



HARRIS COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION BYLAWS

Revised November 10, 2012

Approved by Harris County Commissioners Court, June 25, 2013

PROPOSED CHANGES AS OF MAY 28, 2021

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ARTICLE I. GENERAL

These bylaws constitute the code of rules for the regulation and management of the affairs of the Harris County Historical Commission (HCHC). This document supersedes all previously approved HCHC bylaws and amendments.

ARTICLE II. PURPOSE AND POLICY

HCHC is appointed by Harris County Commissioners Court (HCCC) for the purpose of initiating and conducting programs suggested by HCCC and the Texas Historical Commission (THC) for the preservation of Harris County's historic cultural resources.

HCHC shall conform to the requirements of Chapter 318 (Historic Preservation by Counties) of the Texas Local Government Code (TLGC), as amended, and current THC requirements and guidelines for County Historical Commissions, as described on the THC website and/or other THC publications.

HCHC's overall purpose should not duplicate or replace other Harris County historical organizations and/or activities. Its mission is to provide a unified and effective voice to preserve, protect, and promote Harris County history and historical locations, and to that end, HCHC shall:

- a) Review and process applications for THC subject markers, Recorded Texas Historic Landmark (RTHL) designations, and Historic Texas Cemetery (HTC) markers and designations, as outlined by THC.
- b) Create and maintain a Harris County marker program (Article X, Section 6), as a companion and alternative to the THC marker program, for the purpose of honoring historical topics of primarily local interest. This program may employ a combination of metal county markers and illustrated interpretive panels.
- c) Maintain an inventory of all historically relevant markers and monuments, as defined by HCHC, within Harris County; and make this inventory publicly accessible, including by distribution through technological options such as the HCHC website.
- d) Identify existing THC or Harris County historical markers in Harris County that are in need of repair or restoration, and effect such repairs or restoration as needed.
- e) Seek to identify and promote the development of underrepresented or other worthy marker subjects.
- f) Create countywide awareness and appreciation of historic preservation, its

benefits and uses.

- g) Support and promote the interests and appreciation of Harris County and Texas history, the programs of THC, and, whenever possible, other associated agencies and organizations.
- h) Prepare and issue comments and replies to National Historic Preservation Act Section 106 inquiries addressed to HCHC or referred to it by proper authority.
- i) Prepare and issue statements of findings and render advisory opinions on rehabilitation/ repurposing projects contemplated by developers, for Public Works and Engineering, City Comptroller, County Judge or Commissioners, or other lawful public authority inquiring about the historical significance of selected structures and tax credits for performing work on the same.
- j) Make recommendations to HCCC for the acquisition or improvement of property, real or personal, which is of historical significance, in compliance with the state laws pertaining to historical preservation in Texas.
- k) Accept as custodian, upon approval of HCCC and when feasible, documents, artifacts and other museum objects, and assure that such are received by a proper depository.
- l) Perform other county functions as authorized by TLGC Chapter 318, the applicable rules described in Texas Administrative Code Title 13, Part 2, Texas Historical Commission, and all other applicable THC, state, and federal programs and regulations pertaining to same.

ARTICLE III. FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION AND COUNTY INVOLVEMENT

HCHC is funded by HCCC pursuant to TLGC Section 318.009 (Fiscal and Human Resources). HCHC may request that HCCC, make payment for purposes set out in Section 318.009 as follows:

- a) Erect, maintain, restore, and/or replace historical markers and monuments.
- b) Purchase objects and collections of objects that are historically significant to the county.
- c) Prepare, publish, and disseminate, by sale or otherwise, the history of the county.
- d) Hire professional staff and consultants.
- e) Provide matching funds for grants.
- f) Fund other programs or activities as suggested by THC and HCCC.

Funds may also be used to reimburse approved expenses that are incurred by HCHC officers or members for to HCHC projects or historical projects, as allowed by state and

federal laws, THC regulations, and HCHC bylaws.

Funds allocated for HCHC use shall reside within the Harris County treasury subject to disbursement as authorized by HCCC or its Precincts. Invoices for HCHC projects or historical projects must first be approved by the HCHC Chair or Acting Chair before being presented to the County Judge's office or Precinct Budget Director for payment. At the discretion of HCCC, funds may be distributed to HCHC in the form of an annual budget and administered by HCHC in accordance with TLGC Section 318.009.

Moved this text to new Budget Committee (Article X, Section 2).

~~The Executive Committee shall prepare an annual budget with input from the members.~~

~~The Vice Chair shall present a financial report at each quarterly meeting, as well as an annual report at the first quarterly meeting following the close of the fiscal year. Said reports shall include recent expenses, remaining annual allocation, and planned expenses.~~

Any nonprofit organization established as an HCHC support group shall be a separate entity. If HCHC is affiliated with a nonprofit organization, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) shall be established defining the relationship and the role of each organization. The MOU must be reviewed by the office of the Harris County Judge, and approved by HCCC and the HCHC Executive Committee.

