



**FREEPORT HISTORICAL COMMISSION & MAIN STREET ADVISORY BOARD
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

**THURSDAY, JULY 13TH, 2023 AT 5:00PM
FREEPORT CITY HALL, 3RD FLOOR TRAINING ROOM
200 W. SECOND STREET, FREEPORT, TX 77541**

STATE OF TEXAS

COUNTY OF BRAZORIA

CITY OF FREEPORT

BE IT REMEMBERED, that the Freeport Historical Commission & Main Street Advisory Board met on Thursday, July 13th, 2023 at 5:00 PM at Freeport City Hall, 3rd Floor Training Room, 200 W. Second Street, Freeport, Texas for the purpose of considering the following agenda items:

Chairperson:

Margaret McMahan

Board Members:

Sandra Barbree
Keith Stumbaugh
Ronnie Martin
William Leitch
Betty Lopez
Jack Bullman
Sandra Wood-Wicke

Vice Chairperson:

Irene Ocañas

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Margaret McMahan called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm. The following attendees were present:

Board Members

Margaret McMahan
Irene Ocañas
Sandra Barbree
William Leitch
Ronnie Martin
Sandra Wood-Wicke
Betty Lopez

Staff Members

Ana Silbas, Main Street Coordinator
Tim Kelty, City Manager
Jeff Pena, City Council Liaison

Guests: Patti Richardson, Christopher Duncan

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Invocation was led by Margaret McMahan and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by Ronnie Martin.

PRESENTATION/ANNOUNCEMENTS: Announcements by Board Members and/or Staff.

Main Street Update (Silbas)

Main Street Coordinator Ana Silbas introduced Bryce Hendrickson, Texas Main Street Project Design Specialist, who joined board meeting via Zoom to listen to the Ora Theater Presentation.

Museum Update -Recent Exhibits/ Events (Dillon)

Museum Manager Wade Dillon was not in attendance due to a prior commitment for a museum sponsorship presentation with a local Lions Club. Main Street Coordinator Ana Silbas gave his report, which included that Dillon is currently seeking museum sponsorships and has a meeting with DOW on July 18th. Museum Manager Wade Dillon would like input from the board on any potential sponsors.

Additionally, the next 5 interpretative panels should arrive at the museum this week or next. The last round of 5 interpretive panels and obtaining museum quality cases will complete the restructuring project; a grand re-opening of the museum will be planned.

Furthermore, Silbas mentioned from the museum report that the Shark Exhibit is a hit. In the month of June, the museum received 1,082 visitors. The plan moving forward is to have a large summer exhibition equivalent to the Shark Exhibit, if possible. Museum Manager Wade Dillon is meeting with local museum representatives this Friday to participate in a county-wide initiative to host an Archaeology Program in October. This Saturday, Silbas stated that Dillon will be at the Sea Center promoting the Freeport Museum during their Shark Celebration—The Sea Center will have a program at the museum on July 19th. Lastly, this Sunday, Dillon will be working with David McGinty to cut down model bases to be ADA compliant.

Board Member Announcements

Chair Margaret McMahan introduced Patti Richardson, Tim Kelty-City Manager and Jeff Pena-Councilman Ward A/City Council Liaison to the Freeport Historical Commission & Main Street Advisory Board.

William Leitch expressed concerns over the outdoor restaurant deck being built for Arlene's. The major concern is that in the event of inclement weather (i.e. hurricane season), the deck could potentially cause damage, as it does not seem to be secured.

Presentations

Christopher Duncan presented to the Freeport Historical Commission & Main Street Advisory Board his plans for rehabilitation of the Ora Theater.

Additionally, Duncan presented photos of the original building as inspiration and photos of the current state of the Ora Theater.

BUSINESS- REGULAR SESSION

Consideration and possible action to approve meeting minutes from June 15, 2023.

On a motion made by Sandra Barbree, seconded by Ronnie Martin, with all present voting “Aye”, the Freeport Historical Commission & Main Street Advisory Board **unanimously approved** the meeting minutes from June 15, 2023, with the correction of adding Betty Lopez as an attendee.

Consideration and possible action to appoint a Secretary.

The Freeport Historical Commission & Main Street Advisory Board is required to appoint new officers annually in June.

At the June general meeting, there were not any nominations for the secretary position. Main Street Coordinator Ana Silbas provided the board with a description of duties.

On a motion made by Sandra Barbree, seconded by Margaret McMahan, with all present voting “Aye”, the Freeport Historical Commission & Main Street Advisory Board **unanimously approved** to appoint Ronnie Martin to serve as Secretary.

