker was received from THC and the Tejano Committee worked with the Hall board member, Liz Castañeda, to support their involvement with the final edits. A proposed June 14 ZOOM meeting with Dr. Garza and Maria Rocha was rescheduled at their request. The Committee met on June 6 at the Kyle Depot to discuss pending business and new business. New business included

edits to the Mission/Vision statement, discussion on Daphne Tenorio's conversation with Judge Becerra for a subject marker, and how the Tejano committee can effectively complement the other committees through collaboration. Tejano Committee member July Moreno requested that she be added to the HCHC Arts Committee and removed from the Historical Marker Committee, and Daphne Tenorio elected to no longer be a Tejano Committee member and was appointed to the Courthouse Committee. Kate reminded the committee that all information, requests, and changes to the museum should go through Linda Coker as the Courthouse Committee chairman.

8. Courthouse Committee—Linda Coker described the history of the Courthouse Museum with its hurried timeline to open (three weeks) in 2012 as directed by County Judge Bert Cobb and the concurrent opening of El Centro Cultural Hispano de San Marcos, HCHC member Ofelia Vásquez-Philo's long-anticipated dream center. It was Ofelia's request to the Courthouse Museum to allow El Centro to tell the Hispanic story. Plans are being made to update the museum with displays to describe the diversity of Hays County.

Linda also said that the Courthouse was again closed due to COVID-19 but that Art Squared was still scheduled for July 11. If that event was held, the Museum would be opened with proper precautions. She said that the bulletin board by the elevator had been updated and that she was working with the San Marcos CVB (Convention and Visitors Bureau) to add displays to empty downtown buildings using Untold Stories of San Marcos.

9. Certified Local Government (CLG)—Kate Johnson described the HCHC's inclusion in CLG since 1990. As part of the CLG, reviews are provided of various projects in the county. She was recently asked to provide comments on a telecommunications project.

**Citizens Comments**—no comments were provided.

**Adjourn Meeting**—Jerry T. Moore moved that the meeting adjourn; Lila Knight seconded the motion. The ZOOM meeting adjourned at 7:24 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Luanne P. Cullen, HCHC Secretary