Archeology Committee

April 27, 2023

TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

REAL PLACES TELLING REAL STORIES

TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

AGENDA
ARCHEOLOGY COMMITTEE

Embassy Suites Austin Central
Agave A-B
5901 N. Interstate Hwy 35
Austin, TX 78723
April 27, 2023
10:00 a.m.

This meeting of the Archeology Committee has been properly posted with the Secretary of State's Office according to the provisions of the Texas Open Meetings Act, Chapter 551, Texas Government Code. The members may discuss and/or take action on any of the items listed in the agenda.

1. **Call to Order** – *Chairman Bruseth*

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

2. **Consider approval of committee minutes** – *Bruseth*

   a. Archeology Committee Meeting (October 17, 2022)
   b. Archeology Committee Meeting (January 31, 2023)

3. **Division Director's Report** - *Jones*

   A. Update on Archeology Division Programs and staff - *Jones*

      1. Division Staffing
      2. Director Updates
      3. TASN Update – *Shelton*
      4. Marine Archeology Program – *Borgens*
      5. Curatorial Facilities Certification Program – *Jones*

   B. Upcoming activities/events - *Jones*

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 Paige Neumann at (512) 463-5768 at least four (4) business days prior to the meeting so that appropriate arrangements can be made.

TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Archeology Committee Members

4/27/2023

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TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

ARCHEOLOGY COMMITTEE MEETING

Minutes

The Stella Hotel
Celeste Ballroom
4100 Lake Atlas Drive
Bryan, TX 77807
October 17, 2022
9:00 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

Commissioner Pete Peterson opened the Archeology Committee (AC) meeting on October 17, 2022, at 9:00 A.M. He announced that the members would discuss and act on any of the items listed on the agenda. He welcomed everyone to the Archeology Committee meeting and called the roll.

Members Present	**Members Absent**
Pete Peterson	Jim Bruseth
Donna Bahorich	Earl Broussard
Tom Perini	

Commissioner Peterson announced that Commissioners Jim Bruseth and Earl Broussard were absent. He called for a motion to excuse the absence.

Commissioner Peterson heard no objection, a quorum was established, and the meeting was opened.

2. Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Peterson asked if changes