

ARANSAS COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF JANUARY 23, 2019

Commissioners present: Sandra Bridges, Jerry Brundrett, Tim Daniel, Phil Decker, Sandy Garrison, Mike Geer, Linda Garcia Haynes (outgoing Secretary), Collin Jackson, Leona Nacole Predom, Pat Rousseau, Betty Stiles, Pam Stranahan (outgoing chair), Brian Tullis, and Commissioner Brian Olsen (Court Liaison). [See attached sign-in sheet]

Commissioners absent: Sherri Collins, Barbara Gurtner (meeting conflict), Janet Taylor (ill), and Carol Thompson (outgoing Treasurer--recovering from surgery)

1. Chair Pam Stranahan called the meeting at the Aquarium Education Center to order at 5:19 pm and declared a quorum was present.
2. New members and returning members and guests were introduced.
3. **CITIZENS TO BE HEARD:** None.
4. **Minutes**—Linda Garcia Haynes
Minutes of the regular meeting of November 5, 2018, and Special Meeting of December 3, 2018, were distributed and approved as read after a motion from Pat Rousseau and a second from Collin Jackson.
5. **Treasurer's Report**—
Betty Stiles read from the Statement of Expenditures provided by the County Auditor showing a total of **\$8,858.35** was expended in 2018 for the Historical Commission giving back approximately \$1,200 to the county general fund. We start out 2019 with \$10,000 intact and no funds expended in January thus far.
Treasurer's Report was unanimously approved after a motion by Sandy Garrison and a second by Jerry Brundrett.
6. **Election of Commission Officers for 2019:**
The floor was opened for any nominations.
Motion was made by Pat Rousseau and seconded by Mike Geer to elect Betty Stiles as Chair--Motion carried.
Motion was made by Jerry Brundrett to elect by acclamation Mike Geer as Vice Chair—Motion carried.
Motion was made by Pat Rousseau and seconded by Betty Stiles to elect Collin Jackson as Secretary—Motion carried.
Motion was made by Betty Stiles to elect by acclamation Sandra Bridges as Treasurer—Motion carried.

At this time, Pam Stranahan handed the gavel over to the new chair, Betty Stiles.

Betty welcomed everyone and remarked that we have two new markers to install for 2019 (end of 2018 Applications) assuming they are approved at the THC meeting. She also discussed her focus for a big project in 2019—a new Historical Marker Guide to be published in early 2020 with all 77 historical markers, historic landmarks and cemeteries—the last one published was in 2010. She talked with Mike Probst at the Rockport Pilot who agreed to do the photographing for all of them. The idea is to divide all 77 markers among the commission with each commissioner taking charge of five of them and attempting to obtain sponsors for each of those five. Some past sponsors are no longer here so new ones are needed. Advertising is either 2x4 or 4x2 at a cost of \$325-\$350 and a full page is \$1,000. Each marker will have its own advertiser sponsor. Sandy Garrison asked about the paper quality--the guide will be on higher paper quality than previously published. The layout would be 38.5 pages, for 77 markers; 2 per page, placed in alphabetical order. All we need to do is provide a letter to the potential advertiser asking for support. When the committee forms, assignments will be made so that we are not all approaching the same businesses. Some groups may not be limited to a single marker and some may be able to take on multiple markers. There is much to be worked on together. The Rockport Pilot will sponsor their own marker and will also help us to obtain sponsors. About 10,000 will be published and placed in the local newspaper, at the Chamber and at the History Center. It was suggested that a map be included with the marker guide.

7. **Committee Reports/Action Items:**
 - A) **Executive**—Betty Stiles/Mike Geer/Collin Jackson/Sandra Bridges
Betty reminded new members to take the open meeting training video online on the attorney general website at <https://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/og/open-government-training> (about an hour in duration) and then turn in their certificates to the Secretary. This should be done in the first 30 days of their appointment.

