

**Jefferson County Historical Commission
Bi-Monthly Meeting
Noon, Wednesday, May 27, 2015
Ben Rogers Regional Visitors Center
5055 IH-10 South, Beaumont, TX 77705**

Call to Order / Greetings – Chair Theresa Goodness called the meeting to order at Noon at the Ben Rogers Regional Visitors Center. Those in attendance were Jessie Davis, Ron Ellington, Theresa Goodness, Bruce Hamilton, Ramona Hutchinson, Benda Jackson, Linda McMahan, Paul Prosperie, Jef C. Russell, Don Smart and Jimmy Sparks.

Consider Minutes of Previous Meeting – A motion was made by Jef Russell and seconded by Jessie Davis to accept the Minutes of the March 26, 2015 meeting as printed. The motion passed unanimously.

Treasurer’s Report – Linda McMahan

- Treasurer Linda McMahan reported out of the 2014-2015 JCHC budget of \$12,850, \$2,291.85 had been spent with \$10,558.15 remaining.
- The proposed 2015-2016 JCHC Budget has been submitted to Auditing. Linda polled the Executive Board and it was agreed no changes were needed in the budget / line item amounts so the 2015 – 2016 Budget would remain the same as the 2014-2015 Budget.

Chair Report – Theresa Goodness

- Theresa Goodness reported on the 2015 Texas Legislative Session Update and how it might affect Texas preservation.
- It was also reported that Carolyn Howard has submitted her registration to Beaumont Main Street / JCHA. She will be moving to Dallas to spend time with her 96-year-old Mother.

Coordinator Report – Linda McMahan

- Linda reviewed the amended JCHC Bylaws that were discussed at the March meeting and also mailed to each member. Changes included the addition of a second vice-chair and the date of the Annual Meeting. A motion was made by Don Smart and seconded by Bruce Hamilton to accept the amended Bylaws as presented. The motion passed unanimously.
- Dale Carter, new owner of the Hinchee House, stopped by the office to introduce himself and share ideas about plans for restoration. This property is a Recorded Texas Historical Landmark and also listed on the National Register of Historic Places.
- Everyone was reminded to please turn in their volunteer hours.
- Linda shared that Paul Prosperie was recognized by the Beaumont Heritage Society as Volunteer of the Year. In the announcement it stated: “Paul attends all events, working behind the scenes and doing anything needed to help from photography to moving tables to cleaning off the sidewalks.” Congratulations to Paul for an honor well deserved.

Committee Reports

Archeology – Brenda Jackson

Brenda reported that plans were being finalized for an archeology day at Camp Lookinback. This camp will be held at the John J. French Museum in July. Activities will include a kid’s dig, hands-on art and several demonstrations.

Brenda attended the Historical Archeology Academy in Nacogdoches on May 2-3, 2015. It was hosted by the Texas Archeological Society. Topics covered included urban archeology, Spanish Colonial archeology and local historic sites. Instruction was provided on historic artifact identification and analysis, including ceramics, glass bottles and metal artifacts. The workshop concluded with a tour of historic sites in the Nacogdoches area.

Brenda spent May 9th at the Gregg County Historical Museum in Longview attending a workshop for members of the Texas Archeological Stewardship Network. The sessions included an introduction to prehistoric east Texas ceramics and an overview on site forms, such as how to use TexSite and TARL submission procedures.

Cemetery – Paul Prosperie

Paul reported that a new fence had been placed around the Elisha Brewer Cemetery located on Oil Tanking property. This cemetery is also known as the One Man Cemetery.

A copy of the Cleveland Dyer Oral History was available for members to review. This contains early history of the Lincoln Burial Park on LaBelle Road where Mr. Dyer's father is buried. The County is in the process of getting ownership of the Burial Park to use for indigent burial.

Paul shared that no additional clearing has taken place at the Lincoln Burial Park, and grass and weeds were beginning to grow again. Linda said she would check with Commissioner "Bo" Alfred's office to see when additional work in clearing the area would take place.