ARTICLE IV. MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Eligibility. HCHC members must broadly reflect the age, ethnic, and geographic diversity of Harris County. Members must maintain an interest in historic preservation and an understanding of local history and resources, including preservation trends and issues on local, state, and national levels. HCCC appoints the members of HCHC, taking into consideration the balance of backgrounds and skills, as described in TLGC Section 318.003 (Composition; Term) and recommendations of the HCHC Executive Committee. All members shall serve without remuneration.

Section 2. Term of Office. Members shall be appointed in January of odd-numbered years for a two-year term and serve until their successors take office. In the event of vacancy, interim appointments shall serve for the remainder of the unexpired term.

Section 3. Number of Members. HCHC membership shall be thirty-five (35) voting members, and per TLGC Section 318.003, membership must be comprised of at least

seven (7) residents of Harris County. The position of any voting member resigning or not accepting reappointment shall be filled within the TLGC Section 318 guidelines to achieve a representative balance from throughout Harris County.

Section 4. Emeritus Members. A voting member who has made significant contributions to HCHC and is unable, for any reason, to continue as an active member may be designated as an Emeritus member. Emeritus members are recommended by the HCHC Executive Committee and appointed by HCCC. Emeritus members are not subject to attendance rules, are not counted toward the membership total, and have no voting status.

Section 5. Advisory Members. This type of membership consists of individuals with an interest in or impact on the preservation efforts of Harris County and other HCHC activities. Advisory members may include individuals who have a particular expertise in various preservation and/or other HCHC endeavors. Advisory members are recommended by the HCHC Executive Committee and appointed by HCCC. Advisory members are not subject to attendance rules, are not counted toward the membership total, and have no voting status. Individuals are appointed for two-year terms.

Section 6. Active Participation. Every member of HCHC is encouraged to be an active participant by attendance at meetings and seeking out means to participate in the various activities of HCHC. In particular, each member is strongly encouraged to attend most marker dedication ceremonies and to take an active part in promoting, mentoring, researching, documenting, writing, or seeking the financing of at least one possible marker subject during each two-year term.

Further, members are encouraged to engage the general public in historical conversation and to perform some reading of recent publications on relevant history and preservation. Each member accepting HCHC appointment is expected to commit at least one hundred (100) volunteer hours each year to HCHC activities.

In that the HCHC is appointed for the purpose of initiating and conducting programs suggested by HCCC and THC, members are encouraged to attend THC's annual conference and/or other THC-sponsored events.

Inasmuch as THC requires all correspondence and marker applications to be submitted electronically, all HCHC members are highly encouraged to actively maintain and use an e-mail account.

Section 7. Attendance. Members are urged to attend all meetings. Proxy or other

representatives will not be accepted in lieu of actual meeting attendance.

- a) If a voting member is absent three (3) out of any four (4) consecutive quarterly meetings during an appointment term, that member will be placed on an inactive member list, unless the absence is 'excused' as defined in Section 7(b) below. At the end of a term inactive members will not be recommended for reappointment to HCCC.
- b) The HCHC Executive Committee may define circumstances whereby an absence is deemed excused and not subject to the three absence rule. Members who must miss a meeting should so advise the Chair in advance of the meeting, or as soon thereafter as possible, so that their absence can be excused by the members at the start of the meeting. Given exceptional circumstances, an excused absence may be applicable over the full appointment term.

Section 8. Resignation. Resignation from HCHC will be considered effective upon receipt of written communication to the office of the County Judge, or at a date specified in the communication.

Section 9. Removal. Members serve at the pleasure of HCCC and may be removed by same, without cause, at any time during the appointment term.

Section 10. Open Meetings and Open Records Training. All HCHC members must complete Open Meetings and Open Records Training, as required by Texas Government Code (TGC) Chapters 551 and 552. Failure to complete this training within 90 days of appointment or reappointment will cause the appointee to be placed on the inactive member list. Individuals failing to complete this training by the end of their appointment term will not be recommended for reappointment. Certificates of completion shall be submitted to the HCHC Recording Secretary.

Section 11. HCHC Appointee Orientation. All voting members are expected to review the THC training material describing the responsibilities of a county historical commission and its appointees early in each term, and to become familiar with the THC website.

ARTICLE V. QUORUM AND VOTING

Section 1. Definition. Eighteen (18) voting HCHC members (excluding emeritus and advisory members) shall constitute a quorum for the purpose of convening a meeting and/or conducting business, in accordance with the requirement of TGC Sec. 551.001 that

Quorum means a majority of a governmental body.

Section 2. Voting. Each voting member present (excluding emeritus and advisory members) shall have one vote per issue. Proxy and absentee voting are not permitted.

