



**FREEPORT HISTORICAL COMMISSION & MAIN STREET ADVISORY BOARD
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
THURSDAY, JUNE 15, 2023 AT 5:00PM
FREEPORT CITY HALL, 3RD FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM
200 W. SECOND STREET, FREEPORT, TX 77541**

STATE OF TEXAS

COUNTY OF BRAZORIA

CITY OF FREEPORT

BE IT REMEMBERED, that the Freeport Historical Commission & Main Street Advisory Board met on Thursday, June 15th, 2023 at 5:00 PM at Freeport City Hall, 3rd Floor Conference Room, 200 W. Second Street, Freeport, Texas for the purpose of considering the following agenda items:

Chairperson:

Margaret McMahan

Board Members:

Irene Ocañas
Keith Stumbaugh
Ronnie Martin
William Leitch
Betty Lopez
Jack Bullman
Sandra Wood-Wicke

Vice Chairperson:

Sandra Barbree

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Margaret McMahan called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm. The following attendees were present:

Board Members

Margaret McMahan
Irene Ocañas
Sandra Barbree
Keith Stumbaugh
William Leitch
Ronnie Martin
Sandra Wood-Wicke
Jack Bullman
Betty Lopez

Staff Members

Ana Silbas, Main Street Coordinator
Tim Kelty, City Manager
Robert Johnson, Freeport EDC Executive Director
Jennifer Howell, Chief of Police

Guests: Jesse Glatz, Jose Lopez, Douglas Domingues

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Invocation was led by Margaret McMahan and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by Ronnie Martin.

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

Main Street Update (Silbas)

Main Street Coordinator Ana Silbas welcomed new board members to the Freeport Historical Commission & Main Street Advisory Board.

Museum Update -Recent Exhibits/ Events (Dillon)

Museum Manager Wade Dillon was not in attendance. Main Street Coordinator Ana Silbas gave his report, which included that the Shark Exhibit has been a huge success with an opening of 100 people on June 1st and 30 to 50 visitors every day for the last two weeks and Closed Juneteenth.

Additionally, Silbas mentioned that Fort Velasco Day set for Saturday, June 24th is shaping up to be an amazing event with staff from The Alamo, San Jacinto, San Felipe de Austin, and the Stephen F. Austin Statue attending to give demonstrations. Shanlie Whittington will be providing free period silhouettes to the public. Demonstrators and heritage organizations will be spread throughout the museum as the Shark Exhibit currently occupies the exhibit hall. Museum Manager Wade Dillon requested board members to volunteer during Fort Velasco Day to answer questions from the public and help serve lunch to nearly 40 volunteers that day inside of The Little Theater.

Furthermore, the work on the interpretive panels should be completed within the next month. Panels about Nat Hickey, DOW, and Hurricane Carla have been fully designed. There are an additional ten panels set to be designed and installed and the search continues to find sponsors for new museum quality display cases.

Lastly, the improvements at the museum include: new letters added above the theater corridor and new LED track lighting will soon be installed in the second half of the museum (correction from prior meeting).

Presentations

Chief of Police Jennifer Howell provided an overview of the police department and answered questions related to speeding, police substation, damage to downtown buildings and potential illegal activity. The board was able to gain a better understanding of how the police department implements safety measures across the city.

Chief Howell expressed how important building relationships is in community policing and that she is open to speak with the board at any time for matters pertaining to downtown. Main Street Coordinator Ana Silbas is working to have department heads come to speak to the board in order to build relationships and understand how city departments and boards can work collaboratively together in the revitalization efforts of downtown.

BUSINESS- REGULAR SESSION

Consideration and possible action to approve meeting minutes from May 18, 2023.

On a motion made by Irene Ocañas, seconded by Ronnie Martin, with all present voting “Aye”, the Freeport Historical Commission & Main Street Advisory Board **unanimously approved** the meeting minutes from May 18, 2023.

Consideration and possible action to appoint a Chairperson, Vice Chairperson and Secretary.

