



## Fort Bend County Historical Commission

Chris Godbold, Chairman  
Charles Kelly, Vice Chairman  
Claire Rogers, Secretary  
Don Brady, Treasurer

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### Meeting Minutes for 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter 2019 Gus George Law Enforcement Academy 1521 Eugene Heimann Circle | Richmond, TX 77469 May 21, 2019

#### I. **Call to Order**

Chair Chris Godbold called the meeting to order at 3:01pm. He welcomed commissioners and guests and then all recited the pledges to the United States and Texas flags.

**Attendance:** Bettye Anhaiser, Tzotsy Ballesteros, Philip Bartholomew, Ferrel Bonner, Don Brady, Linda Burks, Bettogene Coyle, Robert Crosser, Ana Alicia Estrada, Chris Godbold, Bruce Grethen, Rebecca Haas, Sharon Harris, Marie Theresa Hernandez, Tracy Hobdy, Charles Kelly, Rene Lamb, Joyce Lolley, Susan Lowe-Strickland, Jesse Matthews, Bryan McAuley, Bobby McKinney, Sue Mitchell, Katie Neely, Veronica Pina, Pat Pollicoff, David Rose, Jay Roussel, Daniel Sample, Joe Southern, Jess Stuart, Roberta Terrell, Vickie Tonn, Mary Ward, Dianne Wilson, and Linda Wooten.

**Guests:** Roger Beeler, Barbara Bleil, Bolton Doggett, Robert Frost, Jane Goodsill, Jim Miller, Bill Rickert, Ronald Orr, Don Knaphaide, Patricia Orr, Sylvia Smith, Pamela Davenport, and Carmen Pina.

**Commissioners not in attendance:** Pat Anderson, Jessica Avery, Karl Baumgartner, Bill Benton, Frank Briscoe, Nicholas Cox, Tim Cumings, Cindy Drabek, Ronald Drachenberg, Jessica Duet, Sha'terra Fairley-Johnson, Becky Gallimore, Randal Glenn, Jeffrey Hoffman, Vernon Hunt, Cecil Jones, Corey Kelly, LeRoy Knekow, Paul Matthews, Patricia McKnight, Lonnie Meadows, John Placette, Claire Rogers, Melanie Perkins Smith, Paul Spana, Bradley Stavinoha, Sylvia Vacek, John Walker, Sharon Wallingford, Diane Ware, and Kevin West.

#### II. **Program:**

Larry Callies, proprietor of The Black Cowboy Museum in Rosenberg, talked to us about his life story, the influence of African culture on the cow culture of the southwest, and his museum. He brought his guest book and recounted the foreign visitors that have come from across the globe to visit The Black Cowboy Museum. Most particularly, he told us that a prominent newspaper in South Africa ran a story about it that attracted lots of attention. A tour group visited wearing their African garb. He said it was a memorable visit, as was a visit of 35 people from Detroit.

Visit The Black Cowboy Museum in Rosenberg at 1104 3rd St. in Rosenberg. It is open Tuesdays through Fridays and on Saturdays by appointment.

Jess Stuart, President of The Lamar Chapter of the Sons of the Republic of Texas (Richmond) told us about the chapter and its recent revitalization last year. Actually, the Lamar Chapter was

the first, established in 1893 by F. M. O. Fenn. Unfortunately, the chapter went dormant in 1911, but it is alive again. It now has 30+ members who meet each month at The Swinging Door. Attendance is free (unless you want something to eat or drink) and open to the public. They have presentations and discussions that they hope will appeal to the public.

Jess reviewed the SRT's and the Lamar Chapter's activities which center on notable dates in Texas history. The group is eager to reach out to local schools and pique their interest in history. The SRT has an annual essay contest that offers significant scholarship money to winners.

The SRT has a Web site. The Lamar Chapter has a Facebook Page. You will find membership information at the SRT Web site, but in summary, a member must prove an ancestor lived in Texas before February 19, 1846. The qualifying ancestor can be man or woman, but the membership is open to men only. However, the Daughters of the Republic of Texas will be happy to take members if you contact them.

**III. Approve minutes of quarterly meeting held on February 19, 2019**

The minutes of the February meeting were emailed to commissioners in advance of the meeting. There were no corrections or additions. Roberta Terrell made a motion to approve the minutes, Robert Crosser seconded, and the vote was unanimous.

**IV. Accept Treasurer's Report**

The treasurer's report was emailed to all commissioners in advance of the meeting. Treasurer Don Brady reviewed the report for those present. For the first quarter of the year ending on March 31, 2019, only interest was credited to the account, not checks were written and the balance in the account is \$2,089.34. Dianne Wilson made a motion to accept the report, Pat Pollicoff seconded, and the vote to accept was unanimous.

**V. Receive Committee Quarterly Reports**

Archives – Dianne Wilson, Chair presented the committee's report which is on file in the commission office. Chris Godbold added that the commission has received a proposal from Kofile to scan our backlog of (mostly) cemetery documents. Dianne is familiar with their work because they scanned documents for the county when she was County Clerk. We will hear more about this proposal in future meetings.

Cemetery – Robert Crosser, Chair, presented the committee's report which is on file in the commission office. In summary, progress continues in researching, monitoring, and recording historic county cemeteries.

