

**Historical Advisory Committee (HAC)
Minutes February 9, 2021**

Meeting held at the Mid County Regional Library, Meeting Room A/B.

Committee Members

Dianne Munson
Theresa Murtha
Pat Spence
Valerie Colbert
Clare Riggs
Stephen Valdes

Present

Pat Spence
Clare Riggs
Stephen Valdes
Dianne Munson
Theresa Murtha
Valarie Colbert

Not Present

BOCC Liaison:

Commissioner Stephen R. Deutsch

Guests

Libraries & History Staff

Jennifer Zoebelein
Tina Ranney

9:00 a.m. Roll Call (Roll Call not taken)

Approval of January meeting minutes: Theresa commented that she would like the minutes to be more detailed. She feels that the minutes are being condensed and important information is being left out. Dianne and Theresa discussed the amount of detail they would like included. It was decided that moving forward minutes will include more detail and conversation. Dianne asked for a motion. No motion was made. Minutes were not voted on. Stephen asked about voting on the historical marker program. That was not voted on at the last meeting and is on the agenda for the current meeting.

Agenda Items:

Jennifer Zoebelein:

Review of attendance: Quick review and reminder that attendance is for the fiscal year and runs from October through September. If you miss 3 in a row, or 4 absences in the fiscal year, that will mean you would be off the committee. No one is close to that; it is just a reminder.

Potential New Historic Marker: (Anthony Williams, St. Mark's Missionary Baptist Church). Mr. Williams had reached out to Jennifer about a historic marker for his church that is 130 years old. He has the paperwork and is working on it. When it is complete, the application will be brought to the meeting for voting.

Discussion was brought up at this time about adding QR codes to the markers and how to go about that. Jennifer will look into what is needed.

Hickory Bluff Marker: (Theresa) – In reference to a book she had read, Theresa has concerns over the authors critical remarks regarding the accuracy of the marker. Commissioner Deutsch mentioned that the authors fact checking could be inaccurate. Theresa mentioned that she is not as familiar with this area of Port Charlotte history. Jennifer mentioned that the information on the marker was put

together by archaeologists contracted by the state. She also suggested that the authors information should not be trusted. Theresa suggested that this is a good reason to have the QR codes that point to the historical facts that back up the marker. She also suggested that Jennifer write in her column about the markers.

Discussion of/vote on strategic plan draft for historical tourism for submission to the BCC:

Review and Discussion of Theresa's document that she had prepared regarding historical tourism. Jennifer opened the discussion with handing out copies of the document to those who needed and offering guidance on how to prepare and vote on the document to present to the BCC. Theresa proceeded to go through the document reading out loud. (Please refer the document handed out at the meeting and emailed) Commissioner Deutsch mentioned that he felt the one thing missing is a defined link between this function and the vision and tourism. Theresa implied that the "task force" she mentioned may be that link. Commissioner Deutsch added other examples of tourism and history. Stephen brought up that he is working on a military trail program and feels that we don't really have a lot of history here in this area. He doesn't see this as a Charlotte County thing, he sees it as a Southwest Florida thing. The area in general has a strong military history, and he thinks this avenue would be better suited to asking the state for funding. Dianne mentioned about having a collective group to gather and organize the information for all the other history groups and is that something the HAC wants to take on. Commissioner Deutsch pointed out that is like what the HAC group already does. Dianne responded that the group needs to get back to some of their previous functions. Commissioner Deutsch brought up some other things that were also reviewed by the HAC in the past. He also spoke to a group he was previously involved in. There may be more history here than we are collectively aware of and he thinks pooling together is a good idea. Dianne agrees that they should have been doing this all along she also mentioned about not knowing about historic related events and that this is something they should be working on to compile. Theresa then tried to clarify that what they are suggesting the organization of some sort of publicity vehicle that emanates from this group that would compile and advertise those various types of events. Commissioner Deutsch then stated that he envisions this group working in an advisory capacity with other staff as a team to keep bringing things of historic significance to the board. Theresa then asked if there was someone specific to reach out to regarding publicity. Commissioner Deutsch told her that there is a PIO person. Tourism is focused on marketing the county. Brian Gleason is the one to reach out to regarding publicity. Jennifer then mentioned that they themselves can not reach out to Brian. They would have to bring it up at the monthly meetings and give it to Jennifer to present to the board, because the group is advisory, it needs to be brought to the board first. Commissioner Deutsch then mentioned that he and his fellow board members welcome the information from their volunteer groups. Theresa then asked do they make a motion and vote on the document and Jennifer suggested that they review the document and give to her when it's ready to present to the board in a way that states the HAC is asking for "this". Even if it's something short, a simple paragraph would be sufficient. Commissioner Deutsch brought up that he would like it to be a joint effort between the group and staff and have it presented that way. It would have more influence on the board. Stephen asked about the historic village in Punta Gorda (History Park). Is there anything that brings all the various groups together? Clare then brought up that this is an ongoing challenge at the event center that it is confusing sometimes as to what is going on and when. Jennifer also brought up that Punta Gorda is a city and is responsible for their own advertisement. Theresa asked if this is the best organization to compile this information. Theresa feels that this group (HAC) is not fully represented by all areas. The fact that they can't extend beyond borders is also a problem. She feels Boca Grande is an important location to our county. Theresa then asked what actions items do we want to get from this

