

**Milam County Historical Commission Meeting
February 7, 2022
Commissioners Court in Cameron, Texas**

Call to Order. Chairperson Joan Ratliff called the Milam County Historical Commission to order at 10:00 am. The meeting was held in the Commissioners Court in Cameron, Texas.

Attendance: The following members attended the meeting; Joan Ratliff, Holly Jentsch, Geri Burnett, Elissa Benford-Roberts, Rita Quinn, Jennifer Patton, Lynn Young, Zane Stigall, John Pruet, and Eunice Stigall. Also in attendance was Doug Kleypas representing the Train Museum. Also in attendance for part of the meeting: Judge Steve Young, and State officials, Jeff Willingford, and Uryan Nelson.

Welcome/Volunteer Hours: Chairperson Ratliff welcomed members and requested members submit volunteer hours on the sheet being circulated or by email. Rita Quinn was welcomed as a new member.

Pledge of Allegiance. Those in attendance, led by Geri Burnett, recited the pledges of allegiance to the flags of the United States and of the State of Texas.

Approval of Minutes. The minutes of meetings on October 4, 2021, and December 6, 2021, were distributed by email to members prior to the meeting. Note: the chair determined that the necessary quorum of members were not present to conduct business in the December 6 meeting. The approval of the minutes was deferred until our next regular meeting. Lynn Young made a motion, seconded by Elissa Benford-Roberts, to approve the minutes of October 4. The motion carried. Geri Burnett made a motion to approve the minutes of the December 6 meeting. Holly Jentsch seconded the motion that carried.

Approval of the Treasurer's Reports. Geri Burnett presented the reports as follows:

The beginning balance in the general fund on September 1, 2021 was \$70,413.01. Revenue was \$32.90 and there were no disbursements giving an ending balance on September 30 of \$70,445.91 of which \$4,000 was in funds dedicated to the Rosenwald School.

The beginning balance for the MCHC Preservation Fund on September 1, 2021 was \$15,950.10. Revenue was \$7.77 interest with no disbursements leaving a balance on September 30 of \$15,957.87.

The beginning balance in the general fund on October 1, 2021, was \$70,445.91. Revenue was \$31.85 and disbursements were \$5,000 to the Vision Historic Preservation Foundation and dues of \$100 to the El Camino de los Tejas National Trail Association giving an ending balance on October 31 of \$65,377.76 of which \$4,000 was in funds dedicated to the Rosenwald School.

The beginning balance for the MCHC Preservation Fund on October 1 was \$15,957.87. Revenue was \$7.22 with no disbursements leaving a balance on October 31 of \$16,965.09.

The beginning balance for the MCHC general fund on November 1, 2021, was \$65,377.76. Revenue was \$30.81 in interest and there were no disbursements leaving an ending balance on November 30 of \$65,408.57 of which \$4,000 was in funds dedicated to the Rosenwald School.

The beginning balance of the MCHC Preservation Fund on November 1, 2021, was \$15,965.09. There was interest revenue of \$7.46 and disbursements of \$1,500 for the Cameron City Park Pavillion leaving a balance on November 30 of \$14,472.55.

The beginning balance for the MCHC General Fund on December 1, 2021, was \$65,408.57. Revenue was \$29.58 in interest and there were no disbursements leaving an ending balance on December 31 of \$65,438.15 of which \$4,000 was in funds dedicated to the Rosenwald School.

The beginning balance of the MCHC Preservation Fund on December 1, 2021, was \$65,438.15. There was interest revenue of \$7.01 and disbursements of \$1,350, for the Kay Theater Foundation Project leaving an ending balance on December 31, 2021, of \$13,129.56.

Elissa Benford-Roberts made a motion to approve the treasurer's reports for all the months September through December as presented. Lynn Young seconded the motion that carried.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Cemetery Committee. Holly Jentsch reported that the Chris North trial has been postponed; Mr. North is charged with destruction to the Prospect Cemetery. She noted that she is also continuing to get requests/inquiries concerning many other cemeteries. For example, requests involving Amelia Culp in Tracy and about the families killed in the 1920 flood around the /San Gabriel River/FM 486 area. She is assisting Northwood Cemetery updating their records. In addition, information updating is in process for Port Sullivan, Gause and Richards Cemeteries.

CLG Committee. John Pruett reported that he is completing the 2021 CLG Annual Report due to the Texas Historical Commission on February 28. He reported that the committee is focusing on acquiring information to develop the Volume III Supplement to our Historic and Architectural Resources Survey of Milam County, Texas, Rural, Milam County, including Milam County property. Our last survey was completed in 2014. The Committee is required to update the survey every ten years. Therefore, Volume III must be completed in 2024.

The Committee has a significant focus on Milam County Rosenwald School sites and participation in the Freedom Colony Project. Again, there are five identified sites in Milam County for the Rosenwald schools. The Davilla location is still standing.

The Committee members continue to monitor and update properties of historical significance. We would appreciate additional input from the Commission and friends for information on historic properties that need to be included in our survey and the extent to which they may be endangered.

El Camino Real de los Tejas Historic Trail. John Pruett reported that he recently went off the board; Lynn Young is still on the board. The board is seeking funding from

the National Part Association, particularly, Dave Cunningham is working with the owner of Sugarloaf Mountain to be included. A grant to purchase 50 acres around Sugarloaf Mountain which is located at the confluence of the Brazos and Little Rivers.

He noted that the application for the Rancho Grande project has previously been stalled at the THC but has now been given concurrence to be sent to Washington.

Marker Committee. Lynn Young reported that there are two efforts underway for historical markers: Elaine Baumann is working on research for Gause Baptist Church and Mary Neely is researching material for Gause Methodist Church.

MCHC Preservation Grant Fund. Holly shared details of the four applications which have been received. Ellssa Benford-Roberts shared additional details of her project to the group.

OLD BUSINESS

THC (Texas Historical Commission). Joan Ratliff shared that much effort is being committed to completing the requisite periodic reports. John Pruett had already reported on the CLG. In addition, the overall MCHC report is being updated.

1895 Project. Geri Burnett shared that this effort includes looking for pictures and history of the Rockdale buildings downtown in addition to city hall. The Open House was a success in spite of the weather. Another Open House is being planned for April. Also, information/research is underway concerning a fireman named "Atchinson" who used to live at the old fire station.

NEW BUSINESS

Attendance Improvement. Joan Ratliff shared that with the lifting of significant COVID restrictions, we need to renew our efforts especially for in-person attendance at meetings. The options for virtual attendance was also discussed. Efforts to update our membership roster are underway. Members are encouraged to be aware of the by-laws requirement for attendance. The by-laws are on-line via our Facebook page.

Future Meetings. Members are encouraged to "mark the calendar" for future MCHC meetings for 2022:

April 4
June 6
August 8
October 3
December 5

The location of these meetings is to be announced.

Update on County Activities. Judge Steve Young joined our meeting briefly to introduce two State officials visiting the County: Jeff Willingford, Regional Director for Senator Cornyn, and Uryan Nelson, Planning & Regional Services Director, of the Central Texas Council of Governments. A booklet "The History of the Hospitals in Cameron, Texas, and How the Hospital Complex Became the New Milam County

Government Center” was shared with the attendees. Judge Young gave an update on the various grants and new businesses coming to the County. Also, he shared the progress on the move to the new County Government Center,

ADJOURNMENT

The agenda topics were completed at 11:35 am. Geri Burnette made a motion to adjourn. Holly Jentsch seconded the motion that carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Eunice Stigall, Secretary