

THE CITY OF



FREEPORT

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**FREEPORT HISTORICAL COMMISSION & MAIN STREET ADVISORY BOARD
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
THURSDAY, AUGUST 17, 2023 AT 5:00PM
311 EAST PARK AVENUE (NAT HICKEY LANE), 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, August 17, 2023 at 5:00 PM at the Freeport Historical Museum, 311 East Park Avenue (Nat Hickey Lane) Freeport, Texas for the purpose of considering the following agenda items:

Chairperson:

Margaret McMahan

Board Members:

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

Vice Chairperson:

Irene Ocañas

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
Keith Stumbaugh
Sandra Barbree
Ronnie Martin
Sandra Wood-Wicke
Betty Lopez
William Leitch

Staff Members

Ana Silbas, Main Street Coordinator
Wade Dillon, Museum Manager

Guests: Edith Fischer (Economic Vitality Subcommittee)
Jesse Glatz (Economic Vitality Subcommittee)

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Invocation was led by Margaret McMahan and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by Irene Ocañas.

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

Main Street Update (Silbas)

Main Street Coordinator Ana Silbas thanked all who volunteered at KIDFEST and stated that the event was a great success. Additionally, Silbas reviewed the Design Report for Arlene's Soul Food & BBQ, which was completed by Bryce Hendrickson, Texas Main Street Project Design Specialist—with consulting assistance from Jamie Crawley, Lead Architect.

Silbas gave an overview on several events and workshops Main Street has participated in, which included: Freeport EDC Independence Day Appreciation Dinner and Celebration, Starbucks Grand Opening, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension- Healthy South Texas Coalition meeting, Houston-Galveston Area Council -Bringing Back Main Street Roundtable.

Lastly, Silbas gave an update on the planning of Día de Los Muertos: A Month of Remembrance, and an overview of a proposal drafted by University of Texas at San Antonio- Center for Urban and Regional Planning Research, regarding Historic Design Guidelines and a Comprehensive Downtown Plan. Silbas presented on the upcoming budget changes for FY 2024.

Museum Update -Recent Exhibits/ Events (Dillon)

Museum Manager Wade Dillon stated that the Freeport Historical Museum received a total of 2,125 visitors during the Shark Exhibit. June saw 1,082 visitors and July saw 1,043 visitors. Additionally, Dillon provided an overview of activities and events related to the museum, which included: conducting community outreach at the Sea Center for their Shark Celebration, working with David McGinty to cut down the base of the Fort Velasco Model to be ADA compliant and meeting with potential sponsors, such as Jeff Lichon, DOW Philanthropic activities for the United States Gulf Coast.

The Freeport Historical Museum received five new interpretative panels covering topics of Nat Hickey, Hurricane Carla and Industry. Dillon also facilitated a webinar for the Collection Managers Committee of the Texas Association of Museums, which he also serves as Chair.

As part of restructuring efforts, Penny's Electric installed new track lights to highlight museum's collections and reduce energy, Public Works/Maintenance fixed the fan in the Children's Room and a new, large display case was ordered.

Lastly, Dillon provided an overview of the museum's current budget and changes moving into FY 2024.

Board Member Announcements

William Leitch expressed concerns over the outdoor restaurant deck being built for Arlene's Soul Food & BBQ.

The major concern is that in the event of inclement weather (i.e. hurricane season), the deck could potentially cause damage, as it does not seem to be secured.

Chair Margaret McMahan did not have any announcements, but did invite guests to introduce themselves. The guests in attendance included: Edith Fischer, Director of Tourism for the Brazosport Area Chamber of Commerce and Jesse Glatz, TBT Real Estate. Fisher and Glatz are both members of the Economic Vitality Subcommittee.

BUSINESS- REGULAR SESSION

Consideration and possible action to approve meeting minutes from July 13, 2023.

On a motion made by Irene Ocañas, seconded by Sandra Barbree, with all present voting “Aye”, the Freeport Historical Commission & Main Street Advisory Board **unanimously approved** the meeting minutes from July 13, 2023.

Consideration and possible action to review and appoint members to Main Street Committees.

The Freeport Historical Commission & Main Street Advisory Board currently has an active design subcommittee and economic vitality subcommittee. Main Street Coordinator Ana Silbas led the discussion on combining the promotion subcommittee and the organization subcommittee.

On a motion made by Ronnie Martin, seconded by Margaret McMahan, with all present voting “Aye”, the Freeport Historical Commission & Main Street Advisory Board **unanimously approved** to combine the promotion subcommittee and organization subcommittee.

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 appoint Sandra Wood-Wicke to the newly combined Organization & Promotion Subcommittee.

Consideration and possible action to approve a plan for downtown signage.

Ronnie Martin led the discussion on directional signage for downtown. With wayfinding as a strategic priority, Martin stated that Freeport Main Street needs ways to better direct people to downtown. There was discussion on creating old fashioned signage that would allow for temporary signs to be interchangeable for different downtown events/activities/services.

This agenda item was tabled.

Discussion on Texas Treasure Business Award.

Main Street Coordinator Ana Silbas gave an overview of the Texas Treasure Business Award. Silbas mentioned that Girouard’s General Store would be a perfect nomination for this award, as their 100th anniversary is in 2024.

WORK SESSION

Chair Margaret McMahan gave her design subcommittee report to the board. McMahan stated the design subcommittee will meeting the following week to review the proposal from UTSA Center for Urban and Regional Planning Research.

Economic Vitality Subcommittee Chair Irene Ocañas stated her committee is working to finalize questions for their downtown survey. The next step for Economic Vitality subcommittee will be to look at logistics of distributing a survey and plan to hold a community session to discuss Main Street goals with citizens. Ocañas mentioned the committee would like to have something tangible to show what citizens would like to see in our Main Street Revitalization efforts.

Main Street Coordinator Ana Silbas shared information on a Livable Centers Workshop: Elements of Placemaking hosted by Houston-Galveston Area Council—scheduled for September 14, 2023 at the Houston- Galveston Area Headquarters. Additionally, Silbas reminded the board of the upcoming Annual Board Training/Workshop facilitated by Sarah O’Brien on September 21, 2023.

Museum Manager Wade Dillon stated he is working on securing sponsors for display cases—two wall cases and two table cases. Additionally, Dillon mentioned that the Freeport Historical Museum gained two new volunteers: Clyde and Joshua, father and son duo from Sweeny, TX.

Upcoming Events

The upcoming events for the Freeport Historical Commission & Main Street Advisory Board include Texas Navy Day (September 16, 2023), Haunting Tales of the Texas Coast Exhibit (October 2nd-31st, 2023), Día de Los Muertos Altar Exhibit (October 2nd- November 11th, 2023), Pre-Historic Native Archeology Program (October 21, 2023), Fall Market (October 28, 2023) and Día de Los Muertos Procession (November 2, 2023).

Items for Future Discussion-Next Scheduled Meeting

The next scheduled meeting for the Freeport Historical Commission & Main Street Advisory Board is September 21, 2023, which will be a board training/workshop facilitated by Sarah O’Brien at City Hall, 3rd Floor Training Room.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion made by Sandra Barbree, seconded by Irene Ocañas, with all present voting “Aye”, the Freeport Historical Commission & Main Street Advisory Board Chair Margaret McMahan adjourned the meeting at 5:50 pm.



Ana Silbas, Main Street Coordinator
City of Freeport, Texas