

City of Franklin Civil War Historical Commission
Regular Meeting
Thursday, March 11, 2021—8:00 AM
Meeting Minutes

Present: Steve Bacon, Rich Buckner, Rachael Finch, Sam Gant, Sam Huffman, Pam Lewis, Mary Pearce (arrived during Item #1 discussion), Clay Perry, Alan Simms, Alderman Scott Speedy, Megan Weisinger, Blake Wintory (arrived during Item #1 discussion)

Staff Present: Amanda Rose and Brian Walker

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Finch called the virtual meeting to order at 8:06 AM and took official roll call.

RESOLUTION 2021-31

Consideration of Resolution 2021-31, “A Resolution Declaring That The Civil War Historical Commission Shall Meet On March 11, 2021, And Conduct Its Essential Business By Electronic Means Rather Than Being Required To Gather A Quorum Of The Members Physically Present In The Same Location Because It Is Necessary To Protect The Health, Safety, And Welfare of Tennesseans In Light Of The COVID-19 Outbreak”

Chair Finch asked for a motion for Resolution 2021-31. Ms. Lewis moved to approve Resolution 2021-31. Mr. Huffman seconded the motion, and the motion carried 10-0.

Chair Finch read an announcement regarding limited public access, as follows:

- Due to the COVID-19 outbreak, this meeting will be a virtual meeting. The purpose of this meeting will be to conduct a design review workshop. No decisions on applications will be made at this meeting. The public may call in to the conference meeting 1-312-626-6799; Meeting ID: 947 4841 7718; Password: 835552. Callers will be unmuted and given the opportunity to comment during the meeting at specific times. The public may email comments to planningintake@franklintn.gov to be provided in full to the Commission and included in the minutes but not read aloud in their entirety during the meeting. Emailed comments will be accepted until 4:00pm the day before the meeting. The meeting video will be available for public viewing 24 hours following the meeting on the City of Franklin YouTube account.

MINUTES

Approval of the January 14, 2020 Minutes.

Mr. Gant moved to approve the January 14, 2021 meeting minutes. Mr. Buckner seconded the motion, and the motion carried 10-0.

**Item 1:
Consideration of Juneteenth Marker Proposal Recommendation to BOMA.**

Chair Finch stated Ms. Stacey Watson was present.

Ms. Rose stated the African American Heritage Society of Williamson County (AAHS) would like to make a proposal to the commission today, for a recommendation to send onward to the BOMA, regarding the installation of a Civil War sign interpreting General Gordon Granger's role in Juneteenth and how he is the namesake of a Civil War fortification here in Franklin. Ms. Rose stated the AAHS will present a proposal to the BOMA at the April Work Session. Ms. Rose turned it over to Ms. Watson.

Ms. Watson stated a group of people got together to try to make a positive impact and to show our story is connected to the larger story. Ms. Watson stated General Granger is the one who actually took the news to Texas to let the slaves know they were emancipated. Ms. Watson stated that was a positive we wanted to share with everyone, and they have worked with the City, the African American Heritage Society, Civil War Trails, and Mr. Eric Jacobson in putting together this verbiage for the part of the sign. Ms. Watson stated she thought everyone had a copy of the verbiage for the sign and stated it was a Civil War Trails-style marker in design, and she clarified that they would want it to be eventually become part of Civil War Trails marker program. Ms. Watson stated the verbiage had been approved by Dr. West and others. Ms. Watson requested the commission read the verbiage. Ms. Watson stated they were trying to do something to tie into all facets of the community and that the marker would be placed at Pinkerton Park or next to it. Ms. Watson stated she added a photograph of the spot they would like to use. Ms. Watson stated this is a broad marker that tells the whole story.

Ms. Rose requested Ms. Watson elaborate on the marker a little bit, since there are so many different signs.

Ms. Watson stated it would be a City sign and style would be the exactly the same as the sign there. Ms. Watson stated some of the Trail markers are due to be replaced soon and that one could be used somewhere else. Ms. Watson stated the intent was to have the City take care of it now but that she hopes to have it become Civil War Trails marker. Ms. Watson stated the African American Heritage Society even offered to fund a sign somewhere else, if needed.

Ms. Rose projected a photograph.

Ms. Watson stated several years ago the Civil War Trails program tried to include more about African Americans, and this sign could be a start. Ms. Watson stated it would have a City of Franklin seal, but a Civil War Heritage Area seal would be also added as well, due to the grant obtained.

Ms. Rose explained the photograph of the location at Pinkerton Park.

Ms. Watson stated with Covid, they can't do as much as they used to, and there could be some edits as well. Ms. Watson stated she felt there should be a map showing the line from Franklin to

Texas and how they got the word out about the emancipation. Ms. Watson stated there are a lot of words in the proposal and would like to get feedback from this commission.

Mr. Simms requested to know if there was a photo of the existing sign.

Ms. Rose stated she did not have a photo readily available of the existing sign.

Ms. Watson stated you could Google it really easily.