conversation/meeting? Try to get more people, she wants to have the minutes earlier. (2 weeks before meeting)

Commissioner Deutsch left early for another appt.

Jennifer brought the conversation back to the strategic planning document. Dianne asked for opinions. Pat said we need more people. Dianne brought up again about event notification, and Jennifer clarified how the process works, and that it might be best to have the individual groups to send out their events, and Theresa asked if we could reach out to Brian Gleason and get his opinion on how he would like it presented to him. Jennifer said she would contact him. Theresa asked the group to focus on the document so they could table it because they were running out of time. She will make amendments that were discussed and send them to Jennifer. Clare mentioned that she would like more time to absorb the contents and Theresa said that would be fine and they could revisit the next meeting.

Dianne brought the next agenda item up regarding the marker program and the group decide there was not enough time to discuss at length. Jennifer confirmed that they had wanted to address the marker program/ordinance. Theresa mentioned that her issue was that they were not supposed to be making recommendations for markers. Jennifer explained the marker program, how and why it was established and how it works. The recommendation for markers should come from the community. Theresa feels that it won't always come from the community, and they should be able to recommend markers and while funding should come from outside sources, they should also be able to request the county to fund them. How do we go about changing the ordinance to make it broader? Jennifer again clarified that the marker program is not the same as the ordinance and that the outline for what they HAC can do is in the ordinance and the marker program was added to give the HAC an active purpose. Theresa feels the ordinance is too restrictive. Pat mentioned that they (HAC members) should be out in the community talking to residents and getting from them what they want for markers. Theresa agrees, but she doesn't believe that should be the only source. She believes that the HAC or some other historical associations/organizations should be making the recommendations. She thinks that it shouldn't always come from the citizens. Clare mentioned that people should know to come to the HAC with the knowledge and requests for markers and that there should be advertising to community that they can come to them. Theresa still wants to make the point that it can't be the only way markers come to be. Her example of this; is a marker that used to be in Punta Gorda for the mounds is gone and has not been replaced. It was brought up by other members that the mounds may not be a good location to replace a marker. Public traffic could damage the site and perhaps it's better without one. She suggested it could be a generic marker and not at that location. She doesn't think they should sit and wait for the community to request markers. Jennifer cautioned that it is not for the committee to be the end all be all for markers. Theresa still thinks that the historical organizations should be the spokespeople for the program. Jennifer also raised the question, if you all put together a request for a marker, who will the funding come from? Theresa said she understands and that they could look at funding options but feels the county should be funding some of them and that county should set aside money for this purpose. Valarie mentioned that she thought there was funding set aside for 3 markers per year. Jennifer said there is, but that is not how its setup or supposed to work. Theresa then asked if they could talk about how it should work. Jennifer reminded that if they want to make changes, they must amend the ordinance and it must be voted on and presented to the board. Jennifer asked if they wanted this to be the focus for the next meeting. The consensus was yes.

Dianne went around the table for member input, starting with Pat who said she doesn't have much going on. The Bean Depot is doing well, and more people are getting out. She would like to get out in the community and invite more people to join and let other know about the marker program. Dianne added that is a good idea to get out into the communities. Stephen talked about the military trail and

some interesting history he has learned along the way and reiterated that he feels the history here is more regional. No one had anything else.

Public Input: None

Meeting Adjourned: 10:04 a.m.

Next HAC Meeting: - Wednesday, February 9th, 9a.m. at Mid County Regional Library, 2050 Forrest Nelson Blvd., Port Charlotte, FL.

cc:

Commissioner Ken Doherty	Commissioner Joseph Tiseo
Commissioner Stephen R. Deutsch	Hector Flores, County Administrator
Commissioner Bill Truex	Emily Lewis, Deputy County Administrator
Commissioner Christopher Constance	Tommy Scott, Director, Community Svcs Dept.