As provided for in THC Guidelines and Articles III, IV, VI, VII, VIII, X, and XII of these bylaws, the HCHC Chair and/or Executive Committee have the authority to act independently on specific items.

ARTICLE VI. MEETINGS

Section 1. Meetings Defined. HCHC shall have no less than four (4) quarterly business meetings each year, each at a time and place to be specified by the HCHC Executive Committee, with at least three (3) weeks' notice to the membership. The first meeting of the year shall be designated as the Annual Meeting.

Special meetings may be called by the Chair or at the direction of HCCC, with at least two (2) weeks' notice to the membership.

Section 2. Open Meeting Requirements. Public notice of all HCHC business meetings, whether quarterly meetings or special meetings, including a detailed agenda, shall be given in accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Act, Texas Government Code (TGC) Chapter 551. All such meetings shall also be conducted in accordance with TGC Chapter 551. Minutes and recordings of open meetings are public records and shall be available for public inspection and copying on request to HCHC or HCCC, per TGC Chapter 552.

Section 3. Order of Business. The HCHC Chair may adjust this standard order whenever circumstances dictate.

- I. Chair Call to Order, Welcome, Establish Quorum, Excuse Absences
- II. Harris County Judge or Representative
- III. Special Presentation(s) by Guest(s)
- IV. Public Comments
- V. Secretaries' Reports (Corresponding & Recording)
- VI. Committee Reports (specify)
- VII. Old Business (specify)
- VIII. New Business (specify)
- IX. Announcements (specify)
- X. Adjournment

ARTICLE VII. OFFICERS

Section 1. Election and Term. All HCHC officers shall be elected from and by the HCHC voting members at the first lawfully convened meeting of the term following the biennial appointment of members by HCCC, or as soon thereafter as practical, and serve until their successors take office.

Section 2. Nominating Committee. The nominating committee is an *ad hoc* committee, elected by the membership during the last lawfully convened meeting of each term to propose a slate of officers to be voted upon at the first lawfully convened meeting of the new term. The committee shall consist of not fewer than three (3) nor more than five (5) active voting members. The Chair and inactive members are not eligible to serve on the nominating committee. Members serving on the nominating committee may be nominated for office.

The nominating committee will select a slate of officers and submit the names to the membership at least thirty (30) days prior to the vote by the membership. The membership may add additional names and submit those names to the nominating committee by email at least twenty (20) days prior to the vote by the body at an open meeting. The member who submitted the additional name will be notified by the nominating committee by email upon receipt of the name. If the name was received after the cutoff date, the committee will also indicate the time and date of receipt as reason for the name not being added. The nominating committee will submit the expanded list of candidates to the membership at least fifteen (15) days prior to the vote by the membership.

Section 3. Election Procedure. Nominations will not be taken from the floor for the election of officers at the first meeting of the new term. Any member desiring to be a candidate for office must so advise the Nominating Committee as soon as possible after the meeting in which the committee is elected.

All officers shall be elected by a majority of the voting members present. If there is only one candidate for each office, the slate can be accepted by voice vote. If there are multiple candidates for any office, preprinted written ballots will be distributed by the Recording Secretary. Ballots will be counted by three tellers, selected by the executive committee prior to the meeting, in the manner described in *Robert's Rules of Order, Chapter 12, Nominations and Elections*. If no candidate receives a majority of the votes cast for that office, a run-off election between the top two candidates will be conducted,

unless one of the two chooses to concede.

Section 4. Removal. Elected officers may be removed from office for cause upon a motion duly filed, and approved by a majority of the voting members present at the next legally convened meeting of the commission, where such motion shall be taken up in preference over all other business on the agenda. “Cause” shall be defined as bribery, treason, or conviction for high crimes and misdemeanors while in office.

Section 5. Vacancies. Should any of the Officer positions become vacant during the term, such vacancy shall be filled in the same manner as the original election, requiring one meeting to elect the nominating committee and another to elect the officer. In the interim, the remaining officers will cover the duties of the vacant position.

Section 6. HCHC Chair. The Chair shall be the Executive Officer of HCHC. The Chair shall have the responsibility to call and preside over meetings in accordance with *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised (RONR)* parliamentary procedure unless otherwise specified in these bylaws, appoint standing and ad hoc committees and their chairs, and represent HCHC at official gatherings. The HCHC Chair shall also:

- a) Have the usual powers of supervision and management as may pertain to the office, or as designated to the office by the members of HCHC.
- b) Be the single point of contact with Harris County officials and staff representing HCHC on official HCHC business, unless the Chair specifically authorizes another member to make such contact.
- c) Serve on, or designate a representative for, any boards, commissions, or committees as requested or deemed appropriate by HCHC.
- d) Report annually to HCCC on the activities of HCHC.
- e) Submit, or cause to be submitted, an annual report to THC in the required time frame.
- f) Write, or cause to be written, the agenda for each HCHC quarterly or special meeting and submit same to the Recording Secretary for posting by Harris County.