B. Preservation and Public Policy—Pat Rousseau/Tim Daniel/Pam Stranahan

- 1) Pat discussed the Revised HIM (Harvey Irma Maria) grants we have applied to for funding and giving them six sites—several are cemeteries, some or locations that are no longer there, one is the San Antonio & Aransas Pass Railroad Depot and, of course, one is the Rockport School. The National Park Service has not yet been funded, and the school and depot have to get on the National Register for Historic Places and these must be registered at the Federal Level before they are eligible for HIM grants. Tom Lawing—Operations at the School has been contacted. Pam has been working with anyone who is available on the Railroad Depot. Updated photos are needed. This group has to approve getting these two sites to the National Historic Register and we submit to the coordinator at THC to make the request to the NHC. Trying to get doors and windows that pass muster and meet storm code, and although not original must look and feel like the original. Itemizing what needs to be replaced and what needs to be put with those projects.

Motion was made by Collin Jackson and seconded by Jerry Brundrett that we apply for HIM Grants and NHC status—Motion carried.

C. Historical Markers & Endangered Properties—Sandy Garrison/Phil Decker/Barbara Gurtner/Brian Olsen/Leona Nacole Predom/Betty Stiles/Janet Taylor/Brian Tullis

- 1) Sandy Garrison reported on the two markers (Sorenson and Shivers houses) the components of which have been accepted by THC but not yet awarded. If we had to choose between the two markers, the Sorenson house would probably be the better choice as it has a much longer history. The Shivers house is a great example of a craftsman house, but a double wing garage was put on it making it a little harder to slide through, although the shared history of Alton & Pinkie Shivers as Sheriffs of Aransas County and Alton being a cousin to Texas Governor Shivers might give that one an edge as well.

Meanwhile, keep getting more information for Christmas; old book stores; a paperback anniversary of the Caller Times—first article is about Ben Garza—Monica Burdette had said he was the First President of LULAC, founded back in the 1920s in Corpus Christi. He was an exceptional man and worked together with the Anglo businessman. He died young in his early 40s from TB. There is Ben Garza Park—a recreational park in Corpus. He was not born in Rockport but was raised here in history. We want to go after the Rockport Connection in 2020 under the Under Recognized Historic Topics. The rental area he lived in was in the barrio and is probably long gone now. The old ledgers are still available at the Courthouse. Jerry recommended the Tony Dominguez Family to seek information on where Ben might have lived.

Sandy has copied and pasted 'You Know You Live in Rockport'. Barbara Gurtner has been working on the Seashell Shoppe, but there is not much paper documentation and only oral histories, so she is interviewing folks to get the history on the site.

Betty Stiles has been trying to get the St. Charles Hunting Club, and although they could not be a landmark, they could be a subject marker post Harvey. There is also Park Road 13, where the Postmaster live, but is in deplorable condition. It is the only 3-story building on Park Road 13 before you get to Bois D'Arc.

Please contact Sandy if ideas come up.

In addition to Sandy as Chair, Barbara Gurtner, Betty Stiles, and Janet Taylor, the following have volunteered to be on this committee: Phil Decker, Brian Olsen, Leona Nacole Predom, and Brian Tullis.

D. Finance and Budget—Sandra Bridges/Brian Olsen/Betty Stiles

Sandra Bridges as Treasurer, together with Brian Olsen and Betty Stiles will make up this committee.

E. Public Relations/Outreach—Mike Geer/Jerry Brundrett/Sherri Collins/Phil Decker/Sandy Garrison/Collin Jackson/Leona Nacole Predom/Betty Stiles

2019 Activities: 1) Calendars to Fourth Graders; 2) Publicity for events (flyer and ad for STHA meeting by March 1st); and 3) New Marker Guide for 2020.

Mike Geer was nominated as Chair for this committee for which he accepted. In addition to Sherri Collins already on this committee, Jerry Brundrett, Phil Decker, Sandy Garrison, Collin Jackson, Leona Nacole Predom and Betty Stiles have all volunteered for this committee.

