

Agenda for Bastrop County Historical Commission  
First Quarterly Meeting – June 9, 2022 - 2 p.m.  
To be held in person in the meeting room of the Bastrop County Courthouse Annex, Bastrop,  
Texas, and by Zoom

Please inform the chair if you must attend by zoom, or will be unable to attend at all –  
Ken.Kesselus@gmail.com

**Ken Kesselus is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.**

**Topic: My Meeting**

**Time: Jun 9, 2022 02:00 PM Central Time (US and Canada)**

**Join Zoom Meeting**

**<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82007387708>**

**Meeting ID: 820 0738 7708**

**One tap mobile**

**+13462487799,,82007387708# US (Houston)**

**+12532158782,,82007387708# US (Tacoma)**

**Dial by your location**

**+1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)**

- Call to Order and Roll Call
- Declaration of Quorum
- Notification of Possible Action – All items listed, unless noted otherwise, are subject to action by majority vote of those present in person or by zoom.

1. Approval of Minutes of March 10, 2022 meeting, as presented or amended.

Bastrop County Historical Commission  
 First Quarterly meeting  
 March 10, 2022 @ 2pm

At 2:01 Chairman Kesselus called the meeting to order and Secretary, Sandra Chipley called the roll. The following members, responded by indicating their presence at the courthouse Annex or by Zoon.

Ken Kesselus, Synda Arbuckle, Judy Bergeron, Sandy Chipley, April Daniels, Judy Davis, Galynn Fogle, Faith Franklin, Rebecca Gleason, David Herrington, Robbie Sanders, Marilyn Jones, Carol Kysar, Mikkie Meyer, Amy Miller, Dianne Mills, John Smith, Debbie Warhmund, Angie Smith, Fran Hunter

Chairman Kesselus declared a quorum.

**Approval of minutes** – Faith Franklin moved that the Commission accept the minutes of its December meeting as indicated on the agenda. Carol Kysar seconded the motions which passed with a unanimous vote.

**Elections to fill vacancies**

A. **Vice Chair** position to be filled upon retirement by Carol Snyder – nomination of Sandra Chipley presented with bio per agenda. Call made for additional nominations at which time no other nominations were received. Nomination approved unanimously.

B. **Secretary** position now vacant with appointment of Sandra Chipley as Vice Chair. Nomination of Galynn Fogle presented providing bio per agenda. Call made for additional nominations at which time no other nominations were received. Nomination approved unanimously.

**Historic Task Force** – April Daniels, Smithville Chamber of Commerce, Railroad Museum

- Looking for volunteers to partner together to create a Trail of History in the county for tourists visiting the county. It could be a digital format with maps, etc. Anyone that is interested in being a part of this project and brainstorm ideas, please let April know.

**Marker Project Update** - Update on the Historical Market program given by Robbie Sanders. Sarah McClesky is the new Texas Historical Commission contact and has been very responsive. Inform commissioners whenever a dedication ceremony is scheduled. BCHC has allocated \$200 to go toward cost of having a ceremony. The Mary Christian Burleson House received their marker last year, had a well-attended ceremony and BCHC provided \$200 toward the marker ceremony which was attended by several BCHC representative.

**Cemeteries Survey** – Update by Debbie Wahrmond

- Mikki Meyer completed several verifications and typing of cemeteries on map
- Dianne Mills and Allison completed the Alum Creek (black) cemetery, and are starting Westbrook Cemetery in Elgin.
- Galynn Fogle completed the Rosanky Family Cemetery with family members and is starting the Rosanky Cemetery.

- Mapping for THC to cross map with BCHC cemetery list has begun thanks to Galynn and Allison helping Debbie W the last couple of weeks. 27 cemeteries in Map 6 were submitted to Jenny McWilliams.
- There have been about 5 questions received through email and phone contact with Carol Kysar which Debbie is trying to close out plus one ongoing discussion with the Gotcher Family for access to their cemetery located on private property.
- The Old Mexican Cemetery in Elgin is supposed to be agreed to by the City of Elgin to finalize a scope with the city engineer to map a metes and bounds diagram for the county to add a property Id. Debbie met with the City Manager and is waiting for their draft. Juan Gonzalez, a local resident is helping.
- Cemetery tours in Elgin: One canceled at Elgin Cemetery due to association concerns. Westbrook, lead Gwen Johnson provided a list of people for the historic Black Cemetery is in process - target date October. Latin Cemetery, lead Juan Gonzalez sent draft script and list to Debbie - target date November. Additional volunteers are welcome to oin

### **Executive Committee, Ken Kesselus**

(1) Website – Fran Hunter is limited on amount of time she is approved to update the website. A complete rework of the website would require BCHC to hire someone for this project. Will investigate cost involved to do this. Fran did revamp the website within her allotted time prior to today's meeting. She can also add links that would allow access to other entities deemed important to the scope of the commission.