Section 7. Vice Chair. This officer shall preside at meetings in the absence of the HCHC Chair, and possess all duties and responsibilities of the Chair in the event of a vacancy or incapacity in that office. The Vice Chair can create ad hoc committees as necessary. The Vice Chair shall also:

- a) Assist the HCHC Chair in duties so designated by the members.
- b) Present a financial report at each quarterly meeting, as well as an annual report

at the first quarterly meeting following the close of the fiscal year. Said reports shall include recent expenses, remaining annual allocation, and planned expenses.

- c) Co-sign with the HCHC Chair all contracts or instruments as may be necessary to carry out the business of HCHC.
- d) Prepare and maintain, or cause to be done, the HCHC member list, emeritus list, and advisory list, including current contact information (phone number, e-mail, and mailing address).
- e) Submit the current/updated HCHC members list (aka Appointee Roster), emeritus list, and advisory list to the Corresponding Secretary for distribution to listed HCHC members and HCCC.
- f) Submit the HCHC Appointee Roster to THC at the start of each term, in the format prescribed by THC.
- g) Arrange for members to receive applicable periodicals which may be available by free subscription, e.g. *The Medallion*.
- h) Be an active member of the THC and Harris County Marker Review Committees.
- i) Chair the Advisory Committee, including holding at least one meeting a year for the committee members.

Section 8. Recording Secretary. This officer shall keep and maintain in good order meeting minutes and other such records as designated by the Chair, or as may be required by federal or state laws, or these bylaws. The Recording Secretary may arrange for another HCHC member to keep the minutes of a meeting, in the event of not being available to attend. The Recording Secretary shall also:

- a) Send a copy of the HCHC meeting agenda via e-mail to all HCHC members, including advisory and emeritus members, and to appropriate Harris County staff member(s) for posting by Harris County. In accordance with TGC Sec. 551.043, said agenda must be posted by Harris County at least 72 hours before the meeting.
- b) Keep accurate records of meeting attendance, including e-mailing a report to each Executive Committee member showing member attendance, and providing the HCHC Chair a report detailing any changes to inactive status due to attendance or other requirements, all reports being due two (2) weeks prior to quarterly meetings.
- c) Receive and tabulate Certificates of Completion for the Open Meetings, Open Records, and other training required in Article IV, Sections 10 and 11, and prepare a report for the HCHC Chair no later than two (2) weeks prior to each

quarterly meeting.

- d) Distribute for review and comment, via a time expedient method such as e-mail, all unapproved meeting minutes and attendance lists to all HCHC members at least two (2) weeks prior to each quarterly meeting.
- e) Attend committee meetings, or cause to be done, and take minutes for same, if requested by the HCHC Chair.
- f) Perform other duties as assigned by the HCHC Chair or Vice-Chair.

Section 9. Corresponding Secretary. This officer is responsible for disseminating announcements and special communications from the HCHC Chair to HCHC members in a timely manner, conducting correspondence and/or communications, not otherwise specified in the bylaws, as required by the Chair, and performing other duties as assigned by the HCHC Chair or Vice Chair. The primary method for distribution will be e-mail, but other methods may be used as necessary. These distributions include, but are not limited to, the distribution of:

- a) Marker abstracts and narratives provided by the Marker Review Chairs.
- b) Marker dedication announcements provided by the Marker Dedication Chair or the marker sponsor.
- c) Membership-wide announcements from the HCHC Chair, Vice-Chair, and/or Committee Chairs, (e.g., marker updates).
- d) General interest announcements, such as activities of other historical organizations relating to preservation, historical sites, symposiums or presentations, ethnic groups, and the like.
- e) Announcements and/or invitations from county-wide organizations relating to activities in such areas as architectural, cemeteries, genealogical, and historical; including special programs, honors, and opportunities for workshops related to HCHC's purpose. (e.g., annual events at the Sam Houston Park, Baytown, Crosby, and Pasadena).
- f) "Save the Date" announcements for future events.
- g) Organizational documents, including but not limited to, HCHC Roster, HCHC Bylaws, and HCHC Procedures Guide.
- h) Reports, including but not limited to, quarterly committee reports and HCHC Chair's annual reports to THC and HCCC.

The Corresponding Secretary is also responsible for posting HCHC meetings, marker dedications, and other appropriate dates to the THC Calendar and HCHC website

Calendar in order to call HCHC members' and public attention to relevant items of special local interest.

Section 10. Other Officers. Additional officers may be created by amendment to the bylaws.

Section 11. Resignation of Officers. An officer may resign the office by submission of written correspondence to the Executive Committee. An office may be resigned without necessarily resigning HCHC membership. Vacancies will be filled in the prescribed manner of appointment.