The Freeport Historical Commission & Main Street Advisory Board is required to appoint new officers annually in June.

Irene Ocañas nominated Margaret McMahan for Chair.

With a motion by Irene Ocañas, seconded by Ronnie Martin, with all present voting “Aye”, the Freeport Historical Commission & Main Street Advisory Board **unanimously approved** to appoint Margaret McMahan as Chairperson.

Sandra Barbree nominated Irene Ocañas for Vice Chairperson.

With a motion by Ronnie Martin, seconded by William Leitch, with all present voting “Aye”, the Freeport Historical Commission & Main Street Advisory Board **unanimously approved** to appoint Irene Ocañas as Vice Chairperson.

The position of Secretary was tabled until description of duties is provided to board.

Consideration and possible action to approve issuing a position on the Overland Group/Dollar General Market development in downtown.

Main Street Coordinator Ana Silbas introduced Robert Johnson, Freeport Economic Development Corporation Executive Director to present updates on the Overland Group development in downtown.

Johnson stated that the contract now states no corrugated steel can be used in the design of the Dollar General Market. Additionally, with exposure of trash being a concern, Johnson stated that Code Enforcement would be the department to ensure that Dollar General is meeting all rules and requirements.

Several members of the Historical Commission & Main Street Advisory Board were also concerned about there not being enough foot traffic to keep the Dollar General Market in business. Johnson stated that research and studies had been conducted for this development; however, if the Dollar General Market was to go out of business, there would be a new site that has been improved and ready for the next potential business. Jack Bullman stated he saw a Dollar General in Alabama and Ronnie Martin mention that after research he believed it could be a good option.

On a motion made by Sandra Barbree, seconded by Ronnie Martin, with all present voting “Aye”, the Freeport Historical Commission & Main Street Advisory Board **unanimously approved** to issue an unopposed position on the Overland Group/ Dollar General Market,

pending the passage of the proposed parking resolution for the land swap designated to Main Street many councils ago.

Discussion on Zoning District and Land Use in Downtown.

This agenda item was tabled to allow new board members additional time to review the Zoning and Subdivision Control Ordinance.

WORK SESSION

Chair Margaret McMahan gave her design subcommittee report to the board. McMahan stated that the design subcommittee is continuing to work on design guidelines and is in the process of contacting professionals in this area: David Watson and Stephanie McDougal.

Promotion Subcommittee Chair Sandra Barbree mentioned that a Business After Hours Mixer, potentially in the fall, would be a great way to promote Freeport Main Street. Keith Stumbaugh touched on how Freeport Main Street was able to create and run a successful Blues Festival.

Economic Vitality Subcommittee Chair Irene Ocañas stated she has scheduled a meeting for June 27th, 2023 to discuss surveying the needs of current business owners and residents in downtown.

Main Street Coordinator Ana Silbas informed the board of the upcoming “Bringing Back Main Street Roundtable” to be hosted by the Houston-Galveston Area Council on July 25, 2023. The event will take place at Stone’s Market in Bay City, TX with registration at 9:30 am. The workshop will begin at 10 am and focus on Bay City’s revitalization efforts, including tips to work with statewide agencies. Silbas also mentioned she would be out of the office attending the 2023 Texas Main Street Retreat in Denison, TX from June 20th-23rd, 2023.

Upcoming Events

The upcoming events for the Freeport Historical Commission & Main Street Advisory Board include the following: Fort Velasco Day (June 24, 2023), Shark Exhibit (June & July 2023), KidFest (August 2023), Texas Navy Day (September 16, 2023) and Día de Los Muertos (November 2023).

Items for Future Discussion-Next Scheduled Meeting

The next scheduled meeting for the Freeport Historical Commission & Main Street Advisory Board is July 20, 2023.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion made by Irene Ocañas, seconded by Sandra Barbree, with all present voting “Aye”, the Freeport Historical Commission & Main Street Advisory Board Chair Margaret McMahan adjourned the meeting at 6:08 pm.



Ana Silbas, Main Street Coordinator
City of Freeport, Texas