

Milam County Historical Commission Meeting
Kay Theater – Rockdale, Texas

April 4, 2022

Call to Order: In the absence of Chairperson Joan Ratliff, the meeting of the Milam County Historical Commission was called to order by Geri Burnett, Treasurer, at 10:05 am. The meeting was held at the Kay Theater in Rockdale, Texas.

Attendance: The following members were in attendance: Geri Burnett, Eunice Stigall, Zane Stigall, Elaine Baumann, Mary Neely, Elissa Benford, John Pruett, Jennifer Patton, and Lynn Young.

Recognition of Guests: The following guests were recognized: Gene Baumann, Judy Marks, Linda Jo Conn, Jamie Larson, and Gary Griesbach.

Pledges of Allegiance: The pledge of allegiance to the American flag was led by Geri Burnett.

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes: The minutes were distributed by email to all members. Jennifer Patton made a motion to approve the minutes of the meeting on February 7, 2022, as distributed. Mary Neely seconded the motion that passed.

Approval of Treasurer's Reports: The beginning balance of the General Fund on January 1, 2022, was \$65,438.15. There was interest revenue of \$30.57 and no disbursements resulting in an ending balance on January 31, 2022, of \$65,468.72 of which \$4,000 is designated to the Rosenwald School.

The beginning balance of the Preservation Fund on January 1, 2022, was \$13,129.56. There was interest revenue of \$6.38 and not disbursements resulting in an ending balance of \$13,135.94 on January 31, 2022.

The beginning balance of the General Fund on February 1, 2022, was \$65,468.72. There was interest revenue of \$30.57 and no disbursements resulting in an ending balance on February 28, 2022, of \$65,499.31 of which \$4,000 is designated to the Rosenwald School.

The beginning balance of the Preservation Fund on February 1, 2022, was \$13,135.94. There was interest revenue of \$6.14 and disbursements of \$978.97 (Milam County Museum) resulting in an ending balance of \$12,163.11 on February 28, 2022.

Committee Reports

The **Certified Local Government Committee (CLG) – John Pruett**. This committee is required by the bylaws of the Commission in compliance of Federal and State laws for the purposes of applying, qualifying, and participating in Federal and State Certified Local Government program. The committee meets bimonthly in months in which the Commission does not meet. There are currently 3 major efforts underway:

- El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail (Lynn Young is currently on the Board; Joyce Conner is also on the Board and shares her reports with the Commission),
- El Rancho Grande (Joyce Conner is the chairperson; this group has established a UTube channel to advocate for the trail. The application has been submitted to establish it for a national park architectural site.
- Freedom Colonies (Include Rosenwald Schools and currently focused on the Liberty Hill and Milano sites)

Other current activities involving CLG requirements include:

- Maintaining a system for surveying...protecting properties and districts of historic significance
- Maintaining/updating surveyed properties/districts inventory

Standing Committees

Cemetery Committee - Holly Jentsch shared via email the various activity. (monitor conditions of historical cemeteries; provide research assistance, monitor various databases):

- Thomson Cemetery. Request to visit was given to landowner and is pending. A descendent of family has also requested to visit, Derek Galbreath. Holly has researched the cemetery, traced the property deeds, etc. The cemetery is listed on the current deed as separate property but not listed on tax roles as separate property.
- Oliver Cemetery. Actively looking to find location to visit.
- Connell Cemetery. Researched cemetery. Talked to Mr. Brymer who said he knew the landowner where the cemetery is located. Hopefully will be able to visit soon. The cemetery is listed on deed records as separate property but not separate on tax roles.
- Miller Cemetery. Active research as family members are also in Thomson, Connell and other cemeteries. Miller is on defunct Alcoa property.
- Beaver Cemetery/Black Israelite Cemetery,

- Gause: Invited to go visit Thursday, 31 March with family of those buried there.

Marker Committee Lynn Young. (provide assistance and guidance to applicants for historical markers and designations; work with CLG and marker recipients in coordinating efforts to maintain markers). Two new marker applications are in progress:

- Gause Baptist Church
- Gause Methodist Church

The Rockdale Old City Cemetery Marker Dedication is scheduled for June 11 at 10 am. Three markers are still expected for delivery for last year's recipients.

Preservation Grants - Holly Jentsch (administers MCHC funded grants and oversees accountability of recipients). The following Preservation Grants have been awarded for 2022:

- The Kay Theater Foundation \$2700.
- Milam County Railroad Museum 4136.00
- Samuel Park Storyboard \$3000.00
- The 1895 Project: \$5000.00

Old Business

1895 Project Update - Geri Burnett shared that there is an open house Derby Day scheduled for May 7. All are invited to participate.

1800 Milam County Map Restoration. – Geri Burnett shared that Jennifer Cbic has been contacted and has offered to restore this map. Eunice Stigall made a motion, seconded by Lynn Young, to authorize Geri to go forward with the project for restoration. The motion carried.

New Business

Future Meetings. The executive committee shared suggestions for future meetings:

- June: tentatively meet at the Old Rockdale City Hall with a program about the renovation project. Attendees would be advised to dress appropriately for the lack of AC at this point in the renovation. Presenter and Location to be confirmed by Geri Burnett.
- August: Presenter and speaker to be confirmed by John Pruett. Topic suggested is the Freedom Colonies/Rosenwald Schools in Milam County.

Other: Guest Gary Griesbach shared and led a discussion about the historical significance, not only to Rockdale, but to the United States, the role of Alcoa's Rockdale Plant has had and the opportunities being lost to preserve physical remnants and documentation via photos.

Announcements

Learning Events see https://www.texaspreservationplan.com/upcoming-meetings?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery for registration information)

- Digital Town Hall #5: Engaging Future Preservationist – April 2 – 6:30-8:30 pm
- Digital Town Hall #6: Interpreting Underrepresented Stories – April 12 – 6:30-8:30 pm
- Digital Town Hall #7: Leveraging Preservation Benefits – April 14 – 12 – 2 pm
- Digital Town Hall #8: Expanding Revenue Streams – April 19 – 12 – 2 pm

Scheduled Dates for Upcoming Milam County Historical Commission Meetings

June 6

August 8

October 3

December 5

Adjournment

There being no further business, Elaine Baumann made a motion to adjourn. Elissa Benford seconded the motion which carried. The meeting was adjourned and members and guests enjoyed the presentation by Geri Burnett on the Kay Theater.

Respectfully submitted,
Eunice Stigall, Secretary.