ARTICLE VIII. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

This committee shall consist of the HCHC officers: Chair, Vice Chair, Recording Secretary, and Corresponding Secretary. The primary purpose of this committee shall be to oversee the general welfare and activities of HCHC. It shall also:

- a) Prepare and maintain, with input from all committee chairs, an HCHC Procedures Guide for distribution to members.
- b) Prepare an annual budget with input from the members. (Article III).
- c) Approve the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between HCHC and its nonprofit support group, if any (Article III).
- d) Recommend members (voting, emeritus, and advisory) to be appointed by HCCC (Article IV, Sections 3, 4, and 5).
- e) Define circumstances whereby an absence is deemed excused and not subject to the three absence rule (Article IV, Section 7).
- f) Resolve disagreements relating to marker applications (Article X, Section 11).
- g) Direct the activities of the Website Committee (Article X, Section 14).
- h) Ensure that HCHC records, including HCHC committee records, are maintained in accordance with the Harris County Records Management Policy and Plan and the Harris County Records Control Schedules. Such records should be deposited with the Harris County Archives at the end of each term.
- i) Promote casual interaction with local organizations. The Executive Committee may organize an annual social gathering for HCHC members and other interested parties.

ARTICLE IX. COMMITTEE APPOINTMENT AND DEFINITIONS

Section 1. Appointment. The HCHC Chair is responsible for all committee appointments, including chairs and members, as needed to further the aims and

programs of HCHC. HCHC committee appointments are for the official biennium period.

The HCHC Chair may seek advice from the Executive Committee prior to selecting committee chairs and committee members, and Committee Chairs may make recommendations to the HCHC Chair of for committee member appointments. Advisory and Emeritus members may serve on committees on a non-voting consultant basis.

Section 2. Committees, General. An individual function of a committee may be added to or eliminated from that committee responsibility, or reassigned to another committee by the HCHC Chair, as deemed appropriate and desirable.

Each Committee Chair is responsible for preparing the section of the HCHC Procedures Guide applicable to that committee.

All officers and committee members contributing directly to the HCHC website must work in cooperation with the HCHC Website Committee and the Harris County Information Technology Center to ensure the proper implementation and/or reporting of the committee's contributions.

Section 3. Standing Committees. The Standing Committees are listed alphabetically in Article X. Specific standing committees may only be created or eliminated by amendment to the bylaws.

Section 4. Ad Hoc Committees. The HCHC Chair may at any time appoint an *ad hoc* committee and chair, as necessary or desirable. Such committees are formed to perform a specific task(s) or objective(s) and the committee is dissolved upon completion of the assignment.

Section 5. Removal. Committee chairs and members serve at the pleasure of the HCHC Chair and may be removed by same, without cause, at any time during the appointment term.

ARTICLE X. STANDING COMMITTEES

Section 1. Advisory Committee. This committee shall be comprised of advisory members, as defined in Article IV, Section 5, and shall provide non-binding recommendations to HCHC in areas such as preservation and other HCHC related interests, including resource identification, preservation education, organizational planning, and financial support.

The HCHC Vice Chair shall chair the Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee

should meet at least once per year at a place and time determined by the committee chair.

Section 2. Budget Committee. This committee shall prepare an annual budget with input from the Executive Committee and the members. The annual budget, with specific line items, is to be presented once a year by the Committee Chair to the Commissioners Court for requested funding.

The Committee Chair shall present a financial report at each quarterly meeting, as well as an annual report at the first quarterly meeting following the close of the fiscal year. Said reports shall include recent expenses, remaining annual allocation, and planned expenses. A copy of the budget, quarterly or annual reports will be made available to the county auditor or any precinct budget/finance director upon request.

Section 3. Cemetery Committee. This committee receives local applications for THC Historic Texas Cemetery (HTC) designations, and reviews them for accuracy, appropriateness, and completeness. Upon completion of the local application review process, the committee chair will report the application to the HCHC membership, and forward the application to THC for processing.

This committee shall also conduct cemetery surveys, and report the committee's findings to HCHC. It should seek to organize and provide a yearly cemetery symposium for the purpose of presenting restoration guidelines, preservation information, and up-to-date cemetery laws. The committee members may represent HCHC through participation in cleanup day activities (in conjunction with local cemetery associations) and other historic cemetery preservation efforts, and participate in other cemetery programs initiated by THC.

Section 4. Community Outreach Committee. This committee shall organize Texas and Harris County history and preservation activities for schools, civic organizations, and other community groups. It shall prepare and present programs and information in a variety of forms, such as, presentation, print, or technological. This committee should cooperate with state or local history and visitor related organizations and other HCHC committees to assist with historical tours, marker dedications, commemorations, and observances, or to establish same as needed.

This committee may establish or partner with appropriate historical and/or educational-based groups in support of extracurricular programs for Harris County students in grades four (4) through twelve (12). The purpose shall be to expand student interest in state and local history by providing an opportunity to seek out appropriate

subjects for Texas or Harris County historical markers, and to learn the skills of research and writing through the marker application process.