Consideration and possible action to approve issuing a position on the Ora Theater.

The Freeport Historical Commission & Main Street Advisory Board tabled this agenda item to review the official structural assessment of the Ora Theater.

The official structural assessment conducted by Freese and Nichols provided six recommendations to stabilize the structure: repair the large roof opening, replace rotted roof lathes and restore the metal roof deck attachment, board up exterior wall openings to prevent intrusion of wind, rain and surface run-off, remove ponding water from inside the structure, repair the secondary roof trusses near the front of the building and remove remnants of annex structure roof on the exterior south wall.

City Manager Tim Kelty provided further information on the Ora Theater and the upcoming Board of Adjustments meeting on July 19th. The recommendation to the Board of Adjustments is for the building to be secured, in order to keep unauthorized people out of the building immediately. Because of the scope of the rehabilitation project, it is understood that more than 90 days will be needed to rectify the issues at hand.

Additionally, City Manager Tim Kelty stated that the Ora Theater is structurally okay—however, there are concerns because further deterioration will occur without rehabilitation efforts.

Consideration and possible action to approve a plan for recycling.

Ronnie Martin brought forth an initiative to implement recycling in our community and aid in the beautification of downtown. The NexTrex Plastic Film Recycling Challenge allows Freeport Main Street to collect 500 lbs. of plastic within a six-month period to receive a Trex bench.

Martin stated that he wants our Main Street Program to be known for taking action to revitalize downtown. The board would need a place to store the soft plastic and would partner with the

Brazosport Breakfast Lions Club to help deliver to drop-off location at Kroger and to earn benches through their organization as well. Martin mentioned it would be great for the City of Freeport to sign up for the recycling program as well and work towards getting a notice on the water bills for this initiative.

On a motion made by Ronnie Martin, seconded by Sandra Wood-Wicke, with all present voting “Aye”, the Freeport Historical Commission & Main Street Advisory Board **unanimously approved** to implement the NexTrex Plastic Film Recycling Challenge to receive benches for downtown.

WORK SESSION

Chair Margaret McMahan gave her design subcommittee report to the board. McMahan stated that she contacted five firms to aid in the development for design guidelines and received interest from Ian Caine, University of Texas at San Antonio- Director of Center for Urban and Regional Planning Research. Caine and his colleagues have contributed to design guidelines for other communities. McMahan was impressed by Caine because he did some homework and research on Freeport prior to first meeting. In the event that Cain and his colleagues are unable to assist Freeport Main Street, they will provide further recommendations for contacts with historic preservation and design guideline experience.

Promotion Subcommittee Chair Sandra Barbree mentioned that a Business After Hours Mixer, with finger foods and networking, potentially in October, would be a great way to get people interested in Freeport Main Street.

Economic Vitality Subcommittee Chair Irene Ocañas stated her committee met on June 27th and had a great discussion on creating a survey to find out what the citizens would like to see downtown and the needs related to business owners. Additionally, Ocañas mentioned that she along with Jesse Glatz, Margaret McMahan and Ana Silbas met with Cathy Ezell, Finance Director to discuss the 2023 EDA Disaster Supplemental Funding through the U.S. Economic Development Administration. The Economic Vitality Subcommittee and Finance discussed projects to submit for potential funding.

Main Street Coordinator Ana Silbas shared with the board her experience at the 2023 Texas Main Street Retreat in Denison, TX. Additionally, Silbas updated the board on additional items related to upcoming professional development sessions and current projects.

Upcoming Events

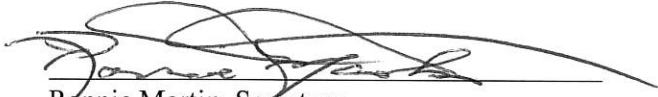
The upcoming events for the Freeport Historical Commission & Main Street Advisory Board include the Shark Exhibit (June & July 2023), KidFest (August 5, 2023), Texas Navy Day (September 16, 2023) and Día de Los Muertos (November 2023).

Items for Future Discussion-Next Scheduled Meeting

The next scheduled meeting for the Freeport Historical Commission & Main Street Advisory Board is August 17, 2023.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion made by Sandra Barbree, seconded by Sandra Wood-Wicke, with all present voting "Aye", the Freeport Historical Commission & Main Street Advisory Board Chair Margaret McMahan adjourned the meeting at 6:05 pm.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ronnie Martin", written over a horizontal line.

Ronnie Martin, Secretary

Freeport Historical Commission & Main Street Advisory Board