



**MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
FREEPORT HISTORICAL COMMISSION & MAIN STREET ADVISORY BOARD
FREEPORT POLICE DEPARTMENT, 430 N. BRAZOSPORT BLVD., FREEPORT, TX
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 1ST, 2020 at 6:00 P.M.**

Chairperson:
Sandra Barbree

Board Members:
Nat Hickey
Carmen Read
Cliff Vandergriff
Carolyn Weatherly
David McGinty
Edmeryl Williams
Jessie Parker

Vice Chairperson:
Brenda George

CALL TO ORDER: Sandra Barbree called to order the regular meeting of the Freeport Historical Commission & Main Street Advisory Board at 6:00 PM on October 1, 2020 in City Council Chambers at the Freeport Police Department.

Carolyn Weatherly conducted a roll call. The following persons were present: Sandra Barbree, Edmeryl Williams, Jessie Parker, David. McGinty, Carolyn Weatherly and Brenda George via conference call.

Staff Members Present: Stephanie Russell, Assistant City Manager; LeAnn Strahan, Destinations Director, Tammy Bell, Administrative Secretary; Wade Dillon, Museum Coordinator; Laura Tolar, Asst. City Secretary.

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Ms. Parker led the Board in prayer and Mrs. Barbree led the pledge.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS:

No comments were made.

PRESENTATIONS/ANNOUNCEMENTS: Announcements by Board Members and/or Staff.

1. Introduction of New Board Members

Mrs. Barbree introduced new Board members David McGinty, Edmeryl Williams and Jessie Parker to the community.

2. Introduction of New Museum/VIC Staff

Ms. Strahan introduced new staff members Wade Dillon, Museum Coordinator and Tammy Bell, Administrative Secretary to the Board providing their background information that makes them suitable for their respective position.

3. Board Member Orientation: Organization & Purpose, Open Meetings Act, and Roberts Rules of Order

Ms. Russell reviewed and discussed the Organization & Purpose, the Texas Open Meetings Act training and certification requirements and Robert's Rules of Order with the Board. All members are required to obtain the Texas Open Meetings Act certification and submit to the City Secretary for records.

BUSINESS – REGULAR SESSION:

4. Consideration and possible action to approve meeting minutes from February 5, 2020.

With a motion by Ms. Weatherly and a second by Mrs. George, the minutes from the February meeting were unanimously approved.

WORK SESSION:

5. The Board may deliberate and make inquiry into any item listed in the Work Session.

A. Status of Main Street Application (Strahan)

Ms. Strahan reported that the Texas Main Street re-certification application was submitted by the deadline of August 31, 2020. Applications will be reviewed and awarded cities will be chosen at the Texas Historical Commission Quarterly Commission Meeting at the end of October. The Board discussed the details of the boundaries of the new Main Street area.

B. Update on Status of Heritage House (Strahan)

Ms. Strahan reported that City staff has identified severe, possibly irreparable damages to the Heritage House building due to poor renovation work previously performed, resulting in the structure being deemed unsafe for public use. Maintenance has received the necessary quotes to present for City Council approval, so it is in their hands to determine whether or not to spend the money to renovate once again. In the meantime, the calendar has been blocked for further rentals or other use. Ms. Russell assured the Board that they would be notified prior to the bond hearing where Council will address this project.

C. Status of Transition of Visitor Center to Museum (Bell)

Ms. Bell reported the affects of COVID-19 as it relates to the transition of the Visitor Center. The new norm has been canceling or rescheduling facility rentals and while we are not currently accepting new rentals, we have allowed tentative reservations until we are allowed to open facilities for public use.

Mr. McGinty inquired about the sale of the trolley at the recent auction. Ms. Russell reported that no bids met the reserve so it would be relisted. Discussion ensued regarding the possible use of the trolley as a visitor kiosk in Freeport Municipal Park.

Ms. Bell also reported her work on creating a new marketing strategy for the Museum/Visitor Center including an updated logo and creating social media pages as VisitFreeportTX.

Mrs. Barbree inquired about plans for the former VIC building. Ms. Russell reported that future plans have yet to be determined at this time.

D. Proposed changes to Museum layout (Dillon)

Mr. Dillon discussed his vision for the Freeport Historical Museum and its artifacts. He has secured artifacts in proper archival materials and began working to restructure the museum layout into a narrative, timeline-based history of Freeport. In addition, he plans to include educational interpretive panels in both English and Spanish.

E. Discussion Regarding Upcoming Exhibits (Dillon)

Mr. Dillon updated the Board on the following museum exhibits and events over the next six months:

- October – Haunting Tales of the Gulf Coast (virtual exhibit)
- November & December – Blue Santa Store (temp exhibit hall)
- January – Lonesome Dove (traveling exhibit)
- February- The Road to the Promised Land: Martin Luther King, Jr. And the Civil Rights Movement (traveling exhibit)
- March – Spring Fling event

Mr. Dillon also introduced the idea of creating a special exhibit on Fort Velasco in 1832 where he would bring in living history reenactors and interactive stations in Freeport Memorial Park next summer.

F. Discussion Regarding Upcoming Special Events (Strahan)

i. Recap of Scavenger Hunt

Ms. Strahan reported great participation the weekend of the Scavenger Hunt with more than 20 teams from as far away as Sugar Land. There were ten historical locations for them to photograph for this virtual activity and prizes were awarded for first, second and third place.

ii. Holiday on the Brazos

The CRT Department is planning socially distanced holiday full of activities on Saturday, December 5th that will include live entertainment, market vendors, a snow hill, movie at the landing and fireworks to end the night. Staff would like to coordinate a boat parade for this event as well. Ms. Strahan encourages the Board to have a booth set up to promote upcoming Main Street events and activities. Ms. Strahan suggested the Board consider relocating this event to historic downtown next year.

iii. Mardi Gras Celebration

Ms. Strahan briefly discussed a new family-friendly Main Street event to be co-hosted by the Board and local downtown businesses.

iv. Cinco de Mayo Celebration

Ms. Strahan briefly discussed a new Main Street event to be co-hosted by the Brazoria County Hispanic Chamber of Commerce.

6. Items for Future Discussion

- i.** Appointment of liaison/sub-committee to the Steering Committee,
- ii.** The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 28, 2020 at 6:00pm. Future meetings will be the last Thursday of each month at 6:00pm.

ADJOURNMENT:

7. Adjourn.

With a motion by Mrs. George and a second by Ms. Parker, the Board unanimously approved to adjourn the meeting at 6:45pm.

Carolyn Weatherly, Secretary
Freeport Historical Commission & Main Street Advisory Board
City of Freeport, Texas

Edited by LeAnn Strahan, Destinations Director