This committee shall maintain a speakers list on various topics of general historical interest and offer such to other organizations seeking speakers.

Section 5. Continuing Education Committee. This committee shall, for the benefit of the HCHC members and its associated personnel, survey, provide summary descriptions of, and report periodically to HCHC about recently released, forthcoming, or recently noted historical resources relevant to our local history including, for example:

- a) Traditional media: publications: books, articles etc.
- b) Electronic media: websites, social media, e-books, archival collections
- c) Exhibitions
- d) Public events
- e) Identification of knowledgeable / skilled persons

It shall also make its discoveries available to the Community Outreach Committee for collaborative use in its program of public education for Harris County's historical or general public.

It may also serve as liaison in instructive communication from the Texas Historical Commission, conduct in-house educational programs and activities for HCHC personnel, and establish a communications list of personnel knowledgeable in institutional acquisitions.

Section 6. County Marker Committee. This committee manages the Harris County Historical Commission Marker Program created by HCCC Resolution dated May 8, 2012, which provides that:

- a) The purpose of the local marker program is to provide potential marker sponsors with an alternative to the THC program in those cases where the state program does not meet their needs, either for schedule or for historical content. The stated criteria for the county program will be much the same as the THC criteria.
- b) The program will be managed and executed through the HCHC, following set criteria regarding significant topics and funding opportunities.
- c) HCHC members will administer the marker program, with the assistance of and input from citizen sponsors, the relevant Precinct, and Harris County

Commissioners Court. Marker inscriptions will be written by HCHC members and marker dedications will be conducted by the HCHC in collaboration with the sponsor, the Precinct, and Harris County Commissioners Court.

- d) The Harris County markers will be a different shape than the THC markers, will have a blue background color instead of black, and will have text in upper and lower case instead of all upper case, to further differentiate the county markers from the THC markers.

The committee reviews applications for Harris County markers for accuracy, appropriateness, and completeness. Following committee approval, the committee chair will distribute the application to HCHC members for comment or approval. Distribution will be by e-mail, with a specified response date. Failure to respond by the requested deadline will constitute acceptance. A majority of the voting members sending approvals and/or no-responses will approve the application. In case of a material disagreement, the application will be submitted to the HCHC Executive Committee for recommendation/approval.

Section 7. Historical Survey and Preservation Committee. This committee performs functions as authorized by TLGC Section 318.006 (Resource Identification), and shall endeavor to support the work of other entities in Harris County engaged in the preservation of historic buildings, sites, artifacts, photographs, paintings, drawings, books, newspapers, oral histories, records, and other historic documents. It shall identify properties in the county that are threatened by neglect, deterioration, lack of maintenance, insufficient funds, vandalism, encroaching development, or other adverse forces affecting the site.

This committee shall establish and maintain a system for periodic review and assessment of each property, and shall respond, via the HCHC Chair, to any request from THC for information on such properties. This committee's efforts should be coordinated with other local entities, and with HCHC Community Outreach and Publicity committees.

Section 8. Marker Dedication Committee.

This committee's primary responsibility is to assist marker sponsors with preparation for the marker dedication ceremony and represent HCHC at dedications when necessary. This committee will work with the sponsor to select the dedication date and develop the dedication program, cause invitations to be sent to all HCHC members, notify elected

officials of the pending event, facilitate requests for proclamations and letters of acknowledgment from these individuals and organizations, help coordinate the appearance of appropriate dignitaries and speakers, assist with the placement and installation of the marker, make the sponsor aware of key deadlines leading up to the dedication, and arrange for the posting of marker dedications and other appropriate dates to the THC Calendar and the HCHC website Calendar.

Section 9. Marker Inventory and Maintenance Committee.

This committee shall enlist the aid of HCHC membership to conduct periodic inventories of historical markers and monuments in Harris County, including THC subject markers, RTHL sites and markers, HTC sites and markers, State Archeological Landmarks, National Register sites and markers, National Historical Landmarks, Harris County Historical Markers, and all other markers and monuments of historical relevance to Harris County.

Marker inventory information should be current and well maintained following formal inventory periods, including photographs of the markers and marker sites, changes to the condition or placement of the marker, updated factual information when new research corrects the marker content, and other such matters. The committee shall use and compare the findings of marker inventories to reconcile and assist THC, if necessary, in updating information reported on THC's online Atlas.

Deficiencies found during on-site inventories, such as missing markers or markers needing repair or refurbishing, will be addressed according to the instructions in the HCHC Procedures Guide.

An annual report of the markers and monuments within Harris County shall be submitted to the HCHC Chair, and reported to the membership periodically as needed. The committee chair shall work with the Harris County Information Technology Center to update and maintain the HCHC Marker Inventory section of the HCHC website.

