

ARCHEOLOGY

TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

AGENDA ARCHEOLOGY COMMITTEE

AT&T Executive Education and Conference Center
Grand Salon ABC
1900 University Avenue
Austin, TX 78705
April 26, 2021
9:30 A.M.

(or upon the adjournment of the 8:30 a.m. Antiquities Advisory Board meeting, whichever occurs later)

Pursuant to the Governor's March 16, 2020 suspension of certain provisions of the Texas Open Meetings Act due to the Coronavirus (COVID-19), the April 26, 2021 meeting of the Executive Committee will be held by videoconference as authorized under Texas Government Code section 551.127. The presiding officer and a quorum of the THC Executive Committee will be present at the above-posted physical location. The public is invited to attend via Zoom using the registration link provided or in person in accordance with the instructions below.

To attend by Zoom, registration is required: <http://bit.ly/april26thcmeeting>

For audio only access via telephone: 1(346) 248-7799 Webinar ID: 914 0970 3244

To attend in person: In accordance with policies of the meeting facility, facemasks are recommended to enter the building and remain on while in the common area. The THC strongly recommends mask use and social distancing throughout the property and during the meeting. The THC encourages any person experiencing symptoms of illness to attend by videoconference instead of in person.

Digital copies of the meeting materials will be available at www.thc.texas.gov/videoconferences after April 20, 2021. To obtain a recording of the meeting please contact esther.brickley@thc.texas.gov after April 30, 2021. The members may discuss and/or take action on any of the items listed in the agenda.

1. Call to Order – Chair Bruseth

- A. Committee Introductions
- B. Establish a Quorum
- C. Recognize and/or excuse absences

2. Minutes – Bruseth

Consider approval of the February 2, 2021 Archeology Committee meeting minutes

3. Division Director's Report – Jones

- A. Update on Archeology Division programs and staff
- B. Marine Archeology Program Update - *Borgens*
- C. Lost Cemetery Internship Project Overview - *Dylla*
- D. Texas Archeological Stewardship Network Update - *Shelton*
- E. CFCP Program Update
- F. Upcoming activities/events

4. Adjournment – Bruseth

NOTICE OF ASSISTANCE AT PUBLIC MEETINGS: Persons with disabilities who plan to attend this meeting and who may need auxiliary aids or services such as interpreters for persons who are deaf or hearing impaired, readers, large print or Braille, are requested to contact Laney Fisher at (512) 463-5394 at least four (4) business days prior to the meeting so that appropriate arrangements can be made.

TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

ARCHEOLOGY COMMITTEE MINUTES

Videoconference Meeting

February 2, 2021

9:30 A.M.

Note: For the full text of action items, please contact the Texas Historical Commission at P.O. Box 12276, Austin, TX 78711 or call 512.463-1858

1. Call to Order

Chairman Jim Bruseth opened the Archeology Committee (AC) meeting on February 2, 2021 at 09:30. Bruseth announced that the meeting was being held via videoconference and in conformance with the Texas Open Meetings Act. He announced that the agenda and meeting materials would be available on the Texas Historical Commission's (THC) webpage.

Bruseth welcomed the commissioners to the meeting and introduced himself as the Archeology Committee Chair. He asked the members to state if they were present as he called the names.

Members Present

Pete Peterson
Earl Broussard

Members Absent

Tom Perini

Bruseth completed the roll call, announced that a quorum was established, and opened the meeting.

Bruseth made the motion to excuse Tom Perini.

Pete Peterson moved, and Earl Broussard seconded the motion.

Bruseth called for the vote and the motion passed unanimously.

2. Approval of Minutes

Bruseth called for the approval of the October 27, 2020 Archeology Committee minutes. He asked if the members needed any corrections.

Bruseth heard no corrections and asked a member to make a motion for approval.

Broussard moved first and Peterson seconded.

Bruseth called for the vote and the motion passed unanimously.

3. Re-certification of the Texas Historical Commission's Curatorial Facility for Artifact Research

Bruseth called on Brad Jones to present on the ten-year re-certification process.

