



Bexar County Historical Commission

Meeting

Wednesday June 3, 2020 1:00 p.m.

Double Height Courtroom, Media Briefing Room

MINUTES

Commission Members in Attendance:

Dr. Felix Almaraz, Chair

Mr. Hector Cardenas

Mr. Joseph de León

Hon. Judge Alan Ernst

Dr. Francis X. Galan

Mr. Clinton McKenzie

Prof. Sue Ann Pemberton

Mr. Jesús (Corky) Rubio

Hon. Prof. Mario Salas

Commission Members with Excused Absences:

Mr. Dan Arellano

Executive Director Angelica Docog

Mr. Mickey Killian

Dr. Amy Porter

Associate Members in Attendance:

Dr. Scott Baird

Dr. David Carlson

Mr. José G. Jimenez

Associate Members Absent:

Mr. Fran Faulkner

Mr. Gary Houston

Brother Edward J. Loch, S.M.

Dr. Sharon Skrobacek

Guests and County Representatives in Attendance:

Mrs. Monica Treviño Ortega, San Antonio River Authority (SARA)

Ms. Carrie Brown, San Antonio River Authority (SARA)

Ms. Betty Bueché, Director, Bexar Heritage and Parks Department

Ms. Juliette Moke, Manager, Bexar County Heritage Center

Ms. Mari Tamez, Outreach Coordinator, Bexar County Heritage & Parks Dept.

- I. The Honorable Judge Alan Ernst called the **meeting to order at 1:04pm.**
- II. Dr. Francis Galan took **roll call** and determined a **quorum present.**
- III. Review of the minutes from the meeting of March 4, 2020. Judge Ernst called for a motion to accept the minutes as submitted. Dr. David Carlson noted a small typo in the spelling of Bro. Ed Loch's surname on pg 3. Motions made and **minutes were approved as amended.**
- V. **Old Business:** Judge Ernst said there was a suggestion to add a "Prologue" to the By-Laws of the BCHC. He has no problem with it other than it just being more verbiage.
- VI. **New Business:** None
- VII. **Announcements:**
 - A. No scheduled meetings of BCHC in July, August, November, and December 2020.
 - B. Forthcoming meeting of BCHC is Wednesday, September 2, 2020.
 - C. Review of State regulation of appointments to County Historical Commissions: Ms. Betty Bueché pointed out the THC printout (distributed at the BCHC meeting) about the County Historical Commission (CHC) organizational structure. She noted that Texas' Local Government Code, Chapter 318, directs Member appointments to be made during January of odd-numbered years, and that appointees serve a 2-year term. She stated we were course corrected when the Commissioners court filled vacancies for the current BCHC, so each of us will have to let Dr. Almaraz and Ms. Juliette Moke know if you wish to be re-appointed this January 2021. Additionally, Associate Members are appointed under the By-Laws. Lastly, she reiterated the statutory code designates four areas of CHC: 1) historical markers; 2) historic cemeteries; 3) buildings/facilities; and 4) history appreciation.
 - D. Recognition of Dr. Paul H. Ringenbach, former Vice Chairman, for his service on the BCHC.
 - E. Position of Vice-Chair (BCHC): Judge Ernst mentioned that if anyone is interested in being Vice-Chair to let Dr. Almaraz know.
 - F. Point of Order: Judge Ernst informed Chairman Almaraz after his arrival at the BCHC meeting (1:13pm) that we took the liberty of preliminary business (minutes, quorum, some announcements). Dr. Almaraz stated he would like to look into hiring a scribe or stenographer to take the minutes at our meeting in September.
- IV. **Power-Point presentation by San Antonio River Authority (SARA) reporting on San Pedro Creek Project:** Ms. Bueché introduced Mrs. Monica Treviño Ortega and Ms. Carrie Brown of SARA to give status update on the interpretative panels of phase two of the project's plan, which we may review though are not required to do so. Monica will advise as well on the 2nd AME Church of St. James and the recent archeological discovery in this section of the creek project:

Treviño Ortega began by identifying her role with SARA as their Community/Public Relations representative. A Focus group will meet on Thursday, June 4, 2020 @10:00am to review the Interpretative Plan and a report will be sent out next week so that the BCHC may provide comments. She reviewed the history of the San Pedro Creek Project while going through Power Point slides, project partners, goals, including flood control, water quality, economic development, etc., and mission of representing the cultural identity of our community.

Carrie Brown mentioned her role with SARA as Public Arts Curator of the San Pedro Creek Culture Park and spoke briefly about the images of the public murals. They are working with design consultants and will get the content out to us ASAP next week.

