



JEFFERSON COUNTY
Historical Commission

Theresa Goodness
Chairman

Leslie McMahan
First Vice-Chairman

Linda McMahan
Secretary/Treasurer and Coordinator

Paul Prosperie
Second Vice-Chairman

Ron Ellington
Past Chairman

JCHC Bi-Monthly Meeting
Noon, Thursday, September 24, 2015
Ben Rogers Regional Visitors Center
5055 IH-10 South, Beaumont, TX 77705

Call to Order / Greetings – Vice Chair Les McMahan called the meeting to order due to absence of Chair Theresa Goodness. Those in attendance were: Sarah Bellian, Bill Cummings, Ron Ellington, Bruce Hamilton, Charlotte Holliman, Ramon Hutchinson, Brenda Jackson, Steven Lewis, Mike McGreevy, Les McMahan, Linda McMahan, Paul Prosperie, Don Smart, Jimmy Sparks and Guest Troy Gray from Spindletop-Gladys City Boomtown.

Consider Minutes of Previous Meeting – Vice Chair McMahan reported that the Minutes from the July 23, 2015 meeting had been emailed to all members. He asked if there were any additions or corrections. There were none. A motion was made by Don Smart and seconded by Bill Cummings to accept the Minutes as printed. The motion passed unanimously.

Treasurer’s Report – Linda McMahan gave the final Treasurer’s Report for the 2014 – 2015 Budget year. Linda reported that due to no JCHC monies used for new markers, repair of markers, or for Dick Dowling Days, there was an increase of unused funds. Out of the \$12,850 budget, only \$3,106.63 was spent with a remaining balance of \$9,743.37 which will be returned to the County. A motion was made by Mike McGreevy and seconded by Jimmy Sparks to accept the report as printed.

Introduction of Speaker – Vice Chair Les McMahan introduced **Troy Gray, Director of the Spindletop-Gladys City Boomtown Museum**. Troy comes to Jefferson County from the Bell County Museum in Temple. He shared several areas of new development for Gladys City which include more Lamar student involvement, Halloween activities, teacher information to encourage more field trips, collections’ inventories, air conditioning, archeological research, and research on the Little Africa settlement of oil workers that worked and lived on site at Spindletop. There was a questions and answer period at the end of his presentation.

Introduction of Guest – Vice Chair Les McMahan reported that a second speaker, Ms. Earline Christ, had been invited to share about research work she had been working on concerning early school and post offices in Jefferson County. Ms. Christ was not in attendance.

Chair Report – Theresa Goodness – No report was given due to the absence of the Chair.

Coordinator Report – Linda McMahan discussed the latest change to the JCHC bylaws that were approved earlier this year. At the Annual November meeting in even numbered years, we will elect our officers and appoint or reappoint JCHC members. Those names will go before Commissioners Court in January of odd numbered years, along with our Annual Report of the previous year for the Court's consideration, approval and recording into County records. After such, the officers, appointees and Annual Report will be forwarded to the Texas Historical Commission for their records.

Since we have already had our officers and appointees approved by Commissioners Court and turned into the THC, we ask at the November 19, 2015 meeting that each member share on their committee or project being worked on. This will help bring everyone up to date on the various areas of history preservation the JCHC is involved in. Also it was requested that each member share suggestions or goals for their particular area.

Don Smart, Paul Prosperie and Bruce Hamilton will be attending a Cemetery Workshop and Training on Saturday, September 26, 2015 sponsored by the Liberty County Historical Commission. It will be a walking tour of a local historic cemetery with explanations of significance of some of the gravestones and their designs. They will also learn proper techniques for cleaning gravestones.

Ramona Hutchinson, Ron Ellington and Linda McMahan will be attending the East Texas Historical Association Fall Meeting at Stephen F. Austin University, Nacogdoches, October 8 – 10, 2015. The Spring Meeting will be held at the Holiday Inn in Beaumont on February 19 – 20, 2016.

Tim Broussard is trying to locate a picture of an old family home originally located in the LaBelle and Taylor's Landing area. He has visited the JCHC office and shared some family information and pictures and the JCHC has also shared some of our information he did not have. Mr. Broussard works at the Rice Mill and has some information on the original settlers to the county. He would be a good candidate for an oral history project.