It was announced that Jim Anderson is closing both his Abstract and Title Company and his attorney practice.

F. Collections—_____/Sherri Collins/Brian Tullis

We have no chair assigned as yet to this committee, but Sherri Collins was already assigned to this committee and Brian Tullis volunteered to come on board. It was agreed that all commissioners need to tour the vault after which others may decide to volunteer their service.

Jerry Brundrett reported that he has done an oral history his family arranged that took 4-1/2 hours. Once the family has had a chance to review it when ready, he may later provide it to the Historical Commission—he has not decided yet. Although it started off as a family history, it ended up being more history of the county.

G. Ad Hoc:

1) Cemeteries—Sandra Gregory Bridges/Brian Tullis

Sandra is planning a cleanup in Spring

2) STHA Spring Meeting (Sat.) April 6, 2019 at the Aquarium Education Center (co-sponsoring with Society)

The topic is Railroads. Jerry has maps of the old railroads coming into area; would be good to scan & send out. Leadership Aransas County Class 22 is having a big fundraiser that same day.

For reservations and box lunch contact Carroll Brincefield: brincefieldc@gmail.com or call 361-798-4280

Need commissioners for arrangements; confirm AV; set up space; coffee/pastries (ACH Society); caterer for lunch;

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8. Old Business –

1) Tropical Trail Event—usually third Tuesdays (exception: January 22 in Alice, TX).

The event on January 22nd started at the Jim Wells Courthouse, toured the area, and heard about some of the shenanigans of earlier folks that lived there, had lunch at the country club—presentation of George Parr and a showdown with the Texas Rangers, history of Duval County and Ballot Box 13. The November Tropical Trail Region event featured Robstown and included the Nueces County Junior Livestock Show; Flat Iron Delgado's building the Harbor Bridge; and history of Robert Driscoll encouraging folks to build there (Robstown is named about Robert Driscoll).

2) Other—Pat Rousseau mentioned the intern we lost for the oral history data entry project; she met with the high school business computer instructor who had a couple of really good candidates for the position and one of the students is an excellent very serious student.

9. New Business – Pam Stranahan

1) Texas State Historical Association Annual Meeting, Omni Hotel, Corpus Christi, February 28-March 2. Early registration through January 31—one day \$60; 3 days \$150 (reimbursable). Tropical trails is offering scholarship for first timers which if you do not get it, there is a line item in the budget to reimburse workshops. There are five (5) concurrent sessions—2 in the morning, a lunch, and 2 sessions in the afternoon. Each session is about an hour and a half and there is the most amazing book room for history. Leona Nacole Predom wishes to go.

2) South Texas Historical Association (STHA) Spring Meeting, Saturday, April 6, 2019, 9:00 am—4:00 pm at the Aquarium Education Center. ACHC is co-hosting with the Society.

3) Other—Mike Geer mentioned that next year is Rockport's sesquicentennial and the following year is the County's as well—do we as a commission want to have one voice to the City Council and the County Commissioners' Court to jointly celebrate?

Mike motioned and Jerry seconded that we send a communication to the Aransas County Commissioners' Court and to the Rockport City Council that the Historical Commission would like to have a joint (single) celebration of the sesquicentennial—motion carried.

Jerry--a time capsule is buried at the old City Hall--it should be retrieved if they decide to bulldoze the building.

10. ACHC Quarterly Meeting Dates:

Quarterly meeting dates for the rest of 2019 are:

March 20; September 18; November 20.*

Betty will confirm with Tish to see if those dates are available at the Aquarium Education Center. If not, she will reschedule them and send notice to everyone.

***Note**—Betty contacted Tish on January 24th and those dates are not available as the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of every month are reserved for the Aquarium evening lecture series. New meeting dates available and confirmed are: **March 27; September 25; November 13** as well as a special meeting on **December 11**.

11. Adjournment:

There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 6:25 pm after a motion from Pat Rousseau and a second from Mike Geer.

Respectfully Submitted,
Collin Jackson Secretary