Treviño Ortega also showed a slide with the names of the Interpretative Plan Committee, which includes several members from the BCHC as well as Bueché among other professionals. She discussed the design of the panels that will be in Spanish and English, a Mobile App so that visitors can experience the SPC Culture Park with a self-guided audio tour and can choose what you're interested in, culture, art, nature, or all three, and follow the map to visit the landmarks of your choosing. Currently, there are 13 panels. She requests that BCHC review the plan between June 10-July 1, and submit feedback/edits by July 1st. There will be revising done on the plan between July 2-July 10, and a final copy sent to Commissioners court July 13, 2020. **End of formal presentation portion.**

Ms. Bueché reiterated if any BCHC members would like to review the Interpretative Plan to please submit comments by July 1st. **Presentation opened up to questions:**

Mr. Corky Rubio mentioned he participated in the process and was impressed with everyone involved and told the presenters "Thank you!"

Mr. Mario Salas mentioned two historical items: 1) Newcombville; and 2) the first Juneteenth parade done at San Pedro Creek, then asked if there's anyone working on that? Treviño Ortega said we'll look at that.

Dr. Francis Galan asked if the Focus group meeting is open to the public or representatives from the public community? Treviño Ortega said no, just the Focus group members, which includes Bueché. Bueché added that she conferred with Commissioner Calvert, BCHC members (Salas) and Associate Members (Gary Houston), as well as Dr. Carey Lattimore (History Professor, Trinity University), the Bishop of the AME Church who referred us to the historiography, and the SA Conservation Society. Treviño Ortega said a total of seven people will meet in the Focus group. Bueché said we'll also hear more from the historical archaeological work.

Mr. Clinton McKenzie stated he's done some research already on the St. James AMU Church and its establishment between 1867-1878, present S. Houston St. and Camaron. Bueché asked Clinton if he's willing to attend Focus group meeting? He said he'll check his schedule.

Mr. Hector Cardenas asked if any of the panels will have something on the coming of the railroads? Treviño Ortega said yes, but in a later phase. Dr. David Carlson added there's

an older historical marker that does make mention of an 1870s streetcar line operated by the RR companies.

Chairman Almaraz asked Mr. McKenzie if he'll be the contact person for the report from SARA and forward it to the BCHC? Clinton said he believes that'll be Mr. Rubio who's already been in contact with SARA.

Treviño Ortega said "Thank you" to the BCHC. She and Ms. Carrie Brown then exited the courtroom. **End of Q&A portion.**

[VII. Announcements, continued]

- G. Mr. Salas shared that he and Dr. Lawrence Scott (Assistant Professor of Education, Texas A&M University-San Antonio) have written curricula for African American Studies. Salas is an instructor for a class on African American history working with Judson ISD. They've addressed the state on public policy regarding education and there's now African American and Mexican American Studies for all high school students.
- H. Ms. Bueché introduced new Staff member, Ms. Mari Tamez, formerly President of the Canary Islanders Descendants Association (CIDA), who joins us as the Bexar Heritage Outreach Coordinator and will also help develop our website.
- I. Ms. Bueché also mentioned Bexar Heritage applied for and got a \$300,000 NEH grant for a COVID-19 related program. Our proposal was to create a lesson plan and teacher packets for Grades 4 and 7 that will include videos online covering 10 topical areas. It'll be free of charge.
- J. Ms. Bueché informed everyone that the Bexar Heritage Museum is currently closed to visitors. It will re-opens later this summer at 25% limited occupancy. The Independent School Districts will not allow school field trips this Fall. Outreach figures for the museum was est. to receive 48,000 students before COVID-19.
- K. Dr. Almaraz presented 2 documents to Ms. Bueché: 1) DRT-Alamo Mission Chapter Minute Books; and 2) Invoices from Dr. Paul Ringenbach, former BCHC Vice Chair, and himself for SA300-related symposiums.
- L. Mr. Cardenas mentioned the packets for teachers should have SA300 materials. Bueché said these will be helpful.
- M. Dr. Almaraz mentioned he got a phone call from Bob Brinkman, Coordinator for Historical Markers Program at THC, about why we haven't submitted any marker applications? Felix said there were none done in Texas because the county historical commissions don't like for these to be produced in Indiana.
- N. Dr. Almaraz added that 40 years ago the BCHC was under the junior member of Commissioners court and his secretary served as stenographer for the BCHC. All this disappeared when another commission squandered the budget. Then under former Chair Virginia Nicholas, Paul Ringenbach as Vice Chair took the minutes until he

retired. Almaraz asked if we favor having a stenographer to transcribe minutes of the meeting? Hearing no objections, he will continue to search for someone to serve as permanent stenographer.

- O. Mr. Corky Rubio pointed out that **Betty Bueché** received the **Ruth Lester Lifetime Achievement Award** recently from the Texas Historical Commission for historic preservation. (See, link: <https://www.thc.texas.gov/news-events/press-releases/thc-awards-leaders-historic-preservation>).

VIII. Chairman Almaraz made motion to adjourn. Seconded motion passed and meeting **adjourned** at approximately **1:55pm**.

(Minutes by Francis Galan)