

**El Camino Real de los Tejas
National Historic Trail Association
Board of Directors Quarterly Meeting
July 20, 2019
AGE Building, Austin TX**

The meeting was called to order at 10:05 a.m. by John Pruett (substituting for Tom Byrd online). A quorum was present. Board members attending Cindy Freeman, John Pruett, Dave Regan, Tom Byrd (on-line), Chip Briscoe (on-line), Sarah Gould (on-line), Chris Talbot (on-line), Lynn Young (on-line), Rebecca Blankenbaker (on-line), Absent Ellen Riojas Clark (resigned/vacant).

Others in attendance were Steven Gonzales (Executive Director ELCAT), Elaine Sullivan (ELCAT staff), Aaron Mahr (National Park Service), Brad Patterson (Texas Historical Commission), Sarah Paige (Texas Historical Commission).

Minutes of the April 2019 minutes were approved as corrected, paragraph seven resending to rescinding, by unanimous vote. Young¹, Byrd². (Action Item)

Committee Reports:

Finance- Cindy Freeman (Chair), delivered the report and discussion centered around income (5% overhead) from Swisher home and Rancheria Grande grants, and expense of Telecom fees, which is a matter of billing timing. A unanimous vote accepted the Finance Committee report. Young¹, Blankenbaker². (Action Item)

Executive Director's Report (Gonzales)- a detailed report was included in the Board Book.

- a) Annual Meeting Update- the venue will be Apache Pass (Milam County), Friday, October 11 and Saturday, October 12. The event will be hosted by the local Model Trail Community, the Rancheria Grande Chapter of Milam County. While still in planning Friday will be used for meetings, demonstrations, and dedications with the possibility of a Native American ceremony. Saturday will be reserved for tours of historical assets to include Sugarloaf Mountain and the Rancheria Grande. It is anticipated that the traveling exhibit will be completed and on display at Apache Pass. It is also planned that Chris Talbot's photographic exhibition will be on display at the Milam County Museum in Cameron.
- b) ELCAT has received a \$50,000 grant from Colin Corgan to work with GTI Environmental towards the historical research and archaeological investigation of the James Swisher home in south Austin. Swisher was a signer of the Texas Declaration of Independence and part of the Runaway Scrape. The house was established in the 1830s just south of the Colorado River.
- c) Texas A&M – San Antonio Project- Dr. Mike O'Brien, Provost of Texas A&M San Antonio, is interested in giving \$20,000 to ELCAT to support (4) students to perform research on Texas A&M's Espada Tract in southern Bexar County. The tract borders

- Mission Espada. O'Brien would eventually like to see the development of a park and bike/hiking trails on the property. The project could begin as early as this fall.
- d) Selling of historic resources and archaeology reports- The Exec. Director suggested to the board the purchase of multiple copies of the historic resources and archaeological reports for Lobanillo Swales, Rancheria Grande, and Los Corralitos for resale as a money-making opportunity for the association. The Exec. Director explained that the reports do not contain sensitive information such as locational data of archaeological resources, but they do provide substantial historical and archaeological information that the general public will find interesting. A motion was made by Byrd¹, Young², authorizing the Exec. Director to spend \$500.00 toward the purchase of the available Rancheria Grande and Los Corralitos books, with the following requirements to include the property owners' consent relative to privacy and Texas Historical Archaeologist approval for distribution. Motion passed unanimously. **(Action Item)**
 - e) We are down to approximately 1,750 of our association brochures. The Exec. Director suggested that an ad hoc committee be established to work toward the creation of a new brochure for the association. A motion was made to create the ad hoc committee and a new association brochure. Freeman¹, Regan², motion passed unanimously. **(Action Item)** A brochure can be used to raise awareness of the trail, as well as to solicit sponsorships from entities that would be featured with the brochure. The Exec. Director will enlist a student from the Advertising/Graphic Design program at UT or Texas State to work towards the effort (Fall 2019-Spring 2020).
 - f) A written report on the Lobanillo Swales site was included in the Board Book. Of concern were the following anomalies recorded on the game camera: 1) two individuals riding horses along the loop of the trail, 2) feral hogs, 3) visitors walking dogs, 4) children leaving the paved trail, 5) individuals smoking on the trail. A discussion ensued on the satisfaction of visitor statistics, and whether signs are required to prohibit those anomalous activities. Chris Talbot reported no significant damage due to these activities; therefore, it was decided not to place signs, but continue the monitoring at this time.

