

MINUTES
TEXAS HISTORICAL RECORDS ADVISORY BOARD
July 21, 2020

The Texas Historical Records Advisory Board (THRAB) meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. on July 21, 2020. Due to Governor Greg Abbott's March 13, 2020 proclamation of a state of disaster affecting all counties in Texas due to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) and the Governor's March 16, 2020 suspension of certain provisions of the Texas Open Meetings Act, the meeting was held by video webinar, as authorized under Texas Government Code §551.127.

Members of the public had access and a means to participate in this meeting, by two-way communication and could register for the webinar by visiting: <https://zoom.us/s/94368079900>. Due to technical issues a recording of the meeting failed.

Members Present: Jelain Chubb, coordinator; Linda Barrett, Malinda Cowen, Phyllis Earles, Teri Flack, Melissa Gonzales, Kristy Sorensen, and Leslie Stapleton

Members Absent: Bob Glenn

Also Present: Mark Smith, Director and Librarian, Texas State Library and Archives Commission, and Daniel Stokes, Director for State Programs, National Historical Publications and Records Commission

1. Welcome and introductions

Jelain Chubb welcomed those present and stated that Mark Smith, Director and Librarian, Texas State Library and Archives Commission, would be providing a report under agenda item five. She introduced Daniel Stokes, Director for State Programs at the National Historical Publications and Records Commission, and thanked him for joining the meeting to learn more about THRAB's activities.

2. Roll call for members and establishment of quorum

Chubb called the roll. All members present except Bob Glenn who has retired from the board. Governor Abbott has not yet named his replacement.

3. Approve minutes of February 24, 2020

Kristy Sorensen moved to approve the minutes and Melissa Gonzales seconded the motion. The board voted unanimously to approve the minutes with minor corrections.

4. Public comment

None.

5. Discussion of impact of COVID-19 on archives in Texas

Chubb provided a summary of the current impact of the pandemic. Most archives and libraries in Texas remained closed to the public. TSLAC is the only archives in Austin that is open for research and that is by appointment only. She has reached out to the General Land Office, Austin History Center and Briscoe Center; while none has plans to reopen at this time all are developing reopening plans. It appears that most repositories are trying to respond to research requests remotely, but they are limited to online resources if staff are not permitted in the facilities. Board members shared similar information from their institutions.

Chubb noted that TSLAC has limited the number of staff in the building and has shared its reopening and material handling protocols with other local and national repositories. TSLAC will continue to update its procedures and policies as new information and research is available.

6. Review and comment on Texas State Library and Archives Commission's FY 2021-2025 Strategic Plan for the State Archives

Chubb reminded the board that one of the requirements from the 86th legislative session was for TSLAC to develop a five-year strategic plan for the state archives with an emphasis on addressing the backlog of records needing appraisal and processing. Members were provided with a copy of the draft plan for FY2021 through FY2025 in advance of the meeting and Chubb provided a summary of key points. TSLAC has requested the board's review and comments on the draft provided.

Members discussed the plan at length and noted that the board discussed many of the challenges TSLAC faces at the February meeting. Chubb answered questions about the rate of incoming electronic records and the increasing demand for digital surrogates. Chubb also discussed how priorities for processing will be established. Chubb reiterated additional storage for the archives is a critical issue. Linda Barrett stated that the plan was comprehensive and well-thought-out. Members concurred. The board thanked Chubb and TSLAC for seeking THRAB's input and other members concurred. Mark Smith thanked THRAB for its review and continued support of TSLAC's efforts.

7. Update on Texas State Library and Archives Commission's FY2022-2023 Legislative Appropriation Request

Chubb invited Smith to provide a summary of TSLAC's budget request for the next biennium. The agency is still waiting to receive budget instructions from the Legislative Budget Board (LBB). Smith discussed the required five percent budget cut the agency took in the spring and the likelihood of further reductions, however until the LBB issues the instructions it is unknown how deep the cuts might be. For now, the agency still intends to submit a list of exceptional items for the legislature's consideration. These will include: \$1.4 million for design costs for an addition to the State Records Center which will provide increased archives and records storage; \$25.2 million for construction of the addition; and \$250,000 to fund two FTE positions to help address the archives backlog. Smith answered members' questions and the board thanked him for the update.

8. Discussion of the 2020 State Board Programming Grant activities

Chubb summarized the THRAB programs supported by the 2020 NHPRC grant funding.

- In late February, the board supported the session, "Giving Voice: The Texas Disability History Collection" at the 2020 TSHA conference in Austin. In addition, THRAB hosted a booth in the exhibition hall during the conference.
- Due to the pandemic judging for Texas History Day and the award ceremonies were all online on April 25. The THRAB award recipients were: Lily Coffman (Senior Individual Documentary Category) from Waco High School for "Sandtown Erased: How Geographic and Cultural Barriers Were Broken by Urban Renewal" and Colton Payne (Junior

Individual Documentary Category) from Santa Fe Jr. High School for “Barbara Jordan: Breaking Racial and Gender Barriers - Equality for All; Privileges for None.”

- Due to the pandemic the archives bazaars scheduled for 2020 were cancelled or postponed. THRAB will evaluate participation in rescheduled events during the grant period.
- The TARO workshops are on hold due to the pandemic.
- The board is contracting with the American Association of State and Local History (AASLH) to offer free registrations for 30 participants for the Basics of Archives course offered by the AASLH. The online course runs from September 14-October 18.

Chubb will submit the required interim report to NHPRC by July 30 and a request to extend the current grant though June 30, 2021. This will allow the board to complete projects delayed by the pandemic.

Chubb invited Dan Stokes to provide feedback on THRAB’s progress and to ask questions. Stokes commended THRAB on its programs and progress over the years. He noted that Texas has one of the most active state boards and that he appreciates the detail provided in the minutes, especially its discussion of archival issues around the state. Members asked about how other boards are dealing with the pandemic. Stokes replied that other boards are having the same issues completing projects and are seeking extensions of grants.

9. Discussion of 2021 State Board Planning Grant application

Chubb reviewed the recently submitted 2021 application with the board. She noted that in light of the extension request for the 2020 grant, the new grant has a start date of July 1 ,2021. This grant will continue the TARO, Basics of Archives, and disaster planning workshops, as well as support for History Day, archives bazaars around the state, and Archives Month. The board thanked Chubb for her work on the application.

10. Discussion of future meetings dates and locations

Chubb noted that the board had expressed a desire for the October meeting to be held at the Lavaca County Archives. This is not likely if the pandemic is still going on. If it is, then another virtual meeting will be necessary.

11. Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 12:48 p.m.

Approved, October 23, 2020.