



Bexar County Historical Commission
Bexar County Courthouse
100 Dolorosa #311
San Antonio, Texas 78205

BEXAR COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Minutes - September 5, 2018, 2:00 pm

Commission Members in Attendance:

Dr. Félix D. Almaráz, Jr.
Mickey Killian
Clinton M. McKenzie
Dr. Amy Porter
Dr. Paul T. Ringenbach
Jesús R. (Corky) Rubio
Dr. Linda Salvucci

Associate Members in Attendance:

Gary Houston
Brother Ed Loch, S.M.
Dr. Sharon Skrobarcek
Dr. David Carlson

Guests or County Representatives in Attendance:

Betty Bueche
Juliette Moke
Rhett Smith

Meeting called to order at 2:08 pm

Roll call until quorum met.

Almaráz: Committee on Historical Appreciation will be led by Sharon Skorbarek until Francis Galan returns.

August Meeting Minutes Discussion/ correction: McKenzie correct TAA to TAS on p.3 of August minutes; also p. 3 on top Richard Curilla's name should be corrected; Carlson noted that Bexareños on p. 3 needs to be spelled correctly.

Almaráz: If there is another version of the brochure on the Bexar area archives printed, please correct the name of St. Mary's archives to its proper and full name.

Almaráz: In regards to the Borderland film festival mentioned at the last meeting, it has been suspended indefinitely.

McKenzie moved to approve the August minutes as amended, Carlson seconded the motion, and the commission voted to approve the minutes.

Treasurer Report Given by Paul Ringenbach:

For FY 18, almost everything has been taken care of or will be resolved by the end of the fiscal year; we are waiting on a W-9 for the San Antonio Regional History Day Fair. The paperwork has been submitted, is in process, but it is waiting for County approval. No further action is required from this commission.

We are waiting to hear back from Mr. Curilla who is travelling. Clinton McKenzie has sent him the forms to complete, so we are awaiting the return of the forms.

For FY 19, there are five procedural steps to take next year for FY 19 expenditures beginning in October.

Procedural Steps:

1. Written proposals on letterhead from requesting group must be submitted to the treasurer prior to presentation to the Commission for vote
2. Group must be an approved vendor by the County or must submit a W-9 to the County. (Instructions on the Bexar County Website)
3. BCHC vote
4. Submission to Commissioners Court
5. Invoice presented for payment

These steps outline the normal procedures. Ask the treasurer, Paul Ringenbach, if you have any questions. Do not go directly beforehand to anyone at Bexar Heritage.

Committee Reports:

Almaráz noted the revised leadership that places Skrobarcek as the Chair of the History Appreciation Committee.

Historical Markers: Almaráz: Sept. 1 was the opening of the acceptance of marker applications, and it ends November 15. But Bexar County has been given the prerogative of cutting off application review as of November 1 so that the committee has time to review all of the materials.

Any applications received after November 1 will be sent to Austin with a note that there was not adequate time to review. There are three types of markers: subject marker, has to do with a site that has important event/s. The second type is a building marker. It is smaller than a subject marker, but requires a lot of evaluation of the building. Third is a cemetery marker. These applications are also reviewed by the cemetery committee chaired by Scott Baird. There is an application coming from Kimberly Baird for her place. This went to THC, and they sent back some suggestions to follow. Since no one else on the committee is an architect, Almaráz will ask José Jiménez to visit the building and assess it and answer the following: Is it original? Are there additions to it? If so, are the additions compatible?

There are four forthcoming applications: 1) Mexican Village 2) Gerfers Community Cemetery 3) St. Hedwig application again but with a different sponsor 4) Brother Loch's application

Cemetery Committee:

Baird's Report:

Cemetery Projects- Scott Baird

Completed Projects

- Gerfers Cemetery (Dedication scheduled for September 22, 2018 with Drs. Almaráz and Baird participating)
- Leon Valley Cemetery (erected their own explanatory marker)

Continuing Projects

- Hockley Cemetery (initiated by David Carlson and Everett Fly in fall 2017)
On 09/04/2018, Dr. Carlson heard from J. Mike Wright and Everett Fly that the two men have "tentatively identified Saturday, October 13th (2018)" as clean up date for the cemetery.
- Bacon/Beckmann (started 02/13/2018)
Dr. Carlson has documented that the cemetery has an easement. I have verified that it is obstructed with vines, trees, and shrubs.
- Ruiz/Herrera (started 07/13/2017)
Ms. Bueschele has opened the possibility that the Sheriff's Office might intervene after all. A construction company has built on top of three of the seven marked graves.
- Interstate 37 and Hardy Oak (started 04/09/2018)
Slave burial ground and Oakley Cemetery
George/McGraw Family Cemetery
Hooker Family Cemetery
Priest Family Cemetery B.F. Shields deed
- Buchenshutz Cemetery (started 07/05/2018) COSA has agreed to clean up garbage dumped around the cemetery and to re-open access to the markers.