Section 10. Marker Mentor Committee. This committee's objective is to recruit committee members and train them to mentor individuals wishing to develop and submit historical marker applications. To this end the committee should, with the assistance of other HCHC committee chairs or their representatives, create and host mentor workshops throughout the appointment term. Workshops should cover a range of application topics, such as funding, mentor-sponsor relationships, narrative research, narrative mechanics, THC submittal process and timelines, and marker dedications.

This committee shall also offer programs, as needed or requested, to provide encouragement and instruction to individuals or organizations wishing to make application for historical markers or HTC designation. Such programs shall be coordinated with the Marker Review and Cemetery Committees.

Section 11. Marker Review Committee for THC Markers. This committee receives applications for THC markers in the various categories set by THC, and reviews applications for accuracy, appropriateness, and completeness.

Following committee approval, the committee chair will distribute the application to HCHC members for comment or approval. Distribution will be by e-mail, with a specified response date. Failure to respond by the requested deadline will constitute acceptance. A majority of the voting members sending approvals and/or no-responses will approve the application. In case of a material disagreement, the application will be submitted to the HCHC Executive Committee for recommendation/approval.

The Marker Review Committee Chair will forward HCHC-approved applications to THC during the annual processing period. This committee will also track the marker applications as they progress through the application process, work with THC and the marker applicant to develop the marker inscription, and report the progress of same to the HCHC Chair, and to the membership at quarterly meetings.

The Marker Review Committee Chair (aka “Marker Chair”) serves as the marker liaison between HCHC, the marker sponsor, and THC for all matters concerning state markers; however, marker payments are submitted directly from the sponsor to THC. When deemed appropriate and necessary, the HCHC Chair may approve marker applications and submit them directly to THC.

Section 12. Publicity Committee. This committee should develop, implement, and maintain the strategies and resources necessary to secure recognition of Harris County historical sites and attractions, especially through organizations such as visitors and convention bureaus and tour companies. This committee is responsible for publicizing HCHC activities to external organizations and to the media, through press releases and other appropriate announcements, as approved by the HCHC Chair. The Publicity Committee should work cooperatively with the HCHC Recording Secretary and Corresponding Secretary to avoid duplication of activities. Typically, internal HCHC communications are the responsibility of the Corresponding Secretary and should be routed accordingly.

Section 13. Texas Treasure Business Award Committee. This committee shall administer THC’s free Texas Treasure Business Award Program (TTBA), which recognizes well-established Texas businesses that have been in continuous operation in Texas for at least 50 years and continue to operate as independent, for-profit, Texas-owned businesses. Businesses that can also establish that they have been continuously owned by the same family or have operated continuously from a building that is at least 50 years old and have maintained its architectural integrity will receive additional recognition. The committee shall seek to identify qualifying businesses in Harris County and assist them to obtain this recognition.

Section 14. Website Committee. Under the direction of the HCHC Executive Committee, the chair of this committee shall coordinate with the Harris County Information Technology Center as to the design, organization, and maintenance of the HCHC website. This committee shall monitor the HCHC website and provide recommendations for technical updates and/or enhancements. The committee shall maintain the general information on the site, and support other HCHC committees by providing training and other assistance in the maintenance of their specific website sections.

ARTICLE XI. MARKER PROVISIONS

Section 1. Marker Storage. Displaced or damaged **THC** markers are property of the State of Texas and must be stored in a Harris County facility and not held by third party custodians. **Displaced or damaged county historical markers or interpretive panels must also be stored in a Harris County facility.**

Applicants may store new markers pending installation, or use the county facility if they desire.

Section 2. Harris County **Historical Markers.** Official Harris County markers shall be cast aluminum alloy with raised letters, 27” wide by 42” high (large), or 26” wide by 30.5” high (medium), or 16” wide by 25” high (small), and conform to all HCHC specifications. The marker background is “brilliant blue.” The marker will display the Harris County logo. Markers may include photos or incising. These markers will be created by a foundry of HCHC’s choosing. All costs to be borne by the applicant or sponsor, and will vary according to the marker specifications.

Section 3. **Harris County Historical Interpretive Panels.** Interpretive panels being endorsed by the Texas Historical Commission where appropriate, the respective

HCHC committees for State and County historical markers may install interpretive panels in addition to State or County markers. Interpretive panels will be a different shape and material than the THC and Harris County markers, and will consist of illustrations as well as text on a standard template. Harris County and the HCHC will be recognized with a logo somewhere on the template.

Section 4. Heritage Trails. Interpretive panels may be grouped, along with THC and County markers, into “Harris County Heritage Trails” that are organized thematically and geographically. The chair of an *ad hoc* Panel Committee will propose an annual plan and budget for each trail, for approval by HCHC members prior to its inclusion as a specific line item into the HCHC annual budget. Panel content, including inscriptions and illustrations, will be prepared by members of the panel committee, and dedications will be conducted by this committee in collaboration with the Marker Dedication Committee, the relevant Precinct(s), and Harris County Commissioners Court.