Jones presented on the re-certification process for the THC's Curatorial Facility for Artifact Research (CFAR), noting that this was the THC's central curatorial facility and served all the THC's historic sites and the Archeology Divisions collections. CFAR was originally certified in 2011 and was identified as an exemplary facility without deficiency or disabling factors.

Jones stated that the re-certification found no deficiency or disabling factors and highlighted their progress and internal improvements. Jones observed that CFAR had taken on many THC sites in the last ten years, and this had substantially increased the size of the collections.

Jones presented multiple photographs, the collapsible shelving for the archival components of the collections, and the facility. Jones recognized the leadership of Laura DeNormandie and Jamie Ross in growing the facility and developing new procedural documents. Jones explained that the policies expanded out to the historic sites and beyond internal curation. He noted that it was remarkable how the staff maintained, improved, and dealt with the increase of collections. Jones concluded his report and asked for questions.

John Nau asked to define and explain how much more capacity the facility had.

Jones reported that the facilities capacity stood at 1900 boxes and that they currently housed 1580 boxes. Jones stated that the facility would fill up quickly as both the Texas Archeological Research Lab (TARL) and Texas Parks and Wildlife (TPWD) held boxes that still needed to be transferred to CFAR.

Nau explained that the planning for additional space needed to begin and that it made a lot of sense for the state to establish one centralized facility. This would eliminate the need to have multiple locations and made sense from a business perspective. He instructed Bruseth to address the issue of a new facility.

Bruseth commented that this was a great point. He noted that the discussion had started and called on Wolfe and Joseph Bell to elaborate on the topic.

Wolfe thanked Bruseth and stated that the commission made a request of four million dollars in the original legislation appropriation request and that there would be ongoing conversations with officials. Wolfe confirmed the facility was about full.

Nau commented that the conversation should be opened for joint participation and storage efficiency.

Bruseth answered that the point was well taken and that he would continue the conversation with Wolfe and Bell. Bruseth reminded the members of the 1554 and La Belle artifact collections housed in Corpus Christi. He noted their vulnerability on the Gulf of Mexico and that it was paramount for the THC to incorporate both collections in the new facility.

Bell discussed that the commission previously completed a full report on a combined curatorial facility for the Sunset Commission. This report was in coordination with the General Land Office (GLO), TPWD, Facilities Commission, and the Texas Archives and Library. The report detailed what a combined facility could do, and the cost associated with such a move.

Bell underscored that he worked with Jones to calculate the cost for the CFAR growth, incorporation of the coastal collections, and collaboration with the GLO for funding grants.

Nau stated that the archeology group was aware of the cultural value of the artifacts, but he urged the group to place a financial value on the collections as this would garner the attention of the Texas House and Senate members. He ended by stating that the AAB members might urge the other agencies to do the same.

Bell stated that Jones and DeNormandie already established the cost for the CFAR collections. He noted that it was in line with the THC's Fine Arts Policy and that they would coordinate with the other agencies, but that the sum could approach over a hundred million dollars.

Bruseth asked Jones for the value of just the La Belle and 1554 collections.

Jones answered that the estimated value was about twenty-five million dollars combined.

Bruseth assured Nau that the information would be passed on to him. He asked Bell to work with the other agencies and to provide similar information.

Bell affirmed.

Nau thanked the Bruseth and Bell.

Pete Peterson raised the use of unused retail space. He explained that pricing and cost of a facility could lead to exploring shopping malls. Peterson suggested that the facilities were built well enough to be reused.

Bruseth noted that this was good information.

Bruseth asked for further discussion, heard none, and read the motion.

Peterson moved and Broussard seconded.

Bruseth called for a vote and the ten-year re-certification of CFAR was approved unanimously.

4. Division Director's Report

Bruseth asked Jones to update the committee on the collections held at the Corpus Christi Museum of Science and History (CCMSH), the Texas State History Museum, and the La Salle Odyssey museums.

Jones updated on the La Belle and 1554 shipwreck collections housed at the Corpus Christi Museum of Science and History (CCMSH). He informed the committee that CCMSH was the primary repository for both collections and that the Texas State History Museum held the hull of La Belle and that the other La Salle Odyssey museums displayed portions of the collections for the public.

