

## **El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail Association**

### **Minutes April 24, 2021**

The quarterly meeting of the El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail Association was called to order via Zoom by President Cindy Freeman at 10:01 AM on April 24, 2021. Participating were Executive Director Steven Gonzales, Board members Cindy Freeman, Dave Regan, Lynn Young, Tom Byrd, John Kusalus, Chip Briscoe, Judge Bob Perkins and Jesse Treviño. A quorum was established. Also participating were Cory Donnelly and Angelica Sanchez-Clark from the National Park Service and Brad Patterson of the Texas Historical Commission.

Judge Perkins made a motion to accept the minutes of the January 16, 2021 meeting as corrected. The motion was seconded by John Kusalus and adopted.

#### **Committee Reports:**

Financials – Dave provided the Finance Committee report. Lynn moved to accept the Financial report as presented. The motion was seconded by John Pruett and adopted.

#### **Administrative Reports**

Executive Director – Steven. Highlights of Steven's reports included:

1. Study-route of the trail between Menchaca Springs and McKinney Falls State Park, which crosses through Onion Creek Metropolitan Park (OCMP). As part of the effort, and in order to determine the link of OCMP to the National Historic Trail, a Community Activated Parks Project (CAPP) has been initiated with The City of Austin Parks and Recreation Department (PARC) to conduct historic and archaeological research within the park. The estimated cost of the project is \$84,996, which includes an 8% administrative fee (\$6,799.68) that ElCaT will capture for overseeing the project. ElCaT has received a \$25,000 donation from Colin Corgan and The Corgan Family Fund towards the effort. Grant proposals have been submitted to: NPS – Challenge Cost Share grant program (\$25,000) and HEB (up to the remaining balance of the cost of the project.) ElCaT member and volunteer, Brian Beattie, is also working to raise funds through donations from members of the artistic and musical community in Austin and other potential donors.

Also working with GTI Environmental, LLC and PARC to obtain an Antiquities Permit from the Texas Historical Commission to conduct the archaeological work at the site.

2. PNTS Central Texas MTC Outreach Grant

A \$9,285 grant has been awarded by the Partnership for the National Trails System to provide funding for an intern to help coordinate the Model Trail Community outreach events in Central Texas. The effort will focus on the San Antonio to Austin trail corridor and seek to establish a chapter in each community, in addition to New Braunfels and San Marcos.

3. Trail Outreach Activities - Guided hikes are being offered to generate interest. The first occurred on the Floresville Hike and Bike Trail on March 27<sup>th</sup>. Other hikes are scheduled for April 17<sup>th</sup> at the Lobanillo Swales; May 15<sup>th</sup> at the Medina River

Greenway (Paso de Dolores) in San Antonio; and June 5<sup>th</sup> in Austin for National Trails Day. We will also have a table at Lobanillo on May 8<sup>th</sup> for The Sale on the Trail.

4. National Trails Day Events. Steven is working with Brian Beattie to conduct a National Trails Day event at either McKinney Falls State Park or Onion Creek Metropolitan Park to conduct a guided hike, while promoting the National Historic Trail and MTC outreach for the Association. Brian is also looking into the possibility of debuting a portion of his artistic “cranky” musical performance during the activity.
5. ElCaT Traveling Exhibit. The traveling exhibit is available for display in museums and other appropriate venues. Titled, *El Camino Real de los Tejas: Its History, People, and Places* the exhibit has three themes that focus on: 1) Cattle Drives along the Camino in support of the American Revolution, 2) Settlement patterns along the trail, and 3) How to see and experience the trail today. More information about the exhibit, including costs, policies, and guidelines can be seen here: <https://www.elcaminorealdelestejas.org/travel-the-rail/camino-real-traveling-exhibit/>
6. Travis Audubon’s Blair Woods nominated as Certified Trail Site.  

The Association has recently submitted its historic resources and archaeological report on Fort Colorado to the NPS- NTIR and recommended that the Travis Audubon’s Blair Woods site be officially certified as part of the National Historic Trail.
7. Lobanillo Erosional Controls  

S & S rails are performing the erosional control work on the hiking trail at Lobanillo. The National Park Foundation provided a \$10,000 grant for the effort and Sabine County and other partners in the area will be providing an equivalent in matching funds for the project.
8. Two new computers, a printer, and a new monitor for the office have been purchased as well as software and needed licenses. Appreciation was expressed to the board members who contributed to purchase the equipment.

