

**HARRISON COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**August 11<sup>th</sup> 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, Richard Magrill, Rose Mary Magrill, Marty Vaughan, Robert Wood, Gail Beil , and Becky Palmer.

**Visitors Present:** Sharon Dews from the Marshall Independent School District (MISD) and Carolyn Howard new Director for Main Street, Tourism, and Downtown Economic Development were present.

**Call to Order**

Tom Speir, chair, called the meeting to order on August 11<sup>th</sup> 2016 at 1:30 p.m. in the conference room of the Marshall Depot Museum and welcomed all to the meeting.

**II. Approval of Minutes**

Minutes of the meeting of July 14<sup>th</sup> 2016 were approved as distributed.

**III. Treasurer's Report**

Elizabeth Bradshaw sent in her report on the Friends of the Harrison County Historical Commission accounts. She reported as follows:

Brokerage account	\$ 5,520.28
Certificate of deposit	3,300.00
Certificate of deposit	7,075.12
Greenwood Cemetery Fund	13,420.99
Friends of the HCHC Fund	4,465.95

Tom Speir reported that \$1,018 remains of the \$3,000.00 provided in the county budget.

#### **IV. The standing committee reports are as follows:**

##### **A. Archaeology**

Tom Speir reported that a letter had been received from Texas expressing concern that a State Antiquities Landmark had been bulldozed (somewhere in the state); the letter warned all the counties not to engage in such destruction. Tom has recorded the New Canaan Elementary School site as 41HS1010. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual East Texas Artifact Show will be held on Saturday, September 17<sup>th</sup> from 8 to 4 p.m. at the Marshall Civic Center. Note: we are not promoting this event because of concerns that it will inadvertently promote illegal artifact hunting. Texas Archeological Awareness Month is October. There is a form on which we can get our cemetery tour listed as one of the events. Regarding this emphasis, Tom passed out a sample brochure as well as a complete listing of available brochures. He also shared the new poster that is available this year. It features the San Felipe de Austin archeological site and the work being done there. Both the brochures and the poster are available from the Texas Historical Commission (THC) for free. Just send them a request for the quantity desired. Tom noted that anyone who is interested can volunteer to go to Austin to help clean artifacts that have been retrieved from the San Felipe de Austin site.

##### **B. Archives**

Tom Speir reported that he still struggles with work in the archives.

##### **C. Cemeteries**

Thomas Richardson was not present to report. Tom Speir reported that he and Bill Whitis continue to work with Jenny McWilliams, Cemetery Coordinator for THC, on the listing of cemeteries in the county. They now have 186 listed and there are probably about 40 more to be added. Gail Beil and Tom reported that the Marshall City Cemetery has been platted. He shared the copy of the plat that he had received for our files.

##### **D. Education**

Sharon Dews reported that we are “on the board,” i.e. on the agenda for the teacher’s In-Service Week prior to the fall semester starting, to make our initial presentation to the Marshall ISD concerning our plans reviving the History Fair as

an annual event. Thursday August 18<sup>th</sup> we will make the presentation; it will be 1-4 p.m. In addition to History Fair Committee members, Gail Beil will be present and involved in the presentation. Becky Palmer reported that the volunteers for the Inez Hatley Hughes Research Library, now housed at the old police/fire station building, will open the collection by appointment to those working on History Fair projects. (Note: the History Fair Committee is composed of Sharon Dews, Becky Palmer, Barbara Judkins, and Elizabeth Bradshaw.)

### **E. Historical Markers**

Gail Beil reported that we have approval for the James Farmer and the Birthplace of Boogie Woogie markers as untold stories. (This category means that the costs of the markers are paid for by THC.) The work on the Coach Pop Long marker and Dr. Lawrence Nixon marker are being left in the hands of Wiley College. Robert Wood reported that the old damaged Marshall Depot marker has been picked up by Mike Martinez from the office and is being repaired for use at the Depot Museum. The Bethel United Methodist Church and Camp Meeting in Elysian Fields will celebrate the dedication of its historical marker on August 21<sup>st</sup> at 2:30 p.m. All members of the commission have received their invitations. Gail Beil is the speaker for the occasion. Rose Mary Magrill has sent all the application materials to Tom Speir for the Ewing Chapel Cemetery marker so that it can be submitted this year. Gail Beil will try to get the application ready for the marker for the old Elks Club Building. She commented that work on the Elysian Fields Booker T. Washington School marker will have to be postponed until next year.