Jones noted that the 1554 collection was coming up on its fifty-year excavation anniversary. He shared that Amy Borgens, staff, interns, and individuals at CCMSH were actively working to re-inventory and provide a

collections assessment. The committee was updated that the collections were in good condition, but that the curation materials had aged.

Bruseth noted that the discovery of the 1554 collections by treasure hunters led to the enactment of the Antiquities Code of Texas.

Jones added that the THC treasured the 1554 collection. He explained that the archeology division was integrating the 1554 collections into dissertations for graduate students from Texas A&M University (TAMU) and the University of West Florida. Jones explained that this allowed for new eyes to work with the collections and that he collaborated with Borgens to re-analyze portions of the collections.

Jones reported that Borgens worked with the underwater unit of the National Park Service (NPS) to conduct a re-survey of the 1554 sites and re-locate the shipwrecks. Jones noted that Borgens and NPS produced a solid report for the committee and that NPS underwater archeologist Dave Conlin had contacted the THC to conduct a ballast study. Jones stated that he was working with NPS and CCMSH to conduct the study.

Jones informed the committee that NPS had invited the THC into a possible collaboration with Spain. This involvement focused on a promotion of Spanish cultural heritage at NPS park sites such as the Padre Island National Seashore. Ideas included the use of Spanish exchange students to translate reports and complete collections care. Spain showed interest in supporting a traveling exhibit.

Bruseth asked if the re-survey provided any clue about where the third shipwreck was located.

Jones informed Bruseth that weather conditions had not allowed the team to go down to the Mansfield Cut. He noted that this is where the wreck was suspected to rest. Jones announced that this would be a project that would need to be re-visited in the future, and that NPS was proposing a series of field investigations in the next year.

Nau asked if this project was within the Texas territorial waters.

Jones replied that it was.

Nau responded that this was great.

Jones advised the commissioner that it was a strange situation. He noted that NPS controlled some of the water but that it overlapped with state waters. Jones informed that this led to joint projects.

Jones's reported that he and Borgens planned to submit articles to a forthcoming book on Spanish colonialism. He noted that they were looking forward to seeing the articles in print.

Jones started his La Belle report. He noted that he participated in a meeting with Peter Fix from TAMU at the Bob Bullock Museum. Fix had informed Jones that they continued to study the hull, planned to install vibration sensors, and a fan system to improve humidity conditions. Jones reported that this would help eliminate issues with the hull.

Jones noted the work was being completed through an agreement between the THC, Bob Bullock, and TAMU. TAMU received a donation for six years of hull conservation. Jones was in the process of reviewing

and ensuring that the agreement fit everyone's needs. He noted that part of the agreement involved a conservation assessment of the La Salle Odyssey collections with a plan to inspect each site in addition to sending out a digital survey to the La Salle Odyssey museums. He concluded that the pandemic delayed the timeline for visiting the institutions, but that he would try to complete this within the next year.

Jones opened the topic of re-locating the collections to a safer area. He explained that he would continue to follow up with the committee as he pursued the relocation project.

Bruseth reiterated the vulnerability of the facilities to a hurricane and noted several of the museums had plans to relocate the collections if a hurricane warning was issued, but he cautioned the group that some of the institutions did not have a plan in place. He further expressed his concern that if the THC did not act, people would question why the resources were not protected.

Jones suggested that this played directly into the emergency plan discussed at the last commission meeting. He shared that most of the small facilities planned to move their collections to CCMSH. Jones stated that the Texas coast was big and that one would hope that the entire coast would not be impacted. It was concluded that an inland location would better protect the cultural resources.

Bruseth thanked Jones.

Jones mentioned the CFAR recertification update and pointed out a few updates to the archeology division webpage. He thanked the IT and Communications divisions for their continued assistance. Jones highlighted the Google map that was created to show the locations of the individual certified facilities. He noted that the individual facilities had the opportunity to showcase their collections. Jones pointed to objects from TPWD and materials from the Texas Panhandle Plains Museum. He encouraged the committee members to visit the webpage.

Jones reported on the success of Texas Archeology Month (TAM). He reiterated that TAM was primarily hosted with virtual meetings. TAM hosted forty participants on the online calendar. Jones stated that he was particularly proud of the twenty different presentations on Texas archeology. He announced that these presentations were available on the THC's YouTube channel.

