

**City of Franklin Civil War Historical Commission
Regular Meeting
Thursday, January 11, 2024—8:00 AM
Meeting Minutes**

Present: Sean Aiello, Patrick Baggett, Mary Pearce, Kelly Kautzman, Tony Morreale, Heather Doleshel, Ray Eldridge, Rachael Finch, Alan Simms, Clay Perry, Colbi Layne Hogan, Alma McLemore, Eric Jacobson, Bill Macon, Pam Lewis

Staff Present: Kelly Dannenfelser, Emily Huffer, Brian Walker, Elizabeth Bulay, Vernon Gerth, Bill Squires, Shanna McCoy

CALL TO ORDER

Vice-Chair Simms called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. and took an official roll call. Vice-Chair Simms noted there were new members and went around the room for the other commissioners to introduce themselves.

CITIZEN COMMENT

This is open for citizens to be heard on any issue or concern. Are there any citizens who would like to speak to the Commission?

Hearing none we will move on to the next item.

MINUTES

- **Approval of the November 9, 2023, Minutes.**

Commissioner Doleshel moved to approve the November 9, 2023, meeting minutes. Commissioner Pearce seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously 11-0.

ITEMS

- **Consideration of the 2024 Chair & Vice Chair**

Mr. Bill Squires from the Law Department explained the role and procedures the Commissioners are to go by for this election. Mr. Squires stated to vote on a Chair & Vice-Chair anyone can be nominated, there is not a limit to how many nominations and a second is not required. Mr. Squires stated whoever gets the majority vote is the winner.

Commissioner Pearce nominated Commissioner Alan Simms for Chair of 2024.

Commissioner Simms nominated Commissioner Tony Morreale for Chair of 2024.

With no more nominations Commissioner Alan Simms was elected to be the Chair for 2024.

Commissioner Pearce nominated Commissioner Tony Morreale to the Vice-Chair for 2024.

A vote was taken, and Commissioner Morreale was elected to be the Vice-Chair for 2024 with a vote of 12-0.

- **Law Overview of Commission Role and Roberts Rules**

Mr. Squires stated he wanted to outline just a little bit of how a meeting for this commission should go. Mr. Squires stated when an item is brought before the board and is on the floor by way of a motion, there should be a motion, a second, discussion and vote. Mr. Squires stated with discussion of a motion if there is anything changed during discussion it is done by a motion for an amendment, which does require a second, and discussion now begins on the amendment not the main motion. Mr. Squires stated after discussion on the amendment is done, the amendment motion is voted on and you go back to the main motion as amended and vote. Mr. Squires stated an item can be deferred and it takes precedence over all other motions, and you talk about why you should cease it right now. Mr. Squires stated Roberts Rules keeps an orderly discussion going on. Mr. Squires explained there are different commissions bodies, there are either legislative bodies, like BOMA or appellant bodies, like BZA. Mr. Squires stated this commission is neither one but more of a recommending body where items would go to another commission. Mr. Squires summarized from the City's ordinance the tasks this commission is charged with doing.

- **Consideration of Williamson Remembers Historical Markers**

Mr. Julian Bibb stated he is a co-chair of Williamson Remembers, along with Dr. Hill and Mr. Matt Maxey. Mr. Bibb stated this is the third time to be in front of this commission. Mr. Bibb stated the first time we came we presented a concept of three markers with their location and language. Mr. Bibb stated the markers addresses African American lynchings from the reconstruction period that took place in Williamson County. Mr. Bibb gave a brief overview about how many markers there were representing the contributions made by African Americans. Mr. Bibb stated this is part of telling our full story. Mr. Bibb stated this commission approved a vote to go to BOMA and we are not asking for a vote today. Mr. Bibb explained the markers are factual statements about what happened in this county. Mr. Bibb stated after the vote from this commission we went to BOMA and gave a presentation and BOMA has two points that they want feedback on from this commission. Mr. Bibb stated one point is the proposed geographic locations and he explained. Mr. Bibb stated the second point is the language. Mr. Bibb stated after this meeting and feedback they will go back to BOMA with an updated presentation. Mr. Bibb stated Ms. Huffer has put together an excellent packet for everyone to view.

Dr. Hill stated Mr. Bibb gave a good summary. Dr. Hill stated all this is linked to all the work that has already been done and this is another piece to the story.

