

City of Franklin Battlefield Preservation Commission
Regular Meeting
Thursday, September 13, 2018—8:00 AM
Meeting Minutes

Present: Rich Buckner, David Eagan, Walker Entwistle, Rachael Finch (via phone), Sam Gant, Sam Huffman, Pam Lewis, Alma McLemore, Clay Perry, Alderman Scott Speedy, Megan Weisinger, Steve Bacon, Eric Jacobson

Staff Present: Amanda Rose, Joey Bryan, Susan Coleman, Brian Walker, Mayor Moore, Eric Stuckey, Milissa Reiersen

Guests: **Kerri Bartlett, Jeffrey Caruth, Dr. Chris Williamson, Hewitt Sawyers, Kevin Riggs, Laurie McPeak, Mary Pearce**

Call to Order:

Chairwoman Lewis called the meeting to order at 8:05 a.m.

Minutes: July 12, 2018

Ms. McLemore moved to approve the July 12, 2018 meeting minutes. Mr. Buckner seconded the motion, and the motion passed 13-0.

Discussion Regarding Additional Historic Markers on City Square:

Chairwoman Lewis stated there was information on the table if anyone did not have it.

Mr. Stuckey thanked the Commission for all their work. Mr. Stuckey stated this topic came before the Board of Mayor and Aldermen at the August 14th Work Session. Mr. Stuckey stated that the concept was presented to tell the fuller story in a way to both preserve what is there today, but also to expand the story of our history. Mr. Stuckey stated the Board of Mayor and Aldermen is scheduled to have a Resolution of Support considered at its September 25th meeting. Mr. Stuckey stated this has been ongoing conversation for the past year and that he would like to let the pastors talk about their proposal.

Pastor Kevin Riggs stated this request has been made as the result of what has happened in places like Charlottesville, with the intent that we not let those events happen in Franklin. Pastor Riggs stated he wanted to know how we could do something proactive to keep that from happening here. Pastor Riggs stated Mr. Jacobson reached out to him and started the conversation and that Mr. Riggs contacted Pastor Chris Williamson and Pastor Hewitt Sawyers to get them involved too. Pastor Riggs stated the goal is to be positive, show respect to past stories, but also to tell a fuller story that has not been told. Pastor Riggs stated the idea is to have four markers placed to tell more of the African American story and give great honor to the United States Colored Troops. Pastor Riggs stated that Ms. Tina Jones has discovered three hundred USCT soldiers so far and that there could be more. Pastor Riggs stated we all have to be confronted by the realities of what life was like and there was a slave market at the old Courthouse steps. Pastor Riggs stated there are a lot of African Americans who were extremely important, especially during the Reconstruction era. Pastor Riggs stated they approached Mayor Moore and Mr. Stuckey to get their input on how this could be done and be unified.

Pastor Sawyers stated they have tried to get with all the historical groups in our area to get them on board with the proposal. Pastor Sawyers stated they did not want to tear down history; he just wants all the story told with all the populations. Pastor Sawyers stated they appreciate the commission hearing their idea and stated that Franklin could be an example to the rest of the nation that things can be worked out and unified.

Pastor Williamson stated the people they have spoken to—who may not understand what the pastors are trying to do—say they believe in the concept, but not the placement. Pastor Williamson stated when he listens to Mr. Jacobson tell stories about the Civil War he has never heard before, it makes his self-esteem feel better. Pastor Williamson stated the motive in heart is in the right place, even though some might not understand why they are doing it.

Mr. Jacobson stated he reached out to Pastor Riggs the day after the vigil held in the square—a day or two after Charlottesville—and stated there is a problem that has never been reckoned with. Mr. Jacobson stated the intent was never to remove the Confederate monument. Mr. Jacobson stated they started talking about a solution. Mr. Jacobson stated no other community in the nation has done what we are proposing to do. Mr. Jacobson stated he firmly supports this effort and the placement is very important.

Chairwoman Lewis presented an example of signage that was sanctioned by the National Trust on Music Row that could be an option to consider.

Mr. Stuckey stated the City has proposed a resolution for support for the markers and statue. Mr. Stuckey stated that the resolution proposes that the markers and statue be placed “on public land located in or around the Square.” Mr. Stuckey stated there is an ongoing issue on determination of who actually owns the Square, so the City has filed a court document to have the courts decide who actually owns the Square property.

Ms. McLemore stated she wants to applaud these men for what they are doing.

Ms. Rose stated the City wanted this to come before this commission to get feedback on the concepts presented today.

Mr. Jacobson explained how the four topics came about and that the signs are proposed to be designed like the Civil War Trail markers. Mr. Jacobson explained that the markers are limited to about 275 words.

Discussion ensued.

Mr. Perry moved to approve the effort and concept of additional historic markers in the City Square. Mr. Huffman seconded the motion, and the motion passed 13-0.

Subcommittee Updates:

Ms. Rose stated a schedule needs to be worked out for the subcommittee meetings because she must be able to attend meeting to take minutes. Ms. Rose stated we can work out solution.

Parks Department Update:

Mr. Walker stated that he met a group at Rest Haven earlier in the week to discuss its history and the ongoing renovations. Mr. Walker stated the Parks Department has been working on the Federal trench line at Carter Hill. Mr. Walker explained that there are a few gaps due to where the archeology study was completed and the results were inconclusive.

Ms. Rose stated that they City has received a grant for the Hayes House window restoration work at Harlinsdale.

Chairwoman Lewis stated she met with the Parks Director about certain Harlinsdale buildings falling into disrepair. Chairwoman Lewis stated Ms. Clayton told her Tuck/Hinton has been retained to do an architectural plan for the buildings.

Organization Announcements:

Dr. Gant stated the underpass on Liberty Pike has been cleaned up and looks great.

Chairwoman Lewis stated the State Museum is almost finished and will open the first week of October. Chair Lewis stated that commemorative pavers are still available for purchase.

Alderman Speedy stated there will be a special Work Session to look at a proposal to expand the Winstead Hill parking lot so that buses can get in and out more easily.

Mr. Eagan stated there will be a grave dedication at Carnton for John Rogers on October 21st at 2:00 pm.

Ms. Weisinger stated there will the Music Along Main program will take place on September 21st to kick off the Pilgrimage Festival.

Ms. McLemore stated African American Heritage Society fundraiser dinner was great and that last week's Porch Talk went well.

Ms. Finch stated she is in Washington D.C. doing research on the Masonic Hall and will be bringing back a lot of information.

Mr. Bryan stated National Steam Preservation Society is making good headway with the locomotive at Centennial Park. Mr. Bryan stated they will be holding a send-off event on October 27th. Mr. Bryan stated they will be airing a story on Tennessee Crossroads to explain the mission.

Adjournment:

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:11 a.m.

Acting Secretary