

Historical Advisory Committee (HAC)

Minutes January 11, 2023

Meeting held at Centennial Park Recreation Center

Committee Members

Present

Not Present

Dianne Munson

Dianne Munson

Valerie Colbert

Theresa Murtha

Theresa Murtha

Pat Spence

Pat Spence

Valerie Colbert

Clare Riggs

Clare Riggs

Stephen Valdes

Stephen Valdes

BOCC Liaison:

Commissioner Stephen R. Deutsch

Libraries & History Staff

Jennifer Zobelein

9:00 a.m. Roll Call

Approval of September Minutes

Roll call: All present except Valerie Colbert

Minute Approval: Dianne mentions they are approved

Post-Hurricane Ian Review

Jennifer gives an update on the county's resources and how everything fared:

Historical Structures:

- The Bunk House and the Cookie House are both intact except for the Cookie House having a partially broken window.

- Cookie House will be opened for tours starting January 20th, every Friday until March 31, 2023.

Historical Markers

- 4 were lost: 1) Hotel Punta Gorda 2) Hickory Bluff Pioneers 3) Howard Homestead in PG 4) Trinity United Methodist Church in PG
- Jennifer mentions the Hotel Punta Gorda got cleaved off and the sign is completely gone. Howard Homestead is also completely severed. Stephen says it could be welded.
- There are some that are intact, but need to be re-planted: 1) Charlotte Harbor Cemetery 2) Hickory Bluff Cemetery 3) Carl Bailey Cemetery 4) Town of McCall
- McCall was completely uprooted and is laying on the ground
- Everything else is intact. Jennifer says that overall, we did well.

Stephen asks about the status of the ones on the water. Jennifer says she does not know. She says the Bunk House Marker is intact despite being so close to the McCall sign. Theresa asks what we can do to help and if there is money needed. Jennifer says it's her understanding that anything affected by the storm is covered by insurance. Theresa and Dianne ask about the timeline for repairs. Theresa asks if there is a temporary solution. Commissioner Deutsch talks about reimbursement process and that, for example, debris removal cost is about \$100 million and FEMA will reimburse 75% of that. After the State's allotment, the county is responsible for about 12.5%. He also says it's 2.5 times worse than Hurricane Charley.

Theresa is concerned that it may take years to get markers fixed. She proposes some kind of temporary signage. Clare asks about the safety of the signs and if they are in storage. Jennifer says they are untouched. Commissioner Deutsch stresses that people don't understand the severity of the damage the county sustained: we lost 3 fire stations, Mid-County Library, a utility building and much more. We have to prioritize what needs to be fixed first. He says the only thing salvageable at the Cultural Center is the library. Clare asks if we can take a tour of the damaged markers during the next meeting. Theresa says we should visit on our own time and keep the meeting. Theresa mentions that the Howard property is on land that belonged to Bucky McCoy and wonders if any private interests would help. Commissioner Deutsch says we have to prioritize and that things like stop signs, street signs, and school area signage come first. He also says that part of it is a staffing issue and we only have so many people and hours. He says we were as prepared as we could have been and what the county and community has been able to do is amazing. He mentions that every church helped out by feeding people, and we actually had more food than we could give out. He says Ian

was the 3rd worst hurricane in the history of the United States. Theresa says that hurricanes are cyclical.

Dianne asks for information on houses that were demolished. Jennifer says that if Community Development has any demo permits, they are sent to us. They haven't sent us anything. Dianne asks for a contact name and she will follow-up. Jennifer says it only comes to us if there is a historical issue involved, for example, if it was a 1930 house built in El Jobean. We would not get it for a 1960 house that has been updated 5 times. We're not going to get everything, but Jennifer says she can ask. Pat says if it was demolished by the storm, it's gone.

Dianne asks how everyone fared from the hurricane. Commissioner Deutsch says the carports went first. He says we are lucky we didn't get the surge like south of us. Stephen talks about his boat. Pat talks about the flooding at her house.

The Tourism website:

- Clare spoke to them and they are willing to put up whatever we desire, we just have to decide how and what information to put up. Are we going to spotlight one area a month or are we just going to have a list? Dianne asks for the website address. It is pureflorida.com. She will bring a sample template to the next meeting. Dianne asks her to email it to the members before the next meeting and she agrees to. Commissioner Deutsch says Tourism has been expanding and the dollars are primarily for marketing. If we keep stressing the places of historical significance, we will get the help because they have the money to do it. Clare says we just have to provide the information to them.

Finalization of the Chadwick Beach Marker:

- Dianne says we don't have the wording of what we want it to say. Theresa says Jennifer was going to get some of the needed information.

Stephen asks Commissioner Deutsch about the area around Sunseeker being an Indian Village at one time. Theresa answers that it was an Indian Mound previously. Stephen wonders if we could bring Sunseeker in to help with funds for a historic project. Commissioner Deutsch says he knows someone at the county who he can talk to about it. Theresa asks where it was, and Jennifer gives an approximate location to where the mound was. Theresa wonders if Sunseeker would get involved. Jennifer clarifies that the marker there is for the mound. Theresa adds that the pioneers settled all over that area. Clare mentions Jeff Berg from Sales and Marketing and she will reach out to him.

Meeting Adjourned. Next meeting on Wednesday, February 8 at Port Charlotte Library