

HARRISON COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes

April 14th 2016

The Harrison County Historical Commission (HCHC) is the county agency in Harrison County, Texas for historic preservation. Its mission is to assist the commissioners' court and the Texas Historical Commission (THC) in the preservation of our county's historical and cultural resources and to protect and preserve the county's historic and pre-historic resources for the use, education, enjoyment and economic benefit of present and future generations.

Members Present: Tom Speir, Jean Birmingham, Ann Brannon, Robert Wood, Thomas Richardson, Gail Beil and Becky Palmer.

Visitor: Bonnie Strauss, Bethany Dean

I. Call to Order

Tom Speir, chair, called the meeting to order on Thursday, April 14th 2016 at 1:35 p.m. in the Marshall T&P Depot. Tom welcomed all present and thanked the museum for hosting the meeting.

Tom announced that our Secretary, Richard Magrill, had suffered a heart attack on Monday of this week and was in ICU at Good Shephard in Longview. Everyone extended their sincere wishes for his speedy recovery. For this meeting, Tom served both as Chairman and as Secretary.

II. Approval of Minutes

Minutes of the March 10th, 2016 meeting of the HCHC were approved as distributed.

III. Treasurer's Report

Elizabeth Bradshaw was absent and no report on the "Friends of HCHC" funds was given.

Tom reported that the HCHC budget from the County has a balance of \$2,634.03 of the original \$3000 budget for this Fiscal Year (FY). We have 87.8% of our budget remaining. We still have major expenses facing us this FY, including various memberships, a banner, and a cordless sander.

IV. The standing committee reports are as follows:

A. Archaeology

Tom Speir reported that Hynson Springs off of FM 449 in Harrison County had been visited, with permission from the current property owners, and recorded as archaeological site 41HS1005. The site already has a pipeline at the top of the ridge which may have impacted the location of the old Hotel Randall. Recording the site now gives it first level protection from future public works projects.

The Young's Mill Pond site north of Hallsville was also visited, thanks to the efforts of Thomas Richardson. It was recorded as 41HS1004.

Public works projects in the county included two Positive Train Control structures planned for construction on the Union Pacific railroad between Marshall and Hallsville. We requested, and received of the Archaeological and Historic Records Review report for both sites, which indicated no sites would be impacted by this new construction.

Additionally, we received a report on the property on Travis Street in Marshall where the new Junior High School is to be built. That report also stated that there were no historic or cultural concerns with building at that site.

B. Archives

Tom Speir reported that he has made very little progress in filing at the office. We still need more help. (Please contact Tom if you can spend a couple of hours helping to file someday.)

C. Cemeteries

Thomas Richardson reported that the Hallsville Cemetery historic marker is broken. It has been patched but needs replacing at some time in the future.

He also reported on the Young Cemetery which he and Tom Speir visited. That cemetery has been recorded as archaeological site 41HS1006 as it did not exist on any of the Texas Historical Commission's (THC) Atlases or databases.

He mentioned the Springhill Cemetery which was visited briefly. It seemed to be in good condition, and it was noted that it is on the THC database.

Algoma Cemetery's southern section (south of US Hwy 80, or Victory Drive) is on the THC database, but not the northern section. Tom Speir advised the THC of this oversight so that the northern section would receive some protection from public works projects.

The discovery of a headstone in the Marshall subdivision off Henley Perry (across from Good Shepherd Medical Center) led to a visit. That subdivision was originally the site of the Monticello Cemetery prior to the construction of houses in the early 20th century. All known burials, save one, had been disinterred and relocated to other area cemeteries (the one known burial is John Duncan who died in 1873). The discovered headstone was for a woman who may have been relocated, as we found she has a newer headstone in the Whaley Cemetery in Elysian Fields. The area where the old headstone was discovered was reportedly once the home of a former employee of Sullivan Funeral Home. Studies will continue on this site to determine what needs to be done.

D. Education

Tom Speir reported meeting with Sons of Confederate Veterans at their request on March 22nd. He presented the same PowerPoint presentation on the HCHC that he had previously shown to the Rotary Club of Marshall.

Members of the HCHC met with Sharon Dews from the Marshall ISD on April 6th to speak to us about reviving the History Fair.

This meeting determined that the HCHC should move forward with a limited History Fair this first year to determine its feasibility for expansion in the

future. The History Fair would be limited to Marshall ISD 4th, 5th, and 6th graders who would construct projects on the topic of “Local Harrison County - People, Places and Things”. Of these three grade Divisions, there will be three Categories, including Traditional, Performance, and Documentary.

Students can participate in the Category of their choice either as an Individual or part of a Group. Traditional Exhibits will be limited to four in a group, Performance limited to six in a group, and Documentary limited to four to a group. Certificates and/or awards will be presented to First and Second place winners.

A rough time-frame was determined. Preliminary promotion of this event will begin next month with the Marshall ISD. The Fair will be this Fall, and the actual event and judging will be next January. This will be local only, and will not allow winners to move up to other levels of competition. If this project is determined to be feasible, then next year we will seek to be included in regional and state competitions.

Another History Fair meeting is planned for April 27th at 4:00 at the Blake House by the Starr Home. Parent packets and time-lines will be discussed and firmed up prior to program promotion in May.