Staff Report (Elaine Sullivan):

A written report was included in the Board Book. The draft of the exhibit panels is out for review. Sergio and Melinda Iruegas have completed the review, and it is anticipated that other reviews will be completed by the end of July. A second review in mid-August must be completed before sending it to production by the end of August. It is expected to be on display at the Annual Meeting.

Adjourned for lunch- Chip Brisco (on-line) provided a demonstration of LIDAR imagery/software.

Regional Updates:

South Texas (Gonzales)- Gonzales/Mahr Field Trip

TxDOT will keep Parque Alto (Arroyo San Francisco Overlook) in-perpetuity if it is developed. At San Ignacio, Mahr (NPS) presented NPS conceptual plans having minimal development with different considerations and interpretive panels. The site is not a trail, not a historic site but is a scenic landscape view evocative of the Camino's setting on the Rio Grande, "a truly amazing site," easy to develop, and low impact. Patterson (THC) and Mahr discussed phased design with caveats for maintenance (\$50,000 to \$75,000). Local capacity to maintain is lacking; however, a plan will be presented to Zapata County commissioners and TxDOT. Dimmit County signs are on the ground needing AFA with the City, County, and TxDOT. There was a brief discussion of interpretive panels for Laguna Espantosa in Dimmit County.

Goliad/San Antonio (Dave Regan)-

Floresville Hike and Bike Trail is in the Strategic Plan. A kick-off meeting for a Wilson County MTC is planned for August with ten entities interested. The Wilson County Sign plan is completed. TxDOT has signed the Goliad AFA. Signing within San Antonio continues.

Brazos (John Pruet)-

The Milam County sign survey is completed with seven signs that need replacement from either damage or missing. The Milam County MTC (Rancheria Grande Chapter) is engaged in the planning of the Annual Meeting. Travis County signage work continues.

East Texas/Caddo (Gonzales)

Regarding the 2nd phase signage in Nacogdoches County, the old Stone Fort signage is pending SFA campus construction. Morris Jackson is engaged in Nacogdoches developing MTC potential. ELCAT will share the Lobanillo plan (Blankenbaker requested) for Hiking Trails at State Historic site of Los Adeas now administered by Cane River. Freeman asked questions regarding the Mission Tejas center opening.

At Large- No report

NPS (Mahr)-

Three new properties added to the National Historic Register: McKinney Falls, Comal Springs, and Lobanillo Swales. Wilson County signs are ordered. Directional signs for Apache Pass should be in time for the annual ELCAT meeting. The meeting with TXDoT in Austin in May will improve the signage process. A contract has been made for a wayside/interpretive panel at Mission Delores. Lobanillo Swales has been added to the website under places to visit. Frank Morrison has retired from the history team, and Angelica Sanchez-Clark PhD will become the chief historian and is looking to hire a student intern. Expect a letter from NPS in the coming weeks to outline Association priorities for collaboration and shared goals for FY2020. Byrd will

assign an ad hoc committee to work on this. Other NHT's in the works and before congress are Butterfield Stage, Chisholm/Great Wester Cattle, and Route 66.

Texas Historical Commission (Patterson)-

As a result of the tornado, Caddo Mounds is closed to the public. The museum was destroyed. A temporary guest building is being prepared, but the opening date is indefinite. The Texas legislature has appropriated \$2.5 million for rebuilding the museum. Texas Parks and Wildlife with transfer six sites to THC. The legislative session completed strong for THC. The THC is looking for a new vendor for historic markers. The Real Places 2020 annual conference will be held on January 29-31, 2020 at the DoubleTree by Hilton, 6505 N IH 35, in Austin.

UT Architecture School Presentation

Students traveled the entire trail and developed creative ideas for further trail development.

Meeting Adjourned

Minutes Respectfully Submitted

John Pruett