

HARRISON COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes

June 13th 2019

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: Bill T. Whitis, Richard Magrill, Rose Mary Magrill, Clemmie Copeland, Becky Palmer, Barbara Judkins, Marty Vaughan, Thomas Richardson, and Robert Wood.

Visitor(s) Present: Steve Horton.

Medical Report: Bill Whitis alerted the Commission that Gail Beil's daughter, Laura, reported that Gail has been diagnosed as having had a seizure and is on very strict bed rest. No visitors. She is predicted to make a full recovery. (They have taken her phone away!) Thomas Richardson reported that Carol Greer has come home and continues to make progress following her stroke.

I. Call to Order

Bill T. Whitis, chair, called the meeting to order on June 13th 2019 at 1:30 p.m. in the conference room of the T&P Depot Museum.

II. Approval of Minutes

Minutes of the meeting of May 9th 2019 were approved as distributed and corrected.

III. County Budget Report

Bill Whitis reported that we have report spent \$1,573 from the \$3,000 included in the county budget for the fiscal year running from October 2018 through September 2019 leaving a balance of \$1,427 remaining.

IV. The standing committee reports are as follows:

A. Archaeology

Steve Horton was present to report that the location of Pine Grove Camp, a Confederate outpost (then east of Marshall but on Butler Street now) has been located. Bill Whitis noted that it was a fortification to stop the Yankees from coming up the Red River. It may prove to be a significant archeological site.

B. Archives

Bill has been filing things in the office and is still waiting for the guy from Tyler to come pick up boxes of archeological material unrelated to Harrison and surrounding counties.

C. Cemeteries

Bill Whitis and Thomas Richardson had nothing to report. Marty Vaughan noted that Concord Cemetery had its annual reunion this past weekend. Wiley Cemetery has had a cleanup.

D. Education

No report.

E. Historical Markers

Bill Whitis noted that all historical marker work is in a kind of limbo with Gail Beil's illness. He is honoring the request for rest and no contacts.

F. Harrison County Historical Museum/

Inez Hatley Hughes Research Library

Becky Palmer New Director. Becky Palmer reported that she will replace Janet Cook as the director of the Historical Museum beginning July 1st.

“History Rocks” Day Camp. The “History Rocks” Day Camp starts the 24th and runs thru the 28th . Participants will play their way through the week. There is a normal full enrollment. Two certified Texas teachers and an aide are paid to staff the event. The Museum also buys crafts and supplies and provides water and snacks. Becky noted that they are fortunate to have an underwriter for the entire education program at the Museum.

Genealogical Work. The new genealogical arm is up and running. June 22nd is its next quarterly event.

Inez Hatley Hughes Research Library. The Palace Cleaners building has been purchased to house the Inez Hatley Hughes Research Library (and other Museum items). Everyone is very excited about the purchase but also somewhat apprehensive about the Museum becoming a property owner with attendant maintenance responsibilities.

Exhibits at Marshall’s Memorial City Hall. No date has been given on when Memorial City Hall will be ready but it has beautiful new doors and roses have been planted out front. The last word was that it might be finished, perhaps, by November. Becky hopes it might open around Veterans Day since it houses the Museum’s military exhibits.

Janet Cook. Janet Cook will continue as a volunteer. She will be working to get the new research center set up and will then be spending one day a week there.

Looking Ahead. Becky said she hopes to be able to pivot from all the past preoccupations with buildings (the 1901 Courthouse, Memorial City Hall, and Palace Cleaners) and instead focus on education projects, museum running, and event planning.

G. Information Technology

Facebook Page. Bill Whitis reported that our Facebook page now has 1,169 likes (we started the year with 261). He is working on an article for June 19th on Emancipation Park. It is where folks gathered every year on “Juneteenth” beginning after the Civil War. If anyone would like to help write an article for our Facebook page, he would love to have the help. Only a couple of paragraphs and a picture (if possible) are needed for each article.

H. Oral History

Bill Whitis noted that Gail Beil borrowed the tape recorder to do an interview with a nonagenarian of the New Hope Missionary Baptist Church . He assumes that she still has it.

I. Preservation

No report.

J. Publications

Lale Trail. Bill Whitis reported that he is still working on the Lale Trail brochure corrections. He suggested the need for a group to revise the listing of properties and determine whether to keep sad-looking buildings and/or replace them with some better buildings.

K. Tourism

No report.

L. Goals

Young's Mill Pond. Concerning the Young's Mill Pond property which the owners wish to donate to a non-profit entity in order that it might be preserved, it was reported last month that the Museum Board agreed to form an exploratory commission for the purpose of determining the feasibility of its involvement but Ann Brannon indicated at that time that the commission has not yet been formed. Becky Palmer reported no knowledge of any commission yet being formed.

M. Annual Preservation Awards

Bill Whitis reported that our Commission was one of the eighty who received a 2019 Distinguished Service Award from the Texas Historical Commission. Also, we have received a submission from Sharon Dews nominating the Marshall Independent School District's AVID program for one of next year's Historical Commission awards and Brenda Dearman has been suggested for an award in recognition of her work on the community calendar. Robert Wood reported that the Depot Museum has a board member who deserves recognition for his work on preservation. Mike Martina has done a wonderful job on seeking

replacements for the original roofing tiles which bear a 1923 date. He has found the maker of the tile and is negotiating for having new ones made.

V. Partners in Preservation Reports

A. 1901 Courthouse

No report.

B. Texas & Pacific Depot Museum

Robert Wood reported that the Depot Museum is having “Christmas in July!” on July 13th. Work is progressing on the roof files. The Depot is still battling leaks in the passenger tunnel. That need is on its way up the Union Pacific chain of command toward being fixed.

C. Starr Family Home State Historic Site

Barbara Judkins reported that it is summer so attendance is good and way above projections for the year. The site will host the Historical Museum’s “History Rocks” day camp on Thursday of its week-long schedule. A portrait that fell off the wall in January is in Dallas for conservation. Recently a South African couple visited.

D. Michelson Museum of Art

Exhibits. The “Birds in Art” exhibit will continue through July 3rd.

E. Historic Landmark Preservation Board (HLPB)

No report.

F. Others (Sabine Farms, T.C. Lindsey Store, Main Street, Pemberton Heritage Center, colleges/schools, etc.)

T.C. Lindsay Store. Marty Vaughan reported no word on when Texas Country Reporter (TCR) program will be broadcast. Her younger sister is doing daily Facebook page posts. She has a good sense of humor. The store is plugging along. Marty noted that it was good to have Bob Phillips and the TCR crew back for a follow-up to their report of 20 years ago.

Central Marshall Historic District. We are still waiting on Marshall's new City Manager Mark Rohr to come and talk with us about plans for the Central Marshall Historic District.

VI. Other

Marshall Visual Arts Center/ City Laundry Building. Bill Whitis noted that Fred Badalamente and Susan Pool want to start a Historic Arts District in Marshall that might be on the National Register. Of course, no one knows what will be done with the City Laundry Building (which currently houses the Marshall Visual Arts Center). The City of Marshall is selling it through a sealed silent auction and it is anyone's guess who will actually secure it.

VII. Administrative

No report.

VIII. Adjournment

The next meeting will be on July 11th 2019 at the T&P Depot Museum at 1:30 p.m. The meeting adjourned at 2:19 p.m.

Submitted by Richard Magrill