Mr. Maxey stated his role on the committee is to tell the accurate story and have people see it and read it and this could be a tremendous addition to the history products. Mr. Maxey stated we are already being herald as a leader nationally and this would continue that.

Commissioner Lewis requested to know if there is any feedback from tourism.

Mr. Maxey responded yes and briefly explained.

Mr. Lamont Turner stated one of the things that resonated with him from the previous presentation at the BOMA meeting was the question of did something happen in these considered locations. Mr. Turner stated when they read through the marker locations there were two incidents that happened, and we know what happened. Mr. Turner stated a marker is a constant reminder that all our humanity counts.

Chair Simms stated feedback is needed today and not a motion. Chair Simms opened the floor for discussion on the text.

Ms. Huffer stated they should start with marker one and look at what goes into the content of the sign.

Commissioner Aiello stated it seems the markers are more nationally focused and requested to know if other City markers were as well.

Mr. Bibb stated when they created the markers needed context of what is going on and most of the markers in Franklin are specific, but not all of them. Mr. Bibb stated clearly telling this story fits in context of what the other markers show.

Commissioner Jacobson stated there is a reconstruction marker as you walk out the door on the left and this one will be on the right, so there will be one that tells more of the national story and this one will compliment it.

Commissioner Pearce stated she has read the markers and there is a lot of copy to be formatted to be easily read.

Mr. Bibb stated it would be readable.

Mr. Maxey stated it would also be on the website.

Mr. Bibb stated the language will be two sided.

Commissioner Jacobson stated he commended everyone who worked on the language of this and explained.

Mr. Bibb stated one of things that BOMA hoped this commission would weigh in such as marker number one that has a title of "Liberty & Justice for All", some of BOMA felt the wording was

too harsh. Mr. Bibb stated this type of recommendations is what BOMA is looking for, like do you think it is too harsh.

Commissioner Hogan stated her only critique would be on marker number three and would suggest adding a statement to make people connect to it.

Commissioner Finch stated to Commissioner Hogan's point, it is the context to the end that is missing and suggested adding another comment.

After further discussion, it was recommended that marker three be re-examined to connect the dots and fix the cemeteries.

- **Consideration of the Installation of the Texas State Marker at Carter Hill Park**

Commissioner Perry stated the Texas Historical Commission has given us a marker to install commemorating Texas troops. Commissioner Perry stated the map is incorrect. Commissioner Perry stated there are 3 suggested locations and they would like a vote on which location.

Commissioner Jacobson pointed out the locations suggested and explained how the marker came to be about.

Discussion ensued on who would provide maintenance for the marker, what if it sets a precedence for other states to want to place a marker and conversation about private property and City property.

Commissioner Morreale moved to acknowledge that the Texas State Marker was discussed. Commissioner Pearce seconded the motion and the motion passed 14-0.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

- **Parks Audio Tour Project**

Commissioner Hogan stated there was no update at this time but were meeting today.

- **U.S. Line Markers**

Commissioner Lewis stated there was no update.

Commissioner Pearce stated they are still working on some verbiage for Dr. Gant.

Commissioner Morreale stated there are 3 batches of markers in que to be purchased.

- **Wayfinding Signs Update**

Ms. Huffer stated she went out yesterday morning to place stakes and they are hoping to get out forty signs. Ms. Huffer stated that will leave twenty signs remaining.

Commissioner Announcements

Commissioner Lewis stated Mr. Walter Green is writing a new book about the nonmilitary involvement during the war years and is specifically about Franklin.

Commissioner Perry stated there are two battlefield parcels acquired.

Commissioner McLemore stated they are working on the 264 Natchez Street house and it has been a challenge but they are going to get there. Commissioner McLemore stated black tie is coming up February 3 and tickets are available.

Commissioner Doleshel stated Visit Franklin is having their first annual road mapping tourism event on Wednesday, the 17th and is open to the community. Commissioner Doleshel stated they would be sending out a survey as well.

Commissioner Pearce stated there is going to be a luncheon to raise money for a Mary Mills scholarship. Commissioner Pearce stated she was one of our first people to break the glass ceiling of our professional black women in Williamson County.

Mr. Squires stated every couple years the Law Department does a training on Roberts Rules of Order, ethics, records requests, etc. and we would encourage everyone to come. Mr. Squires stated it is on March 27th.

Adjourn.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:45 a.m.



Acting Secretary