Ms. Rose explained there is a map on an existing sign and stated Ms. Watson is stating there is a lot of language on the proposed sign and that there may only be room for a map.

Ms. Watson stated they could go to civilwartrails.org and find out more information.

Discussion ensued on if Civil War Trails had seen this yet. Ms. Watson stated that it has and will add more information, more than likely.

Ms. Rose stated this would come back to this commission again for review if wording is proposed to be added. Ms. Rose stated the applicant really wants the sign installed in time for Juneteenth.

Ms. Watson stated yes, they'd like to explain the local African American story.

Ms. Lewis suggested having a photograph of Gordon Granger on the sign.

Ms. Finch stated that could definitely be possible due to there being an image of him on another sign at Eddy Lane.

Ms. Lewis stated that a picture is worth a thousand words and may spur interest.

Ms. Watson stated that sounds good to her and requested to know what everyone thought.

Ms. Lewis and Ms. Watson stated that an event is planned for Juneteenth.

Mr. Buckner stated the signs need more pizzazz than just words.

Ms. Finch stated that CWT signs usually have two to four images.

Ms. Lewis pointed out the local AAHS Juneteenth celebration has been occurring for seventeen years.

Ms. Rose requested to know if anyone had any questions about the language on the proposed sign. Ms. Rose stated that it was written by Eric Jacobson and edited by Dr. West at the Tennessee Civil War National Heritage Area.

Mr. Gant stated he had one comment about the term "Union." Mr. Gant stated that it would be more accurate to say "U.S."

Ms. Finch agreed with Mr. Gant and stated there should be some discussion on the consistency of the marker language. Ms. Finch stated it should not have Union and Federal.

Ms. Watson stated she felt that was more of a grammar thing.

Ms. Finch stated it would be an easy fix.

Mr. Perry stated he liked the sign and we could continue the conversation, but he was going to make a motion to support the sign and verbiage with the potential change for consistent language around nomenclature for the troops, and then the addition of a photo of General Gordon Granger, and a potential map.

Mr. Gant seconded the motion, and the motion carried 12-0.

Ms. Lewis, Mr. Huffman, and Mr. Gant commented on infantry.

Ms. Watson stated that there are more in-depth descriptors on the sign at Eddy Ln.

Ms. Rose stated the next step for Ms. Watson will be going to BOMA to submit the proposal and that the African American Heritage Foundation will be representing the item, with her help. Ms. Rose stated it is slated for the April 20th meeting. Ms. Rose stated the intent is that it'll be on Work Session and voting meeting the same night but that she cannot guarantee that at the moment.

Item 2:

Consideration of Rules and Regulations for City and Rest Haven Cemeteries.

Ms. Rose stated they are excited to have a draft of the Rules and Regulations for City and Rest Haven Cemeteries for the commission to consider at this time. Ms. Rose stated she worked closely with the Historic Cemeteries Subcommittee on this. Ms. Rose stated she wanted to give a special thanks to Mr. Simms for getting it in final draft form. Ms. Rose stated she would love for him to speak to this, if he did not mind.

Mr. Simms stated they have reviewed this several times, and this is our final draft of the regulations, and it has not been decided yet whether there would be two signs or one.

Ms. Rose stated there are still several things to work out with the draft.

Mr. Simms stated the commission could read through the draft and stated he felt they incorporated everything by being a little global.

Ms. Rose stated we needed a recommendation to move the review to the Law and Parks Department.

Mr. Huffman requested to know if this list is a typical list that other cemeteries host.

Ms. Rose stated this seems fairly consistent with others, but we did cater some things to our specific needs.

Mr. Simms noted number three is specific to our cemeteries and how noting against disturbing landscaping was a little more appropriate for our cemeteries than others. Mr. Simms stated this draft is geared more toward Franklin's cemeteries.

Mr. Walker stated to answer Mr. Huffman's question, we start by looking around other cemeteries and historical cemeteries to see their rules and bring all that information together, and then start to whittle that down to things more specific to our cemeteries.

Ms. Pearce requested to know if there was any consideration given to the rock walls.

Mr. Simms stated number eight addresses that situation.

Ms. Pearce stated she would want to add rock walls. Ms. Pearce stated it was a huge problem.

Mr. Simms stated he did not realize that was an issue.

Ms. Rose requested Mr. Walker elaborate on whether rock walls were still a problem.

Mr. Walker stated as far as condition of the rock wall, they are in need of various repairs. Mr. Walker stated as far as a vandalism standpoint, we have not seen that.

Ms. Pearce stated something needs to be added about the rock walls.

Ms. Rose stated she would add it.

Mr. Buckner stated he had comment about number thirteen and stated it should state "commercial photography or film" so people know they can take pictures of their family's grave spots, etc.

Mr. Simms stated switching was fine.

Mr. Perry asked what the group's thoughts are on number eleven, concerning military flags.

Mr. Simms stated they struggled with the verbiage on this and stated "military flags" was what they come up with.