Certified Local Government – Ramona Hutchinson

A meeting of the CLG Committee members is being planned in the next week or two. The meeting will be to review previous grant applications and to set goals for the 2015-2016 Grant Year.

A National Register nomination has been submitted by Lamar University for the Otho Plummer Administration Building. As a Certified Local Government, Jefferson County is required to review such nominations and to notify THC's National Register program office and the property owner of the CLG's opinion of the nomination. The County's Historic Preservation Officer, Ramona Hutchinson, has submitted the appropriate response, and we look forward to another important local building being recognized with this designation.

Courthouse Oversight – Linda McMahan

Linda reported work continues in the basement and first floor areas of the Courthouse to install a new fire alarm and suppression system.

There is limited public access through the basement area. No date has been announced when the Café will be closed. Since the Café provides meals to County employee first responders, the work cannot be done during Hurricane Season.

Linda reported that Bailey Architects have been purchased by Shepley Bulfinch Richardson and Abbott, Inc. The personnel has not changed, just the name.

Dick Dowling Days - Mike McGreevy

After a meeting at the Spindletop / Gladys City Boomtown Museum attended by SCV members and JCHC Coordinator Linda McMahan, the SCV voted to cancel Dick Dowling Days scheduled this year at the Battlefield due to restrictions imposed by THC.

Chair Goodness said she would write H. Glenn Reed, Interim Director, Historic Sites Division to see if it would be possible to meet with THC and the SCV before next year's event to work out any disagreements or concerns.

Historical Markers – Les McMahan

The historical marker for West Beulah Missionary Baptist Church has been received, examined and is being held in storage at Precinct 4 warehouse until it is installed prior to the dedication ceremony to be held on Sunday, July 19, 2015.

The Moon Mulligan historical marker was installed in Magnolia Cemetery by Commissioner Alfred's Maintenance Crew. Jimmy Sparks of Magnolia Cemetery expressed his appreciation for help in the installation of the marker.

History Preservation - Jef Russell

Jef passed out forms for the Texas Treasure Business Award. He said he would be talking with the Texas Coffee Company and hoped to have a completed form by the next meeting. Linda said she would get a list of possible business from South County to contact.

Bill Quick's Book – Bruce Hamilton

There was nothing new to report.

Website – Bill Cummings

Bill was not in attendance but emailed his report. Members are encouraged to go online and see the work in progress. If any changes need to be made, please contact Theresa who is working with MIS in updating the website.

Gilbert Building – Steven Lewis

There was nothing new to report.

Sam Houston State Library – Don Smart

Don reported that the library is opened Tuesday through Saturday. If members plan on going on a Saturday, please call ahead and verify the hours opened.

Magnolia Cemetery – Jimmy Sparks

Jimmy again expressed help with the Moon Mulligan historical marker installation.

Museum of the Gulf Coast – Sarah Bellian

Sarah shared about the Oral History Workshop led by THC's William McWhorter and held at the Museum. Three JCHC members attended.

Ben Rogers Visitors Center – Jessie Davis

Jessie shared that business is beginning to pick up as more people travel during summer months and the Visitors Center is opened longer hours.

Beaumont Landmark Commission – Ramona Hutchinson

Ramona reported meetings are held the second Monday of the month at 3:30 pm in the Beaumont Council Chambers, located on the first floor of Beaumont City Hall. Meetings are open to the public.

Port Arthur Landmark Commission – Les McMahan

Meetings are held in Council Chambers on the fifth floor of Port Arthur City Hall as needed.

The PALC met on April 23, 2015 to hear Case No. H15-01 in regards to the designation of the building located at 501 Procter Street (the former First National Bank and current Port Arthur Economic Development Corporation offices) as a local historical landmark. After reviewing the application and narrative for the building, the Commission voted 8-0 to recommend to the Port Arthur City Council that the building be designated as a local historical landmark. The City Council action will take place at a future council meeting.

Unfinished Business / New Business

There was no new or unfinished business.

Adjournment

Next meeting is scheduled for Noon, Thursday, July 23, 2015 at the Ben Rogers Visitors Center.