Jones presented on the first Undertold Archeology Story from November. He highlighted the two tribal representatives that spoke on their perspectives on cultural resource management. Jones stated that it was well attended and that one could find the story on YouTube.

Jones shared that the Archeology Division conducted and visited projects. He highlighted the Mossy Elm project in Travis County. Regional archeologist Tiffany Osburn was notified of this project by the city of Austin when a karst cleanup led to the discovery of artifacts. Jones noted that a permit was pulled and that the group was working to investigate the site, but it was also a rare opportunity for the division to involve staff, volunteers, and stewards in fieldwork.

Jones explained that the other field visits were related to ongoing data recovery projects. He noted that multiple staff members were also involved in online symposiums. For example, Emily Dylla presented her research at the Society for Historical Archeology and Borgens was also in attendance.

Jones presented future activities and events. The first event was the kickoff of an informal meeting with federally recognized tribal representatives as part of a new initiative headed by Marie Archambeault. Jones

Quarterly Report

Archeology Division
January–March 2021

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE DIRECTOR

This quarter has seen the Archeology Division's (AD) full deployment of an online system for Antiquities Code Archeology Permit applications. We have over 52 organizations and 147 principal investigators onboarded into the system and are issuing permits daily. Many thanks to Donald Firsching of the IT department, who has crafted the system to integrate with eTRAC, and Laney Fisher in AD, who has spearheaded the transition to the online system, working with THC reviewers, private companies, and other state agencies. At the upcoming Council of Texas Archeologists' Spring Meeting, AD will also be debuting a new Abstract Submission form that will be accessible through the online system.

Additional events of note include:

- January 7–9—Amy Borgens participated in the Maritime Managers Group meeting and Emily Dylla presented her work on gender in the California Missions during the Society for Historical Archaeology (SHA) Conference that was held online this year.
- February–March—Tiffany Osburn worked with the local authorities to conduct a damage assessment of a looted site on private property along the Frio River in Concan. Damages were assessed at over \$1 million. Two individuals were arrested and a third turned himself in; a grand jury trial will begin in April. The landowner is working with the THC and a private firm to record and nominate the site as a State Antiquities Landmark (SAL).
- February 8 and March 5—Conducted the first two monthly conference calls with federally recognized tribes with ties to Texas (Marie Archambeault, Brad Jones)
- February 11—Virtual presentation to Piney Woods Master Naturalists (Maggie Moore)
- February 23—Visit to inspect SALs and discuss future development and coordination with staff of the Fort Worth Nature Center (Arlo McKee)

- February 24–25—Visit to data recovery excavations being undertaken at Lower Bois D'arc Reservoir (Bill Martin)
- March 1–6—Site visits to ongoing excavations at 41WR123 and 41WR5/8; exhumation of human remains discovered during construction in El Paso; assessment of the Millington Site (41PS14) (Drew Sitters)
- March 6–7—Online instructor for the Texas Archeological Society Academy "Ceramics 101: The Stories Found in Pottery" (Rebecca Shelton)
- March 19—Presentation on "Consulting with Federally Recognized Tribes" for UT-Austin Anthropology undergraduate class (Marie Archambeault)
- March 26—Undertold Archeology Stories virtual presentation series on "Women in Texas Archeology" featuring four archeologists—Pat Mercado-Allinger, Kay Hindes, Marybeth Tomka, and Tamra Walter—discussing their work, the legacy of early women archeologists, and the future of the field (Rebecca Shelton).
- March 29–April 1—Attended the virtual To Bridge A Gap Conference co-hosted by the Delaware Nation and the USDA Forest Service, which provides an opportunity for the federally recognized tribes and Forest Service to strengthen the relationship with their federal and state partners (Bill Martin, Maggie Moore, Emily Dylla, Arlo McKee, Marie Archambeault, Bradford Jones).

