

Minutes of the Williamson County Historical Commission

A regular meeting of the Williamson County Historical Commission was held on October 10, 2019 in the Williamson County Courthouse at 700 Main Street, Georgetown, Texas. Eloise Brackenridge served as Chair and Rachel Arnold served as secretary.

The Chair called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

Members present were: Rachel Arnold, Nancy Bell, Eloise Brackenridge, Joe Burgess, , Kelly Clark, Jane DiGesualdo, Kandy Dippery, Winnann Ewing, Mike Fowler, Barbara Glasscock, Shelby Little, Michael McCloskey, Jan Raesz, Mickie Ross, Wayne Ware.

Judge Bill Gravell popped in to say hello to the commission.

Minutes:

The Chair called for review of the minutes of the September 12, 2019 meeting. Col. Shelby Little recommended a correction to the Mt. Horeb Cemetery, which had been incorrectly identified as the Mt. Orb Cemetery.

Treasurer's Report:

Nancy Bell reported that the WCHC FY20 budget was approved at \$1,600 for the General Fund.

\$1.53 was returned to the Williamson County General Fund. Program Fund balance is \$7,132.86, Tombstone restoration balance is \$343.67 and \$200 of unrestricted funds.

Old Business:

Mike McCloskey asked that we discuss the Pioneer House in Leander. Rachel Arnold, Micki Ross, Eloise Brackenridge and Nancy Bell attended a meeting with the interim city manager and city CFO. We were informed that an item to accept the deed will be on the Oct. 3, 2019 City of Leander agenda. The item was placed on the agenda but was tabled. Rachel Arnold contacted Commissioner Long to seek assistance regarding this item. Commissioner Long was able to confirm with the City of Leander Mayor Pro Tem that the item would be discussed on the October 17, 2019 agenda. Rachel Arnold stated that she will be at the meeting on October 17, 2019.

There was additional discussion regarding what might happen if the City of Leander does not accept the deed.

Committees Reports:

Markers –

The Florence Church and Post Oak Island markers are having their wording finalized. We are 3 weeks away from this year's deadline and there is nobody in the queue.

Micki spoke with Commissioner Covey regarding the supplemental marker. Comm. Covey is okay with the timeline that was sent out. Comm. Covey asked that the 1998 letter from Irene Veran requested the supplemental plaque. Wording of the plaque was discussed stating that African Americans made up 10% of the Nan residents etc. The subcommittee needs to get together, and Micki will email Mike McCloskey the notes and he will set up a meeting for the subcommittee.

Cemeteries –

They have Boy Scout projects in the works, but they have not set a date. They are going to do work at Mt. Horeb to include a fence and permanent marker. There is some debate as to the name of the cemetery, but records show Mt. Horeb.

Nancy met with Doug McNair who live near Cobb off of SH 195. Worked with Commissioners to prevent a piece of property from becoming a quarry. Jarrell ISD owns the property and was going to sell to a quarry, and they prevented that. He asked that the WCHC would ask Jarrell ISD if they would fence and he would maintain the cemetery. The cemetery is called Gravis Cemetery. There are 13 graves at the 2-acre cemetery. Nancy, Kandy, Eloise and Wayne are going to meet with Jarrell ISD superintendent.

Museum News –

Ghost Tours Oct. 25-26. You can buy tickets online

Cattleman's Ball on October 19, 2019

The "Women in White" might be Nanny Morrow (Micki is not happy she hasn't seen her)

Law & Order Cemetery Tour on Nov. 2 4:00pm-6:00pm at the IOOF

The United State Capitol Christmas Tree will be making a stop in Georgetown on Nov. 17 2PM-5PM.

The Palm House Museum is owned by the Chamber of Commerce who is looking for places that things can go.

Oral History –

A small committee met to discuss if transcriptions were necessary. They decided that paper is important and should be kept. Mildred was able to make it into a MP3. There are some free ways to transcribe through youtube and google. They also got Southwestern University recommendations through the university. Kandy Dippry and Mildred Hill-Davis researched the transcription information. Transcription is approx. \$1.00/min. The committee discussed using video over voice recording. Documentation

and releases may need to be updated if videos from phones are used. Rachel stated that she would try to use Google to transcribe the information.

The commission discussed the need to back up the recordings. Wayne noted that he had quiet a few oral histories backups. Micki stated that she would send a inventory list of what she has at the museum.

Changes to the handbook will be made based off the new procedures. The Commission accepted the new handbook and Micki will send out and this will be the interim checklist that is not part of the book.

Winnann reported that the handbook will not be ready until after the first of the year.

County Census:

Rachel Arnold passed out a hard copy of the draft letter she would like for the commission to review and provide comments. These letters are what each team will be sending to their respective communities to get feedback about the most endangered places in their communities. The subcommittee will meet again and move forward with direction.

Rachel Arnold had to leave the meeting and Jan Raesz took remaining minutes.

Speakers:

Discussion ensued on fund raising projects for the year. The courthouse can be used by WCHC once a year, and David has already arranged for two speakers after the first of the year. Kandy said Valerie has agreed to handle the food, and alcohol will be donated. Texas Independence Day was suggested as a favorable date, but Mickey said the courthouse was available March 26, and April 2.

Eloise said she would contact Judge Gravell to see which date would be best for him, as he is an enthusiastic supporter for this event.

Bricks:

Shelby discussed the recent meeting regarding ownership rights on the courthouse square perimeter regarding brick placement. He, along with WCHC members, Eloise, Mildred, and Mickie, with Judge Gravell spoke via phone with city representatives Baird and Butler to draft a proposal for the placement of 8X8 bricks for veterans of the cold war, Korea, Vietnam to current conflicts, once the property issue is resolved. He expects to have more input at the next meeting.

Shelby said the first agreement was by handshake in 2009 or 2010. Because the city is liable for the area, Mickie explained to the members, "We need an agreement because we're using city assets for a county project. It's an administrative issue that doesn't require council approval," but added she would check with her husband to make sure to avoid possible contention.

Eloise brought up the need for volunteers to sell bricks on Veteran's Day or Market Days. No action was taken.

New Business:

Kandy announced that the Blue Corn restaurant had agreed to provide menu choices for the WCHC Christmas party on December 10 or 12. She said she would let us know once the restaurant agreed on the date for the event to be hosted on their heated, covered patio.

Mickie announced plans for a free visitors parking garage downtown. The site is currently a parking lot. The county has set up a link to a web site to a survey for citizens' support for the project.

Respectfully submitted by Rachel Arnold.