- Wetmore Cemetery
- Sheriff-Bouche-Baird-Carlson Committee

At the August 1 meeting of the BCHC, Ms. Bouche announced that she had an agreement with the Bexar County Sheriff, for upholding the laws (see below) regarding Access and/or Desecration of any and all cemeteries within the county. She agreed to have the Sheriff meet with herself, Baird, and Carlson. Through an email exchange this morning, Ms. Bouche and I have agreed that no committee is necessary- as long as the Sheriff's office does indeed renew its efforts to enforce the law (SEE BELOW). Heritage, Hockley, and Bacon/Beckmann qualify.

New Projects

THC Cemetery Database

THC has contracted an outside consultant to analyze data from county Historical bodies over the past year. The firm will follow through with interviews.

BCHC Cemetery Committee

THC gives BCHC only two responsibilities: 1) to verify that data submitted for designation of a cemetery is accurate and 2) to verify that wording on a Historical Marker is accurate.

In the past a Cemetery Committee of two people has sufficed in fulfilling obligation number one; the Markers Committee has handled obligation number two.

Members of BCHC, however, -myself included- have worked with various Cemetery Boards, however, to assist them address problems of access and desecration. This past month has shown me that the ad hoc involvement of various BCHC members has worked much better than stifling such involvement with an enlarged cemetery Committee.

<http://www.thc.texas.gov/preserve/projects-and-programs/cemetery-preservation/cemetery-laws>

ACCESS

Any person who wishes to visit a cemetery that has no public ingress or egress shall have the rights for visitation during reasonable hours and for purposes associated with cemetery visits. The owner of the lands surrounding the cemetery may designate the routes for reasonable access. Interference with ingress and egress is a Class C misdemeanor. ([Health and Safety Code, Section 711.041](#) and [Section 711.0521](#)) The Texas Funeral Services Commission has the authority to write rules to support Section 711.041.

DESECRATION

... A person commits an offense if they knowingly vandalize or damage the space of the interred. This Class A misdemeanor is punishable by fine and jail confinement. ([Texas Penal Code, Section 42.08](#))

McKenzie asks that Carlson reach out to him about the Hockley cemetery: Point of information from Carlson: Where is the Herritage Cemetery?: Baird: up 410 near Toyota Plant; McKenzie: notes that when city cleans up they often send the bill to the property owner. Wetmore cemetery: not historical, still an active cemetery so contact city of Wetmore.

Houston: Had previously asked for papers on an undertold marker application (cemetery) around 2011- Eastview Community Cemetery out near Roland Avenue and Rigsby on the banks of the Salado Creek that dates back to the late 19th century; it was the private cemetery for the African American community; as other cemeteries were segregated this became the only private cemetery for African Americans; BCHC hired someone (Ed Conroy) to do this research; it was submitted and nothing ever came from it; there was supposed to be a marker and ceremony, but they never got a marker; Baird is looking for the records.

Houston: What are the penalties for desecration of the cemetery? Are they civil or criminal charges? Carlson says it is a Class A misdemeanor; Houston: if there is desecration, then there needs to be consequences.

Almaráz: asks Houston about the Buffalo Soldiers marker. There was an inaccuracy on the marker; has it been corrected? It cannot be corrected on the current marker. Houston will follow up on this issue with Almaráz.

Bueche explains process by which the sheriff's office will look into a complaint about the willful violation of a cemetery; there has to be a person who has an interest in the cemetery (has family buried there for example), and the person has to file a complaint; then the sheriff's office will investigate and go from there.

Bueche: Can ask Sheriff if he can send someone to our next meeting to explain the process and explain their interest in the issue.

Houston: the State might have a mechanism for enforcing protection of markers.

McKenzie: That is desecration of public property.

History Appreciation: Almaráz will leave it up to Skrobarcek to decide how to report events. Main duty is to go to marker dedication ceremony to unveil the marker with the cover.

Brother Loch: Grand opening of the Archives of the Archdiocese of San Antonio is on September 19 for historians and archivists, and September 20 will be an evening affair with dancing and a meal for major donors to the Archdiocese. Then it will be open to the public. Brother Loch is working on sorting items for his archives.

Next week Dr. Poyo's class is coming to research for projects using materials in the archives. Another professor is bringing a class for students preparing to become museum workers. Dr. Ann Tate, who is in a new position of Catholicism and Church and Education, will be coming to visit the archives and bringing in her classes eventually. Mary Kenney will be the Marianist archivist. What happens to archives when nuns die out and are not replaced? Mary is working on this issue and getting grants.

Almaráz announced that he is now the St. Mary's Distinguished Scholar in Residence and will have an office there at St. Mary's University. He will still hold his previous title at UTSA, but will no longer have an office on campus.

Rubio announced that the 39th Annual Hispanic Genealogical & Historical Conference, hosted by Los Bexareños, and with our support will be meeting in San Antonio at the Holiday Inn Riverwalk from September 26 - 28. It looks like the attendance will be excellent.

Almaráz adjourned the meeting at 3:05 PM.