- Two focus groups to consider in the design of the website are
  - tourist/visitor to Bastrop County
  - local individual/resident of Bastrop County
- Suggestion made to have a Task Force to review current website to decide
  - what info to add
  - proofing
  - Keep existing website design or hire someone to completely redesign

After discussion, the decision was made for the issue to go back to the Executive Committee to regroup.

(2) Newspapers on Portal to Texas History – The Smithville Times newspapers prior to 1965 have been sent to the Portal to Texas History. Amy Miller reported that the Elgin Courier from 1930 to present are being scanned with the funds received from a grant. It requires the physical newspaper to be relinquished that are stored in a very secure fashion.

(3) How about cemetery tours? (probably refer to Tourism Task Force) – Use model done by Bastrop Museum for Bastrop City's Fairview Cemetery to develop tours by other cemetery organizations within the county. Develop map of trails for bus tours to cemeteries. The cemetery associations choose a character or two with interesting histories to be portrayed with someone in period costume representing the characters.

(4) How to bring various historical-focused entities together – cooperating/meetings/activities/etc – April Daniels

(5) Foster genealogical research – hold workshop(s) with knowledgeable people from the State or National Level. The City of Round Rock or Georgetown would be a good source of information on how to initiate this since they hold annual workshops on genealogical research topics.

(6) Education – Consider what the Commission could do in the future to incorporate an educational program for school kids.

(7) Past Perfect – Carol Kysar gave an update on the use of the Past Perfect software that the museum installed in 2002. There are now 14 research volunteers that use Past Perfect to transcribe data, images, media records, researching biographies, etc. A visitor to the museum recently commented that the museum has “a very professional archive system”.

Past Perfect allows researchers to query the system for information they are looking for on a particular subject. It does not allow linking of together other museums using it, but that isn't an issue. A website could be created that has links to the various museums that you would just click on the link to access that museums data. Elgin, McDade and Rockne museums have the program. The Smithville Heritage Museum does not have the program. Faith Franklin expressed an interest in getting the program. The use of the desk top version would be an option, since the cost for it is reasonable. This is an expenditure that the Commission could consider as a “Gift”. **Need to market the use of the program more to the public.**

(8) Special Focus for each of the next 3 meetings.

- June – Oral histories process by John Smith

5. Heritage Awareness Committee (Archives & Records, Historical Photos, and Oral Histories) – Ken Kesselus (or someone else)

- Oral Histories Updates by John Smith – 12 oral histories are complete. Website design meeting for the oral histories is scheduled for next week. John agreed to give presentation on the oral history process at the June meeting of BCHC.

#### 4. Reports from local historical entities

- **Elgin Area Committee** – Amy Miller reported on Elgin's Sesquicentennial Celebrate events taking place this year. Newsletter ETX150 sign up to receive, May 25<sup>th</sup> event, Aug 20<sup>th</sup> event, Dec 2022 time capsule and lighted parade. 3 new murals will be dedicated in the downtown area, local historians are writing articles weekly. The City of Elgin is on board with a generous funding support for the 150<sup>th</sup> Celebration
- **Smithville Heritage Society** – Faith Franklin reported on the reorganization of the Smithville Heritage Society beginning with new officers elected, \$500 donation from the Chamber. Fundraising for painting project for the 2 story house donated in 1976 estimated at \$50,000; Faith has a book being published about the historic home that she renovated and now has a historical marker for it. has a youtub channel GAAnthony; Uniquely Bastrop
- **Sayersville Historical Association** – David Robinson not present for update

- **Bastrop County Historical Society** – Sandy Chipley
  - Cemetery tours
  - Homes Tour
  - Kings Highway group DAR
  - Robbie Sanders Book of Historic homes of Bastrop titled “House Histories”
  - El Camino Real group
  
- **Others**
  - Judy Bergeron at the Smithville Library reminded everyone that libraries are great sources of information, specifically noting Smithville Library as a great resource for information on using the Portal of Texas History,
  - Ken Kesselus, chair reported that on April 11, 2022 he would give the annual report at the Commissioners meeting.

**Finance Committee and Treasurer’s report** – Update by Carol Kysar

- Account balance is \$8,338.98
- \$200 gift given to the Mary Christian Burleson House marker ceremony
- Reimburse copy expense for cemetery mapping

The following procedures for certain expenditures of funds beyond normal operations of the Bastrop County Historical Commission were presented for adoption:

1. Any donation under these terms will be considered “gifts.” \*
2. The only limitations on types of usage of such funds include the requirement that the funds will “promote and preserve the history of Bastrop County” as defined in Section 3 of the BCHC Bylaws and comply with the good judgment of the commission.
3. In making any such gift, the commission will employ the following standardized process.
  - a. The commission will not accept applications for funding. Instead, the process that might lead to a gift must be initiated by a member of the commission.

Amy Miller made the motion to adopt, Debbie Wahrmund 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion. All approved. Motion carried.

