

Walker County Historic Preservation Commission

Monday, July 18, 2022

Lafayette-Walker County Public Library

305 South Duke Street, Lafayette, GA, 30728

Chairman Culpepper called the meeting to order at 6:10 pm. Note June meeting was cancelled due to health issues and summer travel obligations.

Notice of meeting was sent to the Walker County Messenger, Walker County Government FB page, and posted at meeting location.

A quorum was established, and the commissioners introduced themselves. Chairman John Culpepper, Vice Chair Alan Slaven, Secretary Renee Griffin, Randall Pittman, Theresa Dorsey, and Frances Cobb were present. Patrick Cook was absent.

Visitors- Historic Preservation Commission of Lafayette member Ron Underwood spoke about the Chattooga academy and its current state of disrepair. David Boyle agreed to care for the museum part of the academy, but the city owns the building. The building was sealed 3 months ago. The plaster is in disrepair due to moisture from the handmade brick not being sealed in a timely manner. The front and back entrance are suffering from moisture disrepair. Window sashes and bottom seals are rotting on upstairs windows. There is concern that the disrepair could lead to a lack of grant compliance on the Chattooga Academy. Chairman Culpepper advised the Georgia Civil War Commission may be able to provide 4K in funding if requested by the city of Lafayette. Total cost of renovation is currently sitting at 50k.

Commissioner Pittman moved to approve agenda as amended to include the Women's Veteran Appreciation program. Vice Chair Slaven seconded, and motion passed.

Vice Chair Slaven moved to approve the minutes of the previous meeting. Commissioner Dorsey seconded, and motion carried.

Old Business:

Commission letterhead has been centered and formatted in an approved manner and still a work in progress.

Commissioners attended Lafayette High School Honors Night to present a certificate of appreciation to Hope Tomlin for her artwork design to be used as the commission logo on all official correspondence. Theresa Dorsey, Frances Cobb, Renee Griffin, Alan Slaven, and John Culpepper were in attendance.

Commissioner Dorsey will have draft next month on Walker County historical educational guide.

Vice Chair Slaven had a review on the proposed Durham sign and will have a rough draft next month.

Dedication ceremony for the restored Young Family Cemetery located in West Armuchee Valley was held on June 4, 2022, with commissioners Alan Slaven, John Culpepper, Randall Pittman in attendance. 45 total attendees present at the dedication. After many years, Confederate Colonel Frances Little and Lieutenant Robert Little now have proper headstones. They laid in unmarked graves since 1863, 1868,

respectively. Commission Chairman John Culpepper wanted to do this in honor of Gary Brooks, Historian for the Private John Ingraham Camp, Sons of Confederate Veterans in Chickamauga for his dedication to identifying the location of over 800 Confederate Veterans buried in Walker County. Also, the pioneer settlers of West Armuchee Valley and Confederate Veterans buried in the cemetery.

Commissioners Randall Pittman, John Culpepper, Theresa Dorsey, Renee Griffin, and Frances Cobb attended the premiere exhibit of the Walker County African American Museum and Cultural Center, "Buildings We Built" on June 25, 2022. The exhibit highlighted local photography and local artist renderings of African American buildings across the county. Attendance was very high with much community participation and support.

June 20, 2022, Commissioners Renee Griffin, Alan Slaven, and Randall Pittman attended American Legion Post 339 Women's Veteran Appreciation Day ceremony. An official proclamation was made by the City of Lafayette Mayor Andy Arnold and all women veterans present were recognized for their valor and dedication.

New business:

A follow up letter was sent to Chairman Whitfield regarding the commission tour of Oak Grove School. Randall Pittman, Theresa Dorsey, Renee Griffin, Alan Slaven, and John Culpepper toured the school. Concerns were expressed about steps, open well and foundation wooden blocks are also deteriorating.

Chairman Culpepper wished to appoint Commissioner Pittman as the Official Liaison to Walker County Government for the Commission with the authority to act within the best interest of Commission. Commissioner Cobb moved, and Secretary Griffin seconded. Commissioner Pittman removed himself from the vote. Motion carried unanimously.

Theresa Dorsey, Frances Cobb, Alan Slaven, Randall Pittman, and John Culpepper attended the Walker County Commissioner's meeting July 14, 2022, concerning the condition of the Court House. Chairman Whitfield advised four million is available from SPLOST funds to repair the courthouse and various county facilities. Vice Chair Slaven was curious about a work schedule, Chairman Whitfield explained that due to State Court being held in the facility at various times it was difficult to renovate the building as the contractor could not work with court being in session. With the completion of the Court Annex building being completed in a few weeks, State Court can be held there, the county can then start the renovation. Commissioner Dorsey gave briefing of commission report.

Commissioners Randall Pittman and John Culpepper repaired and replaced the Civil War Interpretive Sign at Bailey's Crossroads that had been damaged by a car.

Chairman Culpepper advised that he and John Logan, Grants Coordinator for Walker County had been in contact with each other concerning a grant for an updated Historic Resource Survey for Walker County, this must be completed before the County can regain its status as a Certified Local Government Last survey completed for Walker County was in 2012.

Chairman Culpepper reviewed the 2021 National Park Service Economic Benefit Impact Survey for the Chickamauga -Chattanooga National Military Park. The study shows that the park had 945,390 visitors that spent 61,521,000 in communities near the park, which supported 881 jobs in the local area, and had a cumulative benefit to the local economy of 78,685,000. Chairman Culpepper stated that the

battlefield was a great economic engine for the Walker County Gateway Communities to the battlefield, Chickamauga, Lafayette, and Rossville.

The Commission is going to develop a 12-month Activity Report that will be submitted to the Walker County Board of Commissioners and the General Public. There will be a Commission Work Session for the report on August 1, 2022, at the Lafayette Public Library. Public will be notified of Work Session

Commissioner Pittman suggested taking field trips to different historic locations in the county to learn more about the history each location. Discussion on field trips will be discussed at future meetings.

August 15, 2022, meeting of the Commission will be at the Gordon-Lee Mansion Chapel, 217 Cove Road, Chickamauga with a tour of Mansion after the meeting.

Commissioner Pittman moved to adjourn, and Vice Chair Slaven seconded. Motion carried and meeting adjourned at 7:50pm.