(Notes: Doc Halliday was taking care of work toward a marker for the Old Hallsville Bank. Since his resignation from the commission was accepted at our last meeting, Thomas Richardson agreed to supply materials from his files for this project. Carol Greer is trying to take care of the application for the Young's Mill Pond marker but we did not have any update on her progress. Nor was there any report on Doug Bradaway's possible work on the Temple Emanu-El Cemetery marker. Also any work on a marker for the Old Cities Service Gas Station Building will have to be postponed until next year. When time allows, Tom will get to work on turning the Sam Houston School marker in the proper direction to be read by cars coming west on East Houston.)

Tom shared a copy of the *Marshall News Messenger* article on the work of refinishing various markers that is being done by Ty Weekly as a part of his Eagle Scout project. He showed certificates of appreciation signed by County Judge

Taylor which have been prepared for those engaged in this refinishing. He also expressed the hope that others may come forward with projects for cemetery cleanup, marker refurbishing, etc.

### **F. History Museum**

Becky Palmer reported that the History Museum is getting ready for the luncheons for the four Tuesdays in October on Journey Stories. This will be the third year for such luncheons and they will be held at the Marshall Visual Arts Center. In the past there have been about 80-90 at each event. She urged all present to attend the luncheons.

### **G. Information Technology**

Tom Speir reported that our minutes are on the website and up to date.

### **H. Oral History**

Tom Speir noted that we have not gotten anywhere in oral history. He is still having trouble getting the equipment to work.

### **I. Preservation**

Tom Speir noted that Tony Crosby is hoping to have a brochure available for the Fly-In at the Harrison County Airport on Labor Day. He is working with Judge Taylor in regards to a possible museum at the terminal.

Tom reported that he had received a copy of a letter from the THC relating to proposals for a property in Waskom. Tom has met with Waskom Mayor Moore. The city had applied for a grant to put in a community center (much needed by the folks there). They had hoped to modify two old buildings and they wanted to put in large windows (from which the trains passing through could be viewed). Placement of the windows would necessarily involve removal of existing walls and such removal would be deemed by the THC as demolition. After further conversations, Mayor Moore and Tom believe that Waskom may be able to proceed and Tom hopes that the project can be done with minimum impact on the historic structures and provide an enhanced opportunity to tell the history of the buildings that will be involved. (Note: there is a December deadline for the grant related to this project.)

It was called to our attention that Texas Preservation will be meeting at the Depot today not too long after our meeting. There will be a reception for which all

in attendance at our meeting are invited to stay. Gail Beil emphasized that there will be excellent food. Tom remarked that the whole commission is very glad that Preservation Texas is taking this opportunity to hold its meeting in Harrison County.

### **J. Publications**

Tom Speir reported that he had a talk with Audrey Kariel and she thinks the Cultural Potpourri booklet should be reprinted. We could reprint 500 copies for \$1,000. We do not have to decide today. (It was noted that the booklet is very dated and would need to be revised before any reprint.)

Gail Beil reported that Randolph Campbell's book, *A Southern Community in Crisis: Harrison County, Texas, 1850-1880*, is being reprinted. On the 21<sup>st</sup> of October there will be a book signing. It should be at the Ginnochio Hotel but might have to be at Central Perks. Campbell, Beil noted, put Harrison County "on the map" when this book was originally published in 1983.

Robert Wood called attention to the revised brochure which the Depot Museum has printed.