**America 250!** – presented by Sandy Chipley

Consideration of developing resources for a 250th anniversary of the establishment of the U.S. (2026) throughout Bastrop County – Sandy Chipley

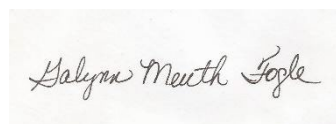
Create a task force to investigate what can BCHC do to assist in event planning for the America 250! celebration.

- Maybe collaborate with or assist Bastrop County DAR chapters
- Possibly we could serve as a catalyst – encourager – resource –

### **Other announcements**

- Synda Arbuckle – While researching Elgin history for the 150<sup>th</sup> celebration of Elgin Synda discovered Newspapers.com to be a great source of information. Even though Elgin newspapers are not on it, due to the cost, the Austin American Stateman newspaper had a lot of information on Elgin. Prior to 1900, the Galveston newspaper carried a lot of Central Texas stories. The book titled “Milestones of Elgin” is a celebration of Elgin’s milestones for the last 150 years that will be published this year.
- Debbie Wahrmond – suggested for next meeting’s agenda to include Report on Mary C Burleson project funds update. Amy Miller mentioned on May 21<sup>st</sup> one of the events of the Elgin Sesquicentennial will be hosted at the Mary C Burleson house. One of the exhibitors will be a chainsaw artist giving demonstrations of his work.

Chair adjourned meeting at 3:38pm



Galynn Meuth Fogle, Secretary  
Bastrop County Historical Commission

## 2. Committee Reports

- A. Historical Markers and Research Committee – Robbie Sanders
- B. Cemetery Survey Committee – Debbie Wahrmond
- C. Historic Tourism Task Force – April Daniels
- D. Finance Committee and Treasurer’s report – Carol Kysar
- E. Executive Committee, Ken Kesselus
- F. Heritage Awareness Committee (Archives & Records, Historical Photos, and Oral Histories) – Ken Kesselus (or someone else)
  - Oral Histories Updates (deferred to number 4)

3. Reports from local historical entities
  - A. Elgin Area Committee – Amy Miller
  - B. Smithville Heritage Society – Faith Franklin
  - C. Sayersville Historical Association – David Robinson
  - D. Bastrop County Historical Society – Sandy Chipley
  - E. African American Cultural Center – Dianne Mills
  - F. America 250! – Sandy Chipley
  - G. Reports and/or announcements by other organizations or individuals
4. General Discussion about Oral Histories – John Smith
5. Suggestions for topics for future meetings
6. Adjournment

Continuing Addendum:

Repeat of Responses to what we should do:

- A. Compile the history of the entire county
  1. each community in the county to submit their history and how it fits into the overall county history and kept on website and put in hard copy.
  2. develop a general format to use.
  3. Possibly publish as a money-making activity
- B. Create a committee that focuses on cooperative efforts between the various historic entities in the County. (and) Have a committee to focus on creating cooperative efforts between the various historic entities in the County.
- C. Tourism
  1. Have a committee that creates tours for visitors
  2. like a historic places tour or cemetery tour, etc.

4. encourages school district field trips
  5. creates online marketing tools promoting historic sites in the County.
- D. Have a committee that creates tours for visitors (like a historic places tour or cemetery tour, etc.) and encouraging school district field trips and creates online marketing tools promoting historic sites in the County.
- E. Live into our statements of purpose and mission
1. PURPOSE: The purpose of this organization shall be to promote and preserve the history of Bastrop County.
  2. MISSION STATEMENT: Encourage knowledge, understanding and an appreciation of Bastrop County's past through research, documentation, and recognition of its notable historic sites and through other appropriate activities, events, and programs.
- F. Oral histories
1. Collect list of oral histories and provide access to them.
  2. How can we find seniors to interviews?
- G. Archival artifacts
1. Catalogue donated archival items.
- H. Website:
1. Do very many people visit the commission website?
  2. Improve i
- I. Pay attention to the State Historical Commission's goals
1. Site Asset Inventory of Surveyed Properties
  2. Education
  3. Fiscal and Human Resources
  4. Provide grants available for erecting historical markers
  5. Review all applications for Texas Historical Markers Planning
  6. Leadership and Training
  7. Historic Site Tax Exemption
  8. Contracts for Lease or Management of Landmarks
- J. Old Jail
1. work with the Commissioner's Court to move forward with the restoration of the jail.
- K. Priorities
1. protection of our historic assets through inventorying, adding to our listed designations (designation adds a layer of protection), and finding/providing resources to protect, enhance, and maintain those assets. (for example – moving the Old Jail project forward)



2. historical tourism with existing strong partners across the County to do a better job of promotion at County level, linking the activities of groups in each area of the County.\

- L. Catalogue donated archival items.
- M. Run a feed on county and cities homepages.
- N. Improve the Website.
- O. Education programs, especially for children
- P. Publicize our work more.