

SEMINOLE COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MINUTES OF MONTHLY MEETING
May 15, 2008

Chairman Don Epps introduced Joe Able, Director of Leisure Services for Seminole County, before calling the meeting to order. The regular monthly meeting of the Seminole County Historical Commission was held on May 15, 2008, at the First Presbyterian Church, 128 Wilbur Avenue, Lake Mary. The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m. by Chairman Epps and began with the pledge of allegiance to our flag followed by an invocation.

Members Present:: Chairman Don Epps, Cecil Tucker, John Bistline, Lillian Griffin, Ettie Jane Keogh, Alex Dickison, Beverly Mason, Paul Zuromski, Eunice Mann, Bob Peters, Rosalie Wright Cook and new member, John Richardson.

Absent: Linda Batman, Jan Jernigan, David Miller

Chairman Epps welcomed new commissioner John Richardson to the board followed with a get acquainted introduction by each commissioner.

Announcements:

Chairman Epps reported on the dedication of the historical marker at the Student Museum on April 19, 2008 on the day marking the observance of the 106th anniversary for the building. The setting of the cornerstone for the school was put in place on April 19, 1902.

Historical Markers:

The Chairman reported that the Crane's Roost marker needs to be moved to a more visible location and ask that Linda Batman follow up with the City of Altamonte for a new location. Also, that she review with the city two suggested sites for the installation of the marker for the Altamonte Hotel, one on the Altamonte Library property and the other on the Forum property, both on Maitland Avenue. The Gabriella marker is ready but installation is on "hold". Casselberry and Wagner are in production and Rosalie was finalizing the copy for the Evergreen Cemetery marker with researcher, Alton Williams.

Chairman Epps ask Joe Able to check on the status of funds for payment of markers presently in production. Also, a follow-up is in order regarding the BCC approval on February 26, 2008 of \$6,000 for a traveling exhibit "Linedrives and Lipstick: The Untold Story of Women's Baseball" scheduled for 2009. A \$1,500 deposit was paid and we need to know if that exhibit has in fact been canceled. We were informed that all planned exhibits were to be canceled, including a free exhibit of clocks.

Chairman Epps ask Joe what he thought would be accomplished with a 20 hour part time employee. He answered "being unfamiliar with the museum and its operation, we are assessing the overall situation to determine the direction for the museum."

Emphasis was expressed that student tours and exhibits are only a small part of the function and operation of the museum as many hours and much work is required for researching, recording, preserving and setting up exhibits that showcase the history of Seminole County for public viewing and a valuable source for research.

Karen and her staff were working on the Sanford Herald project that county staff was critical that it had not been completed. There had been time delays getting approval for the museum to obtain the files, and items were being preserved on the computers in house by museum staff. There had been technical incompatible computer problems with insufficient assistance for resolving them.

Chairman Epps stated the Historical Commission, by it's charter, is an advisement group, and in his opinion we were blindsided by the action of this administration as we were not advised, consulted or informed regarding the actions that took place. The goal of this Commission is to try and keep the museum open with Karen Jacobs there.

Cecil Tucker had great praise for Karen and the wonderful work she has performed over the years helping create this treasure that we have in Seminole County. Cecil said (displaying items) "these books, brochures, pamphlets and flyers for museum exposure have been published and distributed under the direction and guidance of Karen, whose background of Seminole County history is invaluable to every student and Seminole County resident interested in knowing our history.

Karen and her staff have done some very unique and detailed research in the area, much of it on her own time as she has gleaned information from the Florida Times Union newspapers in Jacksonville, Fl and the archives at the University of Florida in Gainesville.

This Commission is in charge of a very ambitious and intensive program of installing markers at historic Seminole County sites. Sanford / Seminole County historically has been known as the Gateway into Central and South Florida. We have 45 markers in this county. I don't know of another county in Central Fl that has taken the interest and effort to mark their historical sites like we have here."

Rosalie Cook also complimented Karen on her working relationship with the public and members of the Historical Commission. It was emphasized that the Commission wants to see Karen Jacobs reinstated as Museum Coordinator in order to be able to continue with the programs relating to the successful operation of our museum.

Question from the audience, "what are the long range plans and the plans for volunteers"? Answer from Joe Able, "we are just beginning, but there will be a need for volunteers and plans for the future are being assessed at this time. Leisure Services is creating a job description to be posted to fill this part time 20 hour position." When the question was ask "will the Historical

Commission have a say in who is hired?" the answer was "probably not". Cecil said "we would like to be involved and know what Leisure Services is doing. I have over 40 years involved in this museum and I don't want to see it go down the drain."

Concern for the security of the museum, it's contents and computer information was expressed. Chairman Epps said the Historical Commission wants to reopen as soon as possible to continue our programs. Joe said he will need help from all of us as we go forward.

MORE NEW BUSINESS

Cecil Tucker announced that the fundraising event scheduled for June 2008, has been canceled.

Chairman Epps reported that FI Statue 125.0104, Tourist Development, allows for support of museums and County Code 245.83, allows for funding from Tourist Development.

Cecil Tucker made a motion that we proceed in asking the BCC for Tourist Development funds for a full time museum coordinator. This motion was seconded by John Bistline and passed unanimously by the Commission. Chairman Epps announced that he will present this request to the County Commissioners at their meeting on Tuesday, May 20, 2008 and that it will be item # 6 on the agenda at about 9:30 a.m. All members are urged to attend if possible.

Members are encouraged to email or write letters to the County Commissioners expressing concerns for the museum.

There being no further business, a motion was made by Alex Dickison, seconded by John Bistline, to adjourn the meeting. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted By,

Beverly B. Mason
Acting Secretary