### **K. Tourism**

The commission with great joy welcomed Carolyn Howard as the new director for Main Street, Tourism, and Downtown Economic Development to this meeting and expressed the hope that she would return often. She is busy working on Marshall's upcoming Wonderland of Lights. (By way of aside, Becky Palmer noted that the Museum Roundtable wants to talk about developing a Wonderland of Sights emphasis to parallel the Wonderland of Lights.)

### **L. Goals**

Tom Speir asked if anyone had any new goals to discuss. He reported that there was nothing new on the project for signs designating US80 as a World War II Veterans Highway. In any case, we should not count on being able to erect the signs this year.

Tom met with Marshall Police Chief Campa on Monday August 1<sup>st</sup> in his office. He asked that his officers do occasional drive-by checks of the cemeteries in Marshall, particularly Greenwood and Marshall City Cemeteries. He asked for input from his officers on which cemeteries are most at risk from vandalism and which might benefit most from security lighting.

Tom also requested Campa's assistance in reaching out to the Hispanic-American community which is developing its own history in Harrison County. Campa admitted it was difficult to get members of that community to step forward, so we offered to help one another in our efforts. We hope that by letting them know that *we* are reaching out *to them*, they will be more willing to step up and get involved in our community as a whole.

Finally, Tom asked for the possible assistance of his officers this fall with some cemetery cleanups. Chief Campa agreed and gave Tom contact information for Detective Tyler Owen who is the current President of the Marshall Police Department Association. Chief Campa indicated that the association is looking for opportunities to work with the community.

Note: Tom will also schedule a visit with the county sheriff regarding this possibility as well. He hopes that the commission can be instrumental in getting more cemetery work accomplished.

#### **M. Annual Preservation Awards**

Tom Speir reported that we should be thinking about next year's awards. He noted that the awards are a great means of interesting people in our work. Recipients of last years awards have become very active in several projects.

### **V. Special Reports**

#### **A. 1901 Courthouse**

No report.

#### **B. Texas & Pacific Depot Museum**

Robert Wood noted that the new brochures and the meeting of Preservation Texas this afternoon have already been mentioned. It was remarked that work proceeds on the Ginnochio Hotel as resources are available. Gail Beil reported that the soft (first) opening of the restaurant in the hotel will be a benefit for the work of the Depot Museum.

#### **C. Starr Home**

Barbara Judkins is busy with the Preservation Texas people today. The ad in today's *Marshall News Messenger* promoting the Starr Home as a venue for events was noted.

#### **D. Michelson Museum of Art**

Tom Speir reported that the Hoover Watercolor Society Traveling Exhibit is open at the Michelson and will be on view until September 2<sup>nd</sup>.

#### **E. Historic Landmark Preservation Board (HLPB)**

Tom Speir reported that he has contacted Tony Crosby and Tony will try to put together a report each month for our meeting.

#### **VI. Other**

Nothing to report.

#### **VII. Administrative**

**Mail.** Tom Speir reported on the invitation to the marker dedication at Bethel United Methodist Church and Camp Meeting and the letter regarding the destruction of state archeological sites. Our National Trust for Historic Preservation membership has been renewed. A request from the History Museum asking the commission to become a member was discussed. On motion, the commission will join all the local historical museums at a maximum cost of \$100 each. (Note: we will ask all local museums to define a \$100 institutional membership level. The secretary will write a letter to each museum concerning this request.)

**Budget.** Tom Speir has submitted a budget request for \$4,200 for the new year. No word has been received on the budget request.

**Pop-up Sign.** The mock-up of the proposed pop-up sign for the commission was passed around. The cost of the mockup came from this year's budget. The cost for the actual sign will have to come from next years budget.

**Membership Renewals.** All memberships of the commission in other organizations should be renewed if we have the money. Our priority will be memberships of the museums in Harrison County, then memberships in Texas organizations, and then any others.

**Photos.** Tom Speir called attention to the continuing need for photos for the Commission's Facebook page.

**VIII. Adjournment**

The next meeting will be September 8<sup>th</sup> at the T&P Depot Museum at 1:30 p.m. The meeting adjourned at 3:12 p.m.

**Submitted by Richard Magrill**