



## **MINUTES**

**Bexar County Historical Commission Meeting**

**1:00 p.m.**

**Bexar County Courthouse**

**Double-Height Courtroom**

**Wednesday, April 3, 2019**

**Commission Members in Attendance:**

**Dr. Felix Almaráz**

**Dan Arellano**

**Joseph de León**

**Hon. Alan Ernst**

**Dr. Francis X. Galan**

**Mickey Killian**

**Clinton McKenzie**

**Prof. Sue Ann Pemberton**

**Dr. Amy Porter**

**Jesús R. (Corky) Rubio**

**Mario Salas**

**Commission Members with Excused Absence:**

**Angelica Docog**

**Associate Members in Attendance:**

**Dr. Scott Baird**

**Dr. David Carlson**

**Frank Faulkner**

**Gary Houston**

**Jose G. Jimenez**

**Brother Edward J. Loch, S.M.**

**Dr. Sharon Skrobarcek**

**Associate Members with Excused Absence:**

**None**

**Guests or County Representatives in Attendance:**

**Juliette Moke**

Betty Bueché  
Leslie Stapleton  
Tim Gritten

Welcome: Chairman Dr. Felix D. Almaraz, Jr.

Meeting Called to Order at 1:10 pm

Roll Call: Dr. Amy Porter

Review and Approval of BCHC Minutes of March 6, 2019. Motion by McKenzie and second by Ernst. Motion passed.

**II. Review of By-Laws:** Appointment of Ad Hoc Committee to recommend revisions and enhancement. Almaráz knows that the BCHC created by-laws quite a while ago. Judge Ernst will chair the committee, and Dr. Skrobarcek and Corky Rubio will serve on the committee. Almaráz will serve as an ex-officio member. Almaráz noted that he needs to get permission from the Commissioners first so that the committee does not waste time.

**III. Succinct Oral Reports of Standing Committees:**

A. Archaeology (Clinton McKenzie)- Kay Hindes, the city archaeologist, is retiring in July. Concerning work at the Leon Valley Onion House, good material has been found that can go into their museum- very interesting family related items- toy marbles, cartridge cases, etc. McKenzie gave a talk there.

B. Archives (Brother Edward J. Loch, S.M.)- no report- Carlson noted that the SARA meeting will be on Friday, May 3 at 3:00 pm hosted by Bexar County Spanish Archives.

C. Cemetery (Dr. Scott Baird)-

**Official Duties:**

*Historical Designation:* We have no active requests for State Designation status. Several cemetery owners and Associations have shown interest, however.

*Bexar County Cemetery Inventory:* Jenny McWilliams emailed an Earth Google link to Bexar County Genealogy Society's list of cemeteries containing nine volumes of location maps. Each entry includes primary and alternate cemetery names, and location. David Carlson, Clinton McKenzie, and I now need to enter that information on the TxDot Active Atlas. (And we would welcome help...)

**Unofficial Aid:**

The Cemetery Committee receives a growing number of requests from cemetery owners for help in the restoration of vandalized and endangered cemeteries.

*Bexar County Cemetery Resources:* The Cemetery Committee with the help of Riley and Riley Attorneys are preparing a list of resources. We have included ideas found in the THC Cemetery Contractors list. The Trinity University Library staff, in addition, has helped us compile funding resources.

*Ruiz-Herrera Cemetery (Somerset):* The Somerset Historical Society has decided to sue the Ruiz Herrera Cemetery Association, arguing that the Association has been negligent in protecting the cemetery from Medina River flood damage.

*Bacon-Beckmann Cemetery (Vance Jackson and 1604) Ms. Violet Sales Hasley* has involved the family in addressing the lack of access to the cemetery. They cleared a wide walking path to the cemetery and cleaned the cemetery itself. The Path itself is still hazardous to use, but healthy adults can wend their way.

*Herritage Family Cemetery (Moursund Rd, near Toyota plant)*: Linda Sprague now working with attorney Darby Riley. The attorneys for the present owners of the land are willing to fence in the remaining portion of the cemetery. The Herritage family members plan to gather here in San Antonio on April 13. Mr. Riley and David Carlson have both agreed to meet with them, before deciding to settle with the company's offer.