MARINE ARCHEOLOGY PROGRAM (MAP)

The MAP has had an increased number of project reviews for this point in the fiscal year, the highest in 13 years and a 54 percent increase in average reviews since last year. In addition, as part of continued coordination with the General Land Office's (GLO) oil spill emergency response, the MAP has revised the THC's marine state tract codes in the GLO viewer, so that these can be used to streamline and expedite cultural resources concerns during spill mitigation. The THC is still part of a multi-

agency task force with the U.S. Coast Guard to develop Area Contingency Plans for the Gulf of Mexico.

The MAP continues coordination with the National Park Service (NPS) as we approach the 50-year anniversary of the 1972 THC excavation/testing of *San Esteban* and *Espiritu Santo*. The NPS will be working with the THC to recognize this significant project, which was the first state-funded underwater archeology data recovery project in the U.S. State Marine Archeologist Amy Borgens also worked collaboratively with the NPS in October 2020 on a post-hurricane Hanna survey assessment of submerged cultural resources off Padre Island National Seashore. The AD has been actively involved in planning a second phase of this work, slated to begin in May. Borgens and AD Division Director Jones submitted draft chapters on the 1554 Shipwreck Project to be included in a Springer Publication on Spanish Colonial Archeology.

For public outreach this quarter, Borgens participated in the Government Maritime Managers Forum at the 2021 SHA conference, and presented a lecture for the Nautical Archeology Program at Texas A&M University.

REVIEW AND COMPLIANCE ACTIVITIES

Under the auspices of the National Historic Preservation Act and the Antiquities Code of Texas, the State and Federal Review Section staff of the AD reviewed approximately 2,393 proposed development projects during the period of January 1–March 31. Of those, about 60 archeological surveys were required to determine whether any significant cultural resources would be adversely affected, and approximately 13,876 acres were surveyed. About 112 historic and prehistoric sites were recorded, and of those, eight were determined eligible for listing in the National Register and 68 were determined not eligible, with 36 of undetermined eligibility.

CURATORIAL FACILITIES CERTIFICATION PROGRAM (CFCP)

The THC's CFCP ensures that state-associated archeological collections are properly curated. During the February THC Quarterly Meeting, the THC's Curatorial Facility for Artifact Research was recertified for another 10-year period. The Witte Museum in San Antonio will submit the self-evaluation component of the CFCP application in April and will be ready for potential certification by the July Commission meeting.

In his capacity as State Archeologist, Jones continues working with staff and Texas Archeological Stewardship Network (TASN) members on AD collections. TASN Steward Janet Dye is assisting staff at the Wheless Lane Archeology Lab with collections from the Old Socorro Mission, Fort Polk, and Brazos Santiago sites.

TEXAS ARCHEOLOGICAL STEWARDSHIP NETWORK (TASN)

The current membership of terrestrial and marine stewards is at 133. At the beginning of January, we reviewed our membership lists, and 23 stewards were up for renewal in 2021. We sent letters requesting renewal in February; to date we have received confirmation from 16 stewards.

To assist THC staff in meeting the diverse inquiries and requests the THC receives, the TASN is collaborating with the History Programs Division and AD staff to develop two pilot programs. The first, initiated by Bob Brinkman (Marker Program), Jenny McWilliams (Cemetery Program), Bob Ward (TASN), and the Travis County Historical Commission, will focus on recruiting volunteers who are skilled in historic research, archives, genealogy, and cemetery preservation. The second, a tribal steward program designed by Regional Archeologist and Tribal Liaison Marie Archambeault, aims to expand THC tribal coordination efforts, foster collaborative relationships with tribal members, and provide preservation training.

We received seven outstanding nominations for 2021. After they were reviewed by AD staff, State Archeologist Jones and TASN Coordinator Becky Shelton met with the Advisory Committee on February 25 to review and finalize the nominations. Invitation letters have been sent, and nominations will be finalized next month.

Based on the successful turn-out and participation of last year's fully virtual TASN Workshop and Annual Meeting, we will host an online meeting for the membership this summer. In addition, we are planning multiple smaller workshops that will focus on specific topics such as the Archeological Sites Atlas, development of volunteer roles within the new pilot programs, and other regionally specific training as needed.

We sadly note that Rolla Shaller passed away in February. He joined the TASN in 1993 and was an integral part of our network. Rolla was a mentor to countless members of the archeology community, an excellent researcher, and quite the humorist. We will miss him dearly.