

**MINUTES**  
**REGULAR MEETING**  
**FREEPORT HISTORICAL COMMISSION**  
**WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY, 5, 2020 at 10:00AM**  
**311 NAT HICKEY LANE**  
**FREEPORT, TEXAS 77541**

**1. Call to order**

Nat Hickey called the meeting to order at 10:15am.

**2. Roll call**

Board members present for the meeting:

- Nat Hickey
- Sandra Barbree
- Brenda George
- Carmen Read
- Carolyn Weatherly

Staff members present:

- Stephanie Russell, Assistant City Manager
- LeAnn Strahan, Destinations Director
- Sadie Smith, Museum Coordinator

Visitors present:

- David Towers
- Melanie Oldham

Board member Cliff Vandergriff was not present for the meeting.

**3. Consideration and possible action regarding the selection of members for the following positions among eligible Board Members.**

**A. Chairperson**

Discussion ensued regarding possible candidates to be considered for a new Chairperson. Mrs. George made a motion to nominate Mrs. Barbree as Chairperson effective immediately, Mrs. Read seconded the motion and the Board voted unanimously to approve Mrs. Barbree as Chairperson.

**B. Vice Chairperson**

Discussion ensued regarding possible candidates to be considered for a new Vice Chairperson. Mrs. Read made a motion to nominate Mrs. George as Vice Chairperson, Mrs. Weatherly seconded the motion and the Board voted unanimously to approve Mrs. George as Vice Chairperson.

**C. Secretary**

Discussion ensued regarding possible candidates to be considered for a new Secretary. Mrs. Read made a motion to nominate Mrs. Weatherly as Secretary, Mrs. Barbree seconded the motion and the Board voted unanimously to approve Mrs. Weatherly as Secretary.

#### 4. Departmental Updates

##### A. Culture, Recreation & Tourism Department

Ms. Russell updated the Board on the need and progress to restructure and create a new city department to include the visitor information center, museum, recreation center, community events, and the Main Street program. She announced that Ms. Strahan has been promoted to director of the newly formed department and that management is still working to finalize details.

##### B. Visitors Center Relocation

Ms. Strahan discussed plans to relocate the visitor information center to the museum. Ms. Downey will move as well to continue her VIC duties and assist with other departmental duties. Ms. Strahan announced the official date for the VIC to open at the museum will be April 1<sup>st</sup>.

##### C. Staff/Volunteer Schedule

Ms. Strahan discussed that with the VIC moving to the museum there would be some restructure in the hours of operation. Staff will be available to open from 9am-5pm Monday through Friday. Ms. Strahan requested that the Board agree to help staff the museum on Saturdays from 11am-2pm, and Mrs. Read suggested that we might develop a volunteer training session to bring them up to speed on guided museum tours. Mrs. George stated that she would prefer to host events for children on Saturdays to bring in more visitors.

##### D. Special Events/Exhibits

- Presidential Exhibit – February 2020

Ms. Strahan informed the Board that the Presidential Exhibit is currently on display and is expected to remain open through the month of February. The presidential desk was damaged in storage, so staff is looking for a new or gently used desk to purchase.

- Daddy Daughter Sock Hop – February 15, 2020

Ms. Strahan updated the Board on the ongoing plans for the Daddy Daughter Dance. Volunteers are needed to help decorate beginning at noon on Friday 2/14, and to help during the event from 5pm-9pm.

- Spring Fling – March 13, 2020

Discussion ensued regarding the upcoming Spring Fling event, a fun day planned each spring break for local children to enjoy inside and out of the museum. While last year we collaborated with Communities in Schools and other organizations in a STEM focused theme, the Board discussed the problem of having groups willing to participate during their week off from school. Mrs. George suggested a sports related theme, and that a sub-committee be formed to coordinate activities this year. Mrs. Read, Mrs. George and Mrs. Barbree will include a group of millennials to join the sub-committee and plan 2020 Spring Fling.

- Texas Navy Exhibit

Ms. Strahan updated the Board on the success and popularity of the 2019 Texas Navy Day event and the plans to make this an annual event to include

the support of neighboring counties. In addition, she brought them up to date on conversations that followed with the Texas Navy Association regarding a possible permanent exhibit sponsored by friends of the group, expressing the important role that the Texas Navy played in our local history.

**5. Discussion regarding Texas Main Street Program and future application**

The Board and staff members discussed the process to reclaim our position as a Texas Main Street city. With the deadline for applications being July 2020, Ms. Strahan will work to develop a timeline necessary to reasonably meet that goal. Ms. Barbree discussed the necessity to have data prepared in advance of the application process, and that participating in Main Street events and training is key to the success of the program. The Board discussed the two available positions and the need to fill those spots with businesses or individuals that have property in the Main Street area. Ms. Russell and Ms. Strahan will schedule a meeting next week with Tim Hootman, the Houston attorney who owns the Broad Street building with colorful art sculptures. Mr. Towers is a resident and interested in the history and preservation of Freeport and has expressed interest in joining the Board.

**6. Items for Future Discussion**

Items to be discussed at the next scheduled meeting include:

- coordinating events with Freeport Library (Ms. Weatherly),
- new STEM Event (Mrs. George),
- permanent exhibit for Wilma (Ms. Strahan)
- future Board members
- City Council liaison
- improved advertising.

Ms. Russell will find information regarding re-applying Board members.

**7. Adjourn**

With a motion from Ms. Weatherly and a second from Mrs. Read, Mrs. Barbree adjourned the meeting at 11:29 am.