***American Culture Association, Cemeteries and Gravemarkers Area***: I will present a paper, *TEXAS: A Typical State's Guaranteed Protection of Its Cemeteries*, at ACA's annual meeting held in Washington D.C. April 16-20.

D. Historical Markers (Dr. Almaráz)- We only have one challenge with markers- undertold stories. Sometimes THC grants a free, large subject marker. They granted one to BCHC ten years ago for the Council House Fight. They hired a consultant, but it was a lopsided report. Mr. Killian and Almaráz have that responsibility now. They will work to write a more balanced history.

Almaráz met with Ringenbach to discuss the anthology from the Bexar county Tricentennial Symposia. The title will be *Spain's Contact with the New World*. If the contributors do not submit their final essays, then they will not be included. Dr. Skrobarcek will also serve on this editorial committee. Gary Houston noted that there is another pending undertold story which is still unresolved, and this is the Eastview Cemetery marker. This needs to be revisited.

E. History Appreciation (Dr. Sharon Skrobarcek)- see newsletter

F. Oral History (Open and still unassigned for lack of interest)- If no one is interested, we will suspend this committee until there is interest.

**IV. Status of Trademark Trial (A Challenge will be explained to BCHC at meeting of May 1, 2019)-** Almaráz- a trademark has five years and during that five years the person with the trademark has to protect what they are guarding. New DA might offer consultation to the BCHC. A lawyer will come next month to discuss the issue.

**V. Unfinished Business: Undetermined**

**VI. New Business (Spontaneous and unrehearsed)**

**VII. Announcements: (2 minutes per speaker)**

Scheduled: Dr. Francis X. Galan: A Symposium: "The Powers of Borders"

Arrellano- this Saturday, we will be celebrating Tejano Independence Day. It will be at 11:00 am in front of the Spanish Governor's Palace and later in Austin. Arrellano went to Mexico City and visited the Museo de Chapultepec. And he viewed many rare and old documents. They also visited Puebla and debuted *Texas before the Alamo*.

Baird has been the BCHC representative at the San Pedro Creek oversight committee.

McKenzie will start attending, and Porter will be an alternate.

Houston updated the commission on the Hays Street Bridge issue. The case has been returned to the lower court, and the city council will be voting on whether or not to drop the suit. If they drop the suit, the next step would be for the city council to void the sale of the land. Then, the land could revert back to the city to be used in the way originally intended. The state historical commission is convening on April 16 to define antiquities landmarks for the upcoming year.

The Woolworth building has been included in that list. The GLO plans to put a museum on that corner. The Conservation Society and others have hired architects to show how the building can be preserved and a museum can be created. Pemberton noted that the GLO hired a firm to look at the existing building and that report is coming out soon. Almaráz asks that Houston talk to him more about it.

Rubio has asked if there is a protocol to follow if people want to give things to the Historical Commission or County. Bueché noted that the County has a collections policy. Coordinate with the county collector.

Bueché noted that we have some done some research on when was the first county park created. It was donated in 1920 by Brackenridge. It was a part of Comanche park, and it was considered very important to the Centennial Commission. By 1936, the Texas Commission for the Centennial put a marker on it. It was deemed to be the site of the encampment of SFA when he was recruiting troops for the Siege of Bexar. One of the other 11 Centennial makers was the gravesite of Kendrick Arnold. The men recruited by SFA refused to go unless they were led by Kendrick Arnold, an African American. He was connected to Deaf Smith and did not know that SFA was looking for them. He ended up leading the regiment. The Bexar County Parks System would like to develop activities around this recruitment story. In the midst of this recruitment, SFA went to DC and Ben Milam stepped in. Much of the Siege of Bexar occurred in the Main Plaza area. SARA wants to develop a new paddling trail around this area where Kendrick Arnold's gravesite is. Kendrick Arnold was Deaf Smith's son-in-law. Arnold had a white father and a slave mother, but he was not treated as a slave although there is no record that his father ever freed him. Houston noted that very little research has been done on the free black subculture in San Antonio. This story might be a good vehicle to examine this larger story. Jimenez noted that what is now Milam Park was part of a grant given to the residents of Bexar. Bueché says that it is run by the city, and we can suggest that to them. So Centennial will be June of next year (100 year anniversary of the first county park).

**VIII.** Adjournment: 2:17 pm