Cultural Resources – Randal Glenn, Chair – Chris Godbold reported for Randal Glenn that this committee had reviewed two requests regarding construction sites and possible disturbance to historical resources. No impact was detected. The committee report is on file at the commission office.

Historic Preservation – Rene Lamb, Chair – presented progress for this committee. Her report is on file at the commission office. The committee has been reactivated and will continue surveying the county's historical structures.

Jay Roussel added that the Army Corps of Engineers is performing a feasibility study regarding

locations along the Brazos River where they may attempt to stabilize its banks. The Corps wants comments regarding historic resources that it should consider in their project planning. The Fort Bend Archeological Society will participate. The county historical commission will also help with this endeavor. Contact Jay, Rene, Susan, or Chuck Kelly if you know of any location on the river that may have historic structures, cemeteries, or other cultural resources that may be affected. Many are already identified, but it is important that all significant sites are considered.

Chuck Kelly gave a high-level review of historic-preservation legislation now in the state legislature. Two bills were in committee, both prohibiting restrictions on property owners' disposition of historic structures on their property. Some authorities (like municipalities) have codes that require property owners to file permits to demolish structures on their land. The purpose is to give preservationists an opportunity to organize efforts to preserve historic structures. Naturally, this is a balance between owner's rights and preservation of significant elements of our historic legacy. House Bill 2496 was amended and passed by the House. It is now before the senate. The opinion of most preservationists is that municipal codes are reasonable and are rarely if ever abused. If you agree, contact state senators and voice your opinion.

Another house bill (HB 2439) prohibited local governments from regulating building materials for renovations in historic districts. These restrictions apply to structures in historic districts, which are not restricted because they do not have historic designations. This legislation is in a Senate committee. Once again, if you have an opinion, feel free to contact state senators.

More information on both bills is available at the commission office or on state Web sites.

Funding for victims of Hurricane Harvey is also a significant item in historic preservation. The Texas Historical Commission received federal funding from the National Park Service for aid to historic properties damaged by Harvey. Unfortunately but understandably, the qualifications are very tight. A property must be on the National Register of Historic Places or it must qualify. Properties we thought might qualify failed because they had been moved within the last 25 years.

The department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has also offered funding to Harvey victims. This money is directed toward residential property, especially low-income residents. If you know anyone seeking assistance, contact Rene, Susan, or Chuck, and they will provide further information.

Oral History – Sylvia Vacek, Chair, presented the report which is on file. The committee is progressing on its backlog. New interviews are being recorded at a moderate pace. The City of Sugar Land is sponsoring a city-wide exhibit, celebrating town's 60th anniversary as an incorporated municipality. They are using some of the county's recorded interviews. They are also recording 15 new interviews which they will process and share with the county commission.

Public Affairs – David Rose, new chair of the committee, presented its report for Tim Cumings, retiring committee chair. A copy is on file at the commission office. A noted point of interest is the venue for the annual Bleil Heritage Award ceremony. The committee investigated several venues, but none offer terms as good as the Texas Safari, which will be the location for the 2020

ceremony.

Research & Markers – Bettye Anhaizer, Chair, presented the report also on file. A new marker for Court Hardware in Stafford has arrived and will be dedicated in the coming months. The commission still wants to rededicate the Thompsons Ferry Marker which was moved last year. Bettye emphasized that anyone requesting a state marker should approach the committee with a paper, or organized research to build a case to present to the Texas Historical Commission.

**VI. Old Business**

- a. Update on Sugar Land 95. Chris Godbold stated that there has been no movement on the petition before the courts, as it awaits passage of legislation to allow Fort Bend County to acquire the cemetery site from Fort Bend ISD. Chuck Kelly read an email message from Veronica Sopher of FBISD receive on May 20th indicating the needed legislation has been passed by the House and is with the Senate. There is no opposition, so it is reasonable to expect it will pass within the week, although there are no guarantees.
- b. Chris announced that any commissioners who have not signed their pledged oath of office should do so. Copies were available on the back table. Copies will be available at the next quarterly meeting, also.

**VII. New Business - none**

**VIII. Announcements**

- a. Announcements from Commission members and/or general public.
  - i. Chuck Kelly has received requests from commissioners for badges to enter the commission office on the 5th floor of the Travis Building in Richmond. Requestors will need to send him portrait photos (cell-phone is sufficient), which he will submit with the necessary form. Bob Crosser has requested badges for several members of the Cemetery Committee. Chuck will contact them in the near future.
  - ii. The Texas Historical Commission asks that all county historical commissioners take their online training regarding the Public Meetings Act and the Open Records Act, which governs state and county organizations. Chuck will send links to commission members, showing the locations for this training. It does not take long. Any commissioner who has already taken this training does not need to repeat it.
  - iii. Submit any ideas for the commission's Facebook page or Web site to Chuck Kelly.
- b. County Historical Commission to meet next on August 20, 2019 for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter General Meeting.
- c. The Commission's Executive Committee to meet on June 10, July 8, and August 12.

**IX. Adjourn**

Dianne Wilson moved that the meeting adjourn, which was seconded by Bettogene Coyle. The motion passed unanimously at 4:25.

Minutes submitted by Secretary Claire Rogers  
Based on notes from Vice Chair Chuck Kelly