

Florida Historical Commission
500 S. Bronough Street Tallahassee, Florida 32399
Room 307, R.A. Gray Building
Web Meeting, Zoom, Meeting ID: 811-7035-1479
Wednesday, February 7, 2024 - 9:40 a.m. to 12:50 p.m.

Meeting Minutes

Commission Members Present In-Person: Dr. Judy Bense, Chair; Parker Destin; David Drysdale; Rick Gonzalez; Kathleen Kauffman; Frank Terraferma

Commission Members Present Via Webinar: John Browning Jr.; Dr. Michael J. Francis; David Hoyt; John Phelps; Dr. Clifford Smith

Commission Members Not Present: N/A

DOS Staff Members Present: Cord Byrd, Florida Secretary of State; Alissa Lotane, Director; Dr. Angela Tomlinson, Assistant Director; John Grandage, Assistant Director; Ruben Acosta, Bureau Chief, Bureau of Historic Preservation; Dr. Kathryn O'Donnell Miyar, Bureau Chief, Bureau of Archaeological Research; Dr. Sarah Liko, Operations Manager; Jeremy Heiker, Historical Marker Program Coordinator; Jillian E. Pratt, Assistant General Counsel

Members of the Public Present: John Arnold, Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission; Kent Blosser, Florida Department of Management Services; Melissa Wyllie, Florida Trust for Historic Preservation

Item I. Call to Order and Roll Call

Dr. Bense called the meeting to order at 9:40 a.m. and asked Dr. Liko to call the roll. Quorum was confirmed.

Item II. Introduction of Commission, Staff & Guests

Dr. Bense asked the commissioners, staff, and guests to introduce themselves.

Item III. Adoption of Agenda

Dr. Bense asked for a motion to adopt the February 7, 2024, FHC business meeting agenda. Parker Destin moved. Rick Gonzalez seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Item IV. Approval of Minutes from November 3, 2023, Meeting

Dr. Bense asked for a motion to adopt the minutes from the November 3, 2023, FHC business meeting. Frank Terraferma moved. Parker Destin seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Item V. Chairman's Comments

Dr. Bense began by welcoming the new Commission members and providing a brief summary of the Commission's purpose.

Item VI. Director's Comments

Lotane was recognized to provide the Director's comments. Lotane first expressed her appreciation for those who had been able to attend the Union Bank opening. She then discussed the Division's budget, including amounts included in the House and Senate offers for the Special Category grants.

Item VII. Business Items

Dr. Bense recognized Wyllie to discuss current proposed legislation and its effect on historic resources in Florida. She provided Commissioners with information on the Florida Trust for Historic Preservation's plans for advocacy, highlighting their main initiatives.

Dr. Bense recognized Blosser to provide a presentation on the Florida Space Exploration Monument. Blosser indicated that HB 1189 was established in 2023 and, instead of presenting a design and placement, DMS will be presenting a plan that will be due July 1, 2024, to be presented to the governor's office intended to outline prospective locations and associated costs. A selection committee, composed of two staff members from Space Florida; one staff member from DMS; one staff member from the Department of State, Division of Arts and Culture; and an architect, has been selected and is presently working on this plan. A solicitation was executed, per bill requirement, for an art contest, which opened October 27, 2023, and ran through December 31, 2023. The selection committee will have about a month to review 36 submissions and select five proposals that will be considered at a public meeting to select an individual award winner. Commission members expressed their concerns with their involvement in the submission review and selection process, citing concerns based on the outcome of the Holocaust Memorial project, specifically that their expert opinions were not taken into consideration. Blosser advised that his present role is to collect feedback and recommendations, and the overall selection of the finalist will be the responsibility of another committee. Committee members implored Blosser that they would like to be notified as to when they would be able to provide their expert opinion on the Space project and its results.

Bense recognized Arnold to present a request to rename the North Causeway Boat Ramp Park in Fort Pierce, Saint Lucie County, in honor of Senior Investigator Kyle Lee Patterson. Gonzalez moved to accept the request to approve the renaming as presented. Kauffman seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Item VIII. Break (optional)

Bense called for a break at 10:42 a.m. The meeting reconvened at 11:00 a.m.

Item IX. Committee Reports

Secretary of State, Cord Byrd, joined the meeting briefly to express his appreciation for all the work that's being done in the state of Florida. Committee members provided a brief re-introduction of themselves and thanked Secretary Byrd for visiting the meeting.

Dr. Bense recognized Dr. Miyar to provide updates on the Bureau of Archaeological Research (BAR). Dr. Miyar provided an overview of her position as State Archaeologist and of BAR's program areas. Updates were provided on the construction of the new archaeological collections building at Mission San Luis, potential funding for a conservation lab addition to the new building, changes to NAGPRA, underwater research projects, surveys, collaboration with law enforcement, and Archaeological Resource Management (ARM) Training.

Dr. Tomlinson was recognized to provide updates, on behalf of Acosta, for the Bureau of Historic Preservation (BHP). Dr. Tomlinson provided updates on the Certified Local Government (CLG) Program, the federal tax incentives program, National Register, Main Street, Master Site File, and the process of hiring an architect.

Dr. Tomlinson also provided updates on where the Grants Program stands in the current budget offers from the legislature. She discussed upcoming Grant Program deadlines, meetings, and staffing.

John Grandage was recognized to provide Outreach and Construction updates. He discussed state and federal funding for various construction projects at DHR-managed properties and their current statuses. He also discussed upcoming public outreach and events at DHR managed museums and historic sites.

Item X. Other Business

Parker Destin requested the next meeting agenda include a topic addressing what the state at large has planned, if anything, for the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. Alissa Lotane advised this will be added to the agenda.

Item XI. Public Comment

None were given.

Item XII. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 12:50 p.m.

Presiding Officer

State Historic Preservation Officer and
Director, Division of Historical Resources

Approved: _____