Mr. Huffman requested to know if adding "military veterans" would be a good thought and noted the size of the flag.

Mr. Gant stated adding the size does away from any conflict.

Ms. Pearce questioned number seven, stating that we do not allow alcoholic beverages anywhere in town and asked if it is covered by the City in general.

Ms. Rose thanked the subcommittee for all their hard work.

Mr. Huffman requested to know what kind of sign it would be.

Ms. Rose stated the HZC needs to review that, and in context, it would be more of a post-and-panel type sign.

Mr. Perry moved to approve the Rules and Regulations for City and Rest Haven Cemeteries with the noted amendments. Ms. Lewis seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

**Item 3:
Subcommittee Progress Reports.**

Ms. Rose stated she hoped everyone received her email regarding the status of the subcommittee agenda meetings. Ms. Rose stated she apologized for the change in the schedule, but because we do have unanticipated staff shortage at this time, we will meet as she described in the email.

- **Wayfinding Signs**

Mr. Buckner stated they continue to make progress with the subcommittee, and the subcommittee is really working well together. Mr. Buckner stated he felt everyone is pleased with the work they have accomplished in the past two years. Mr. Buckner stated right now they are meeting with City departments and others to get some firmer direction and advice on signs as we start to move a process of getting approval. Mr. Buckner stated they are working to finalize the locations of signs, the verbiage on the signs, and the symbols that go along with the signs. Mr. Buckner stated they are continuing to move forward in order to have something for BOMA by the end of the year.

- **Public Outreach/Interpretation**

Ms. Rose stated the subcommittee members can still continue to work on script revisions to the audio tour and to compose new scripts for places it'd want to add to the tour. Ms. Rose stated there are about three slots left to be able to add to the tour. Ms. Rose stated the subcommittee will pause its meeting schedule until there is more staff availability. Ms. Rose stated due to the nature of the work, the individuals on the subcommittee can continue to work on the revisions in the meantime.

Ms. Lewis stated she has a colleague named Doug Scott Hare who does voiceover work and loves history. Ms. Lewis stated Mr. Hare took one of our stops and interpreted one of them with audio, and we have it to listen to it at some point to see what we think. Ms. Lewis stated that Mr. Hare would love to do the interpretation voiceovers for a nominal fee.

- **Historic Cemeteries**

Ms. Rose stated the draft Rules and Regulations document was completed and the subcommittee will pause its meeting schedule until there a little more staff to help. Ms. Rose stated she did encourage anyone to reach out to her with questions. Ms. Rose stated there are some priorities lined up by the subcommittee that she and Mr. Walker continue to work on. Ms. Rose stated one

item is hiring an ironwork consultant to assist with some of the work needed in City Cemetery, and there was a grant received for that. Ms. Rose stated they submitted a grant application for consideration to pursue burial marker restoration at Rest Haven Cemetery. Ms. Rose stated the grant amount request is around \$40-45 thousand dollars. Ms. Rose asked everyone to keep their fingers crossed that we get awarded the grant.

- **U.S. Line Markers**

Ms. Rose stated the U.S. Line Marker Subcommittee is ready to present its proposal to BOMA. Ms. Rose stated they were unable to meet in February due to lack of quorum, but staff will finalize the presentation sent previously and schedule a time for the item to appear before a BOMA Work Session.

Item 5:

Parks Department Updates.

Mr. Walker stated with the warmer weather, we are seeing a lot more activity in all the parks and that the Rotary Club wants resume cleaning some more tombstones. Mr. Walker added that two trails are getting repaired at Eastern Flank.

Mr. Simms stated the Rotary Club will start this weekend. Mr. Simms stated last fall we cleaned three quarters of the markers at Rest Haven.

Mr. Gant requested to know about two markers at the old BGA, specifically if there has been any discussion on getting those moved.

Mr. Walker stated the last he recalls, there are some issues with just moving the markers.

Ms. Rose stated there is a Tennessee Heritage Protection Act at the state level that does require memorials established within public areas to be maintained and have no alterations or removal of those markers without approval. Ms. Rose stated there would have to be a petition submitted for this.

Mr. Huffman requested to know about any information on paving the parking lot at Fort Granger.

Mr. Walker stated there are no plans to pave the parking lot.

Ms. Pearce stated the landscaping needed to be looked at.

Item 6:

Organizations Announcements.

Ms. Pearce stated the McLemore House is being repaired and put back in kind.

Ms. Weisinger stated there has been an increase in the past week of hotel occupancy and travel is starting to rebound.

Mr. Huffman stated the purchase is still underway for the property across from Collins Farm.

Ms. Lewis requested to know what is happening with the DAR and Collins Farm.

Ms. Rose stated it is still going on and she worked with Ms. Lisa Clayton on a use for the City and DAR.

Mr. Walker stated they are working with them on a garden area with a patriotic feel.

**Item 7:
Adjourn.**

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:18 a.m.

Acting Secretary