

**City of Franklin Civil War Historical Commission
Regular Meeting
Thursday, March 27, 2025—8:00 AM
Meeting Minutes**

Present: Mary Pearce, Kelly Kautzman, Heather Doleshel, Rachael Finch, Alan Simms, Colbi Layne Hogan, Sam Huffman, Eddie DeGarmo, Marlene Holmes, Alma McLemore, Sean Aiello, Eric Jacobson, Pam Lewis, Clay Perry

Staff Present: Emily Huffer, Brian Walker, Elizabeth Bulay, Kelly Dannenfelser, Bill Squires

Consultants: Siraj, Robbie, Matt, Lauren, Scott, Mary Ruffin

Guests: Laura Holder and Nina Scall

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Simms called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. and took an official roll call.

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 January 9, 2025, Minutes.**

Commissioner Holmes moved to approve the January 9, 2025, meeting minutes. Commissioner Hogan seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously 10-0.

ADMINISTRATIVE ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ms. Huffer stated they installed the next batch of the line markers on New Highway 96, Hillsboro Road and Fair Street. Ms. Huffer stated they are looking ahead to finalize the next six and their locations.

Chair Simms requested to go ahead and order them since it takes so long to get them.

Ms. Huffer stated she would look into it.

Preservation Plan Update with the Lakota Group

Chair Simms stated they would be turning the meeting over to the consultants for the Preservation Plan Update.

The Lakota Group introduced themselves to the commission and stated which part of the consulting team they represented.

Ms. Huffer stated they had invited two guests to be here as well, and they introduced themselves as Ms. Laura Holder and Ms. Nina Scall.

Mr. Siraj stated this process is a three-phase process, and we are still kind of in our first phase, and would like to hear from everyone on what you want to come out of this plan.

Each commission member went around and stated the name of the organization they represented and what that organization represented.

Ms. Mary Ruffin stated she read the battlefield plan, and it is a real testament to the plan that so much of it has been completed. Ms. Mary Ruffin stated she would like to know what the commission would like to see in the new plan.

Ms. Pearce stated she would like to see Franklin be the best place in America to hear the real story of the Civil War from Reconstruction to WWII. Ms. Pearce stated she would like to

Ms. Mary Ruffin stated she would like Ms. Pearce to expand on that.

Ms. Pearce stated she would like the stories told of what women did in the war, rising after the Civil War, just to tell a human experience. Ms. Pearce stated she would like documentation of everyone who was in Franklin during the war and after the war.

Mr. Siraj stated that it sounds like the home front experience, not the battle experience.

Ms. Pearce stated Yes, that was right.

Ms. Mary Ruffin stated that feeds in with interpretation, understanding and tourism.

Ms. Doleshel stated she would like to see continued research, interpretation and reaching out to the millennials.

Mr. Perry stated that the millennial thing is really important right now, and people will come to Franklin through technology.

Mr. Siraj stated there is still a lot of information to be uncovered and these stories lie with the people, and I wonder if there is any kind of sourcing platform where people can go on that platform

and share a video or audio of stories and that way the stories can be captured. Mr. Siraj requested to know if there would be any interest in that.

Ms. Lewis stated that some of the under told stories are concerning the African American history, the Native American history and women's history.

Mr. Siraj stated the Fuller story is more than the fuller story of the Civil War.

Ms. Pearce and Ms. Lewis stated yes.

Ms. McLemore commented that there are so many stories out there that connect.

Ms. Hogan stated this commission has a subcommittee that is working on an audio tour and explained that they should look into other tours that could come out of this. Ms. Hogan stated there is a need for walkability.

Ms. Holder questioned the protection of land and requested to know if all the battlefield land has been saved.

Ms. Scall stated the Civil War Preservation fund is drying up and explained. Ms. Scall stated in terms of connectivity the dollars will go towards places that could draw people to their tours and is determined by NPS dollar for dollar match. Ms. Scall stated this group was some of the best fund raisers she has come across.

Mr. Perry explained the million dollars acquired for Ropers Knob through Franklin's Charge and stated they were looking for matching funding. Mr. Perry stated they are always looking to preserve more land especially land that is close to the Carter House and explained why.

Ms. Pearce stated everything that is bought has a conservation easement on it.

Ms. McLemore stated the African American Historical Society installs markers on historic buildings to preserve and share history.

Discussion ensued on easements.

Mr. Robbie requested to know from Ms. Holder what role MTSU plays in all this.

Ms. Holder stated the Tennessee Civil War National Heritage Grant is a little bit different in that the national heritage area gets dollars from congress and we take those dollars and go across Tennessee so they can tell their Civil War stories and preserve their history. Ms. Holder stated the funding is used for education and interpretation.

Commissioner Announcements

Ms. McLemore invited the group to visit 264 Natchez.

Ms. Pearce stated a picture says a thousand words and explained that Mr. Hathaway did renderings showing sites of what would have happened if the zoning and rezonings had happened.

Mr. Huffman stated he the installation of two markers and there is a total of 8 up.

Mr. Jacobson stated they had a groundbreaking ceremony at the Carter House set for tomorrow and stated it has been fifteen years in the making and should be open in the Spring of 2026.

Ms. Kautzman stated that busy seasons are picking up.

Mr. Perry stated they were turning over 4 properties to the City of Franklin between now and fall at the latest. Mr. Perry stated the Masonic Hall is getting underway kicking off early May. Mr. Perry thanked the City of Franklin for helping with the projects.

Ms. McLemore stated that on May 19th, there will be Hayes House Porch Talks and explained it would be at 6 pm. Ms. McLemore stated that on June 19th, there will be Juneteenth at the McLemore House.

Adjourn.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:33 a.m.



Acting Secretary

5/8/25