The meeting recessed briefly from 11:30 – 11:38.

## **New Business**

### **Committee Discussion**

Strategic Planning Committee (John Kusalus) Preliminary discussions have been held and a virtual meeting of the committee will be scheduled.

Development Committee – (Jesse Treviño) Funds are needed to fulfill the scope of work and mission. Possibilities include an annual fundraising event, such as a (Banquet, potential donor funding to hire an event planner, lobbying for federal funding and educational tools. He met with Rep. Richard Raymond (Laredo) who serves on the State Affairs Committee. While it is too late for state funding for this session, we could work with TXDOT districts for funding. There are about 95-97 signs on TXDOT ROW. Budgetary requests should be submitted prior to the next

session. Jesse asked that Judge Perkins and Chip Briscoe serve on the Committee. Judge Perkins cannot directly solicit funds.

Austin Annual Meeting (Tom Byrd) – The dining hall at McKinney Falls State Park Friday is reserved for Oct 22<sup>nd</sup>. A field trip will be planned for Saturday. A discussion followed regarding holding the annual conference in the spring as it may be helpful to hold a fundraiser during legislative session and invite the elected officials. Jesse advised that Representative Raymon asked for a map of ELCAT and state representatives along the route so he can introduce a resolution.

### **MTC Reports**

- MTC Task Force logo recommendations. 1. Lynn moved to adopt recommendations as presented and the motion was seconded by John Kisalus. Following discussion, the motion was amended to approve it if acceptable to NPS. Dave will send the task force report and images to Aaron Mahr and Steven.
- Floresville MTC – (Dave Regan) interpretive panels are being reviewed for installation in the Falls. One damaged sign was replaced. Pursuing designation of trail within the park and interpretive panels. Discussion of certifying site. Helton Park trail is 1 mile long.
- Rancheria Grande (John Pruet) – meetings have been held online. Steven was a guest at the last meeting. The next meeting is May 6<sup>th</sup>. Interpretative panels are being shipped to Apache Pass.

### **Regional and At-Large Reports**

- South Texas (Chip Briscoe) provided updates on the TXDOT overlook construction and signage; Steven is hopeful we can expand footprint of area to become larger park experience. Potential funding may be available through the Land and Water Conservation Fund.
- Caddo – Steven reported new signage in Sabine and Natchitoches Parishes. Fort St. John Baptiste interested in hosting an exhibit in the future. Cindy met with Tony Sudder at Caddo Mounds. May be able to connect Caddo Mounds with Mission Tejas.
- Brazos Region – John Pruet – a conference call was held April 12, 2021, to discuss the potential acquisition of Sugarloaf Mountain property for future trail development.

National Park Service Update – Angelica Sanchez-Clark (Historian) and Cary Donnelly, (landscape architect). A new task agreement is being drafted for 2021-2022. The current agreement was recently modified to extend to September 2022. Working on cooperative workshop with trail from Mexico. (Dos Caminos initiative); virtual meeting with SARA and ELCA and NTIR. Angelica Sanchez-Clark provided a link for Bird Day: Environment for the Americas: <http://birdday.org/> and <https://parkplanning.nps.gov/pike> link to birding.

- Zebulon Pike NHT feasibility study worked with GTI for portion through Texas and LA. Upcoming virtual public meetings for public input; link to Pike planning website; Steven

is on the board of Nation Trails partnership (PNTS) and they are interested in commenting on it. Feasibility study on Chisholm Trail has been submitted to Congress and he anticipates legislation to be introduced for designation this Congress – also Butterfield and Route 66 trails.

- Caddo Mounds signage has been ordered; waiting for approval for Travis County signage. She will add Sabine County to list.
- asset Inventory – move recorded trail assets into the survey 123 application.
- Mobile app NTIR digital media champion Em Kessler Hoerner [emily\\_hoerner@nps.gov](mailto:emily_hoerner@nps.gov) provided a link to the NPS mobile app:  
<https://www.nps.gov/elte/learn/photosmultimedia/mobile-tours-and-apps.htm>

Brad Patterson of the Texas Historical Commission advised that Mission Dolores in San Augustine should reopen soon.

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Judge Perkins and seconded by Jesse Trevino. The meeting was adjourned at 12:58 PM.

Lynn Young

Secretary