Committee Reports

Archeology – **Brenda Jackson** shared about the successful completion of summer events at the French Museum and also announced some of the upcoming fall events.

Cemetery – **Paul Prosperie** announced plans were being finalized for the Second Annual Magnolia Cemetery Tour to be held on Monday, October 19, 2015 at 9 AM. Judith Linsley of the McFaddin Ward House will be helping with the tour and **Jimmy Sparks**, director of **Magnolia Cemetery**, is also lending a hand.

Certified Local Government – **Ramona Hutchinson**, CLG Committee Chair, reported meetings were being held in preparation for the writing and filing of the 2016 THC Subgrant to apply for funding to hire a cultural resource consultant or firm who demonstrates the resources and qualifications to provide the county with a quality County-wide historic survey plan. The THC grant is for \$5,000 with the JCHC supplying \$5,000 matching funds. The grant application must

be completed and reviewed by JCHC; received, approved and filed by Commissioners Court; and in THC's hands by Monday, November 2, 2015.

Courthouse Oversight – **Linda McMahan** reported the work on the Courthouse had run into some problems but things were worked out. There were problems getting in some of the new equipment and a door and part of a wall had to be removed and then repaired or replaced. I met with Commissioner Arnold, Engineering and also did a walk-through with architect Dohn LaBiche. I was assured that THC was aware of the situation and all had been approved.

Historical Markers – **Les McMahan** reported that contact had been made with Mike Getz, Beaumont City Councilman, and Sharon Hendrix, principal at South Park Middle School, regarding the installation of the “found” South Park High School marker. The marker (actually two parts) was originally attached to the demolished building but will be reinstalled on a pole with a supplemental marker indicating when the original building was demolished.

A historical marker application had been received from St. Paul United Methodist Church in Port Arthur, and is being reviewed at this time. It appears that the application might be on the incorrect form (requesting the marker for the building rather than for the church body). The building does not appear to have the necessary architectural significance to be considered for a Registered Texas Historical Landmark, but would qualify for a Texas Historical Marker as other churches have done.

Information has been gathered for a marker application for the Sabine Pass Lighthouse. Even though it is in Louisiana, THC has said it would qualify if we tie it into “transportation” history in Texas as well as to the Battle of Sabine Pass.

Texas Treasure Business Awards – **Jef Russell** – No report given due to Jef's absence.

Web Site – **Bill Cummings** shared the information and function of the website is essentially complete. Recent upgrade fixes and post card images from Sam Houston Regional Library and Research Center have been added. The post cards capture turn of the century buildings as well as rice production, timber transport, and shipping.

A selection of these images will eventually find their way into the history text. Theresa has proposed a more orderly structure for the history text section. When completed, it will simplify the navigation and maintenance of this lengthy file. We still need to integrate the narratives with the historical markers for Jefferson County and to insert images at appropriate locations in the history text.

Bill encouraged everyone to take a look at the website. You can access it from the Jefferson County official site (the Historical Commission link is on the left).

Local Historical Photographs – **Steven Lewis** shared his latest post cards and other interesting tidbits of information about early Beaumont. As always, there was exchange of information to help in different preservation projects going on by other members.

Sam Houston State Library – **Don Smart** shared that he will be going to the Liberty

Library and working on Bill Quick's boxes if anyone is interested in going. He will let us know the dates he plans to be there.

Museum of the Gulf Coast – Sarah Bellian shared projects going on at the Museum and also said she would be glad to help with the writing of THC grant.

Ben Rogers Visitors Center – Jessie Davis - No report was given due to Jessie's absence.

Beaumont Landmark Commission – Ramona Hutchinson – The Beaumont Landmark Commission meets on the second Monday of the month at 3:30 PM in the Beaumont City Council Chambers.

Port Arthur Landmark Commission – Les McMahan – The Port Arthur Landmark Commission meets as needed. If you are interested in attending, please contact Les for meeting dates.

Unfinished Business / New Business

None

Adjournment

Next meeting is scheduled Noon, Thursday, November 19, 2015 at the Ben Rogers Visitors Center. This will be the JCHC Annual Meeting.