Section 4. Marker Replacement. The Marker Review Committee and the Marker Inventory and Maintenance Committee shall work together to replace lost or damaged markers, as necessary, including locating and working with marker sponsors in order to resubmit marker applications if required by THC guidelines.

Section 5. Supplemental Markers. The Marker Review Committee and the Marker Inventory and Maintenance Committee will work together, as needed, to define and apply for markers that are needed to supplement existing THC markers. Supplemental markers can be used to record changes in a marker’s location or factual information.

ARTICLE XII. PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

Section 1. Parliamentarian. The HCHC Chair will appoint a Parliamentarian to provide guidance in matters of parliamentary procedure.

The rules in the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised (RONR)* shall govern the proceedings for HCHC meetings, in all cases to which they are applicable, provided that they are not inconsistent with current THC guidance, these bylaws, or applicable state or federal law.

Section 2. Motions. Verbal motions proposed during a meeting must be clearly stated to the satisfaction of the Recording Secretary and seconded prior to discussion and/or voting. Written motions should be made whenever possible. A motion will be subject to the following parliamentarian rules.

- a) Comments are limited to no more than three individuals per side.
- b) Individual members may speak on a proposed motion no more than twice and for no longer than two minutes per motion.
- c) The HCHC Chair may call upon a member for additional comments, or limit discussion as specified in items 1 and 2 above.
- d) Comments must alternate between speakers in favor and against the motion. If only one side is represented the maximum number of speakers is limited to two, each speaking for no more than two minutes.
- e) If deemed appropriate the HCHC Chair may refer a motion for study and/or evaluation prior to voting.
- f) A motion may be amended or withdrawn only by the person making the motion.
- g) With the exception of amending a motion on the floor, additional motions will not be considered until the motion on the floor has been referred, withdrawn, or voted upon.
- h) Referred motions must be reported upon at each quarterly meeting until resolved.

ARTICLE XIII. BYLAWS AMENDMENTS AND PROVISIONS

Section 1. Amendments. These bylaws may be amended by a majority vote at any lawfully convened meeting, a quorum being present (per Article V), with subsequent approval by HCCC.

A proposed amendment to the bylaws shall be submitted in writing, in either paper or electronic form, and distributed by the Recording Secretary to the office of the Harris County Judge and all HCHC members (including active, inactive, advisory, and emeritus) at least thirty (30) days prior to the meeting in which they will be considered for HCHC approval. For the purposes of establishing the distribution date, a postmark date and/or e-mail sent-date establishes the thirty-day period. Individual postal and/or electronic delays or loss are not cause for delaying a vote on a proposed bylaws amendment.

Section 2. Approval. At the discretion of the HCHC Chair and the individual submitting the amendment, if present, motions to modify, revise, or change an amendment(s) may be considered and incorporated into the amendment prior to voting. The Parliamentary procedure incorporated in these bylaws (Article XII, Section 2) shall

also apply to motions pertaining to the bylaws.

A proposed amendment may be submitted to the Harris County Attorney prior to consideration by HCHC.

Any amendment to, or provision of the bylaws that violates Texas or federal law shall be deemed void. Voiding same shall not affect the continued validity of the other amendments or provisions of these bylaws.

ARTICLE XIV. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST AND CODE OF ETHICS

If a member, agent, or employee of HCHC has a conflict of interest in any transaction involving the selection, award, or administration of historic preservation funds or grants, such person cannot participate in a vote, discussion, or decision about the matter. If a member, agent, or employee of HCHC be advised or suspect that they may be involved in a conflict of interest situation on a HCHC issue, such person is ethically responsible to make this known to the HCHC Chair, who will ask for clarification by HCCC. This action must precede a vote, discussion, or decision on the matter; doing so after the fact may require a re-vote at the direction of HCCC.

HCHC as a whole can receive gifts of money and other property on its behalf through HCCC to further its preservation goals, and for any use in the furtherance of its lawful purposes in accordance with the TLGC, and applicable guidelines set by the office of the Harris County Judge.

ARTICLE XV. ADOPTION

Bylaws Committee Chair, Bernice Mistrot

Attesting this draft submitted and approved by the 2021 HCHC Bylaws Committee

I hereby certify that these bylaws were adopted by majority vote of the Harris County Historical Commission members on _____, 2021 at a regularly scheduled business meeting, with quorum present.

Harris County Historical Commission Vice Chair and Acting Chair, Christopher Varela

I hereby certify that these bylaws were adopted by the members of the Harris County Commissioners Court at its meeting held on _____, 2021.

County Judge Lina Hidalgo

Commissioner Rodney Ellis, Precinct 1

Commissioner Adrian Garcia, Precinct 2

Commissioner Tom S. Ramsey, P.E., Precinct 3

Commissioner R. Jack Cagle, Precinct 4