

Walker County Historic Preservation Commission

Lafayette-Walker County Public Library

April 17, 2023

6 pm

Chairman Culpepper called meeting to order at 6:05 pm

Public Notice of Meeting was emailed to the Walker County Facebook page, the Walker County Messenger(4/10/23) and posted at the Lafayette- Walker County Library.

Chairman John Culpepper ,Vice Chairman Alan Slaven, Secretary Renee Griffin, Commissioners Frances Cobb, Theresa Dorsey, and Randall Pittman were all present at the beginning of the meeting with Commissioner Eddie Upshaw arriving later. Introductions were made to all present. and a quorum was established.

Visitors: Heather Lynn Kitchens. Gina Pittman, Keith Thomas, Dale Powell, Leon East, Jen Carson, Elias Carson, and Doug Carson

Public information: Heather Kitchens shared information about the Oak Hill School. Her mother's family bible was filled with documents about her family, her granddaughter, Mary Hatfield Phillips was the first School Teacher. Jesse Hatfield taught at the school from 1904- 1917.

Doug Carson gave a presentation on James J. Andrew's Raiders, who highjacked the Civil War Locomotive the " General" in Big Shanty, Ga. (Marietta) with the intention of destroying tracks, telegraph lines, and bridges between there and Chattanooga. Due to the close pursuit of Confederates, they ran out of steam and wood north of Ringgold and abandoned the train on foot with hopes of escaping to Union lines. Six of the Raiders came through Walker County and were subsequently captured, one was temporarily held in the Walker Jail in Lafayette. He gave a riveting presentation on the man hunt.

Vice Chair Slaven shared his own family history with Andrew's Raiders. Samuel Slaven was one of the twenty-two men that volunteered for the raid that were in Ohio Infantry Regiments. He and six fellow soldiers along with Andrews, a civilian spy, were captured, executed and buried in the Chattanooga National Cemetery. The seven men were posthumously awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor, Andrews did not qualify as he was a civilian. The remaining raiders also were awarded the medal, the first recipients in the nation's history.

Commissioner Dorsey moved to accept the agenda as presented and Commissioner Upshaw seconded. Motion carried.

Commissioner Pittman moved to approve the minutes of the April 17, 2023, meeting and Commissioner Upshaw seconded. Motion carried.

Old business:

Funding update for proposed wayside markers, waiting for update. Chairman Culpepper advised when he was developing the Chickamauga Campaign Heritage Trail , several wayside makers were funded by the private sector, the commission may want to pursue this for additional markers.

Status Report Courthouse Renovations Project- non currently.

Fort Cumming report- Secretary Griffin reported that it was a very transient facility with limited documented history.

Status report on adding current Walker County Wayside Marker Walker County Tourism website- Joe Legge is going to see how to convert the DVD collection to Walker Rocks website.

List of desired Interpretive signs:

- Estelle Iron Ore Mines and Cemetery
- Wright's Mineral Springs Summer Resort
- Walker County Rosenwald Schools
- Oak Hill log cabin school
- McLemore Cove, Daugherty Plantation, Civil War History, Native American History
- Oak Grove School

New Business:

Walker County Historical Society Meeting April 30, 2023m at 3pm at Marsh House about the Wright's Mineral Springs Resort. The members and public are invited to share any history or documents they have about the resort.

Chairman Culpepper presented the text and graphics for the Estelle Mines and Cemetery Wayside Marker

Commissioners Dorsey and Frances Cobb reported on Wright's Mineral Springs Resort. Theresa Dorsey is meeting with Beverly Foster about the Rosenwald schools. Commissioner Pittman updated on the Oak Hill school. McLemore update from Chairman Culpepper. He has completed his research on Native American history, the Daugherty Plantation, and the Civil War history. He is gathering additional history on John P. Gatewood that operated out of the cove, a psychotic bushwhacker that killed one of Commissioner Frances Cobb's ancestors in addition to many more during the Civil War.

Beginning discussions and information gathering about the Old Walker County Home (Poorhouse)- will make a good interpretive sign. New home was built using bricks from old court house, possibly named Aims House.

Commissioner update- Theresa Dorsey reported the repairs scheduled for the Chattooga Academy. She will be accompanying the 4th grade of North Lafayette Elementary on a Marsh House field trip. Randall Pittman updated about an abandoned church on Moon Lake Rd. Commissioner Stultz said the property had been pulled from tax rolls because of extensive back taxes. Randall Pittman spoke to Commissioner Askew about access to the Oak Grove School. Oak Hill School Update-Randall Pittman will speak to people in the area about where to move the school. Representative Mike Cameron is reviewing bylaws to see that the Commission is in compliance with state rules. Battle of Davis Crossroads Signs at the foot of Pigeon Mountain are in disrepair and are not legible. They are sun-bleached and cannot be read. Alan

Slaven suggested creating a brochure to be available at the new resort, McLemore. Renee Griffin suggested postcards as well. Jen Martin is putting information about the 160th anniversary Battle of Chickamauga reenactment in the Walker Rocks Chamber of Commerce Press Releases. Renee Griffin encouraged her fellow commissioners to choose a person from the Chickamauga battle history to interpret for educational purposes during the reenactment.

Next meeting will be May 15th, at the Lafayette-Walker County Library at 6pm.

Eddie Upshaw moved to adjourn, and Theresa Dorsey seconded. Motion carried and meeting adjourned at 8:07pm.