E. Historical Markers

Gail reported that Bob Brinkman with the THC had spoken with us by phone. He indicated that any errors on existing historical markers should be indicated by looking up the marker on the Texas Historic Atlas online. When the marker is brought up, a tab in the upper right corner should be clicked to report errors. This will bring up a new window in which you can specify what is wrong (text, location, etc.) In this manner, if the marker ever needs to be replaced in the future, the THC will have on record the corrections that need to be made.

Gail also reported on her progress with James Farmers Week, 4-23 – 4-30. This will be in conjunction with the City of Marshall, and will include movies being shown in the lobby of the old Paramount Theater in downtown Marshall Mon-Thurs.

This will lead up to a debate in the old 1910 Historic Courtroom between the SMU debate team and the Wiley debate team, at 6:30pm on Friday & Saturday. This will be for the benefit of the Wiley Debate team.

The HCHC is planning on buying a battery operated sander and other supplies to restore some of the more faded historical markers in the county. A local Eagle Scout has volunteered to spear-head this project.

F. History Museum

Becky Palmer reported that the Museum will be having an event on 2 day Adult day camp. This program is entitled “History Detectives: Fun & Learning at our Day Camp for Adults”. The topic is “The Caddo”, and it will be held April 27-28, 2016. Highlights the first day include Keynote Speaker Phil Cross, Caddo Indian Historian, and a discussion of Caddo artifacts by Patti Haskins from Gregg County.

On the second day Tom Speir will present discussion on Archaeology in East Texas, and a report on “Their Namesake: Caddo Lake State Park” by Mia Brown (TP&W Ranger). The event will conclude with a fields trip to the State Park (weather permitting). Contact the Museum to participate in the event.

Becky also reported that Attendance has improved at the Museum since Jean Birmingham’s performance as “Milly Brown Sanders” on February 26th.

The Inez Hughes Research Center is still closed to the public due to City of Marshall construction at Memorial City Hall.

G. Information Technology

Tom Speir reported that updated minutes of the HCHC meetings continue to be posted on our website in a timely manner by the County’s IT director, Charles Nenninger. Our thanks go out to Mr. Nenninger.

H. Oral History

Tom Speir reported that Elizabeth still working on our new audio recorder.

I. Preservation

In regard to cultural resource reports involving public works projects (see reports under Archaeology in these minutes), SWEPCO has been asked to provide a copy of any previously existing report concerning their highline between Marshall and Hallsville. This highline is scheduled for new construction, but a new report is not required.

J. Publications

We are continuing to try to get the text of all the historic markers in the county to create a new publication of this information.

K. Tourism

We are trying to help with promotion of the James Farmer Week events and the Historical Museum's Adult Day Camp.

L. Goals

No new projects were presented.

M. Annual Preservation Awards

A meeting was held with Anthony Crosby confirming the planned combined Awards Presentation at the Old Courthouse on May 15th. We have been asked to help with refreshments.

Election of the HCHC Preservation Award recipients was reschedule for April 22nd as only one of the three members of the Awards Committee was present and the entire list of nominees was unavailable. A special meeting of the HCHC has been scheduled for April 22nd.

V. Special Reports

A. 1901 Courthouse

No report.

B. Texas & Pacific Depot Museum

Robert Wood reported that their board meeting will be held next week. He noted that there is lots of work going on next door at the Ginocchio, which we all support. Also on May 10th, 2nd graders from the Student Academy will be touring all four Marshall Museums, which was confirmed by Becky Palmer.

C. Starr Home

Bethany Dean reported that a workshop on April 23rd will be on “Care & Storage of Heirloom Textiles”. August 31 will see the end of current exhibit on four generations of women at the Starr Home.

May 1st will be a “Historic Sites Free Day” when The Texas Historical Commission (THC) will offer FREE admission to all 20 THC state historic sites on that Sunday. A Victorian Fair in October is also being planned.

D. Michelson Museum of Art

Tom Speir reported the following schedule for the museum, as received from Bonnie Strauss:

May 3	Leadership Marshall
May 4	Marshall Symphony League
May 10	S. Marshall STEM Academy Round Robin
May 13	Bluebonnet Bash Fundraiser
May 17	Elysian Fields Elementary

E. Historic Landmark Preservation Board

No report.

VI. Other Business

No reports given.

VII. Administrative

Incoming mail: Tom Speir reviewed the mail received by the HCHC in the last month, including a letter of gratitude from Wiley College for last month's Historical Marker Dedication Ceremony.

CHC Orientation Workshop: Tom Speir reported that he will be attending this THC sponsored workshop on May 6th in Alto, Texas.

Facebook Page: Tom noted that we still need photos for our Facebook Page. Additionally, our Facebook page has reached nearly 2500 persons.

Friends of HCHC: The Bylaws of the Friends have been approved.

Banner: It was suggested that a expanding free-standing banner be purchased. We are awaiting mock-ups of this banner prior to purchasing.

VIII. Adjournment

The next meeting will be May 12th at the T & P Depot Museum at 1:30 p.m. The meeting adjourned at 3:17 p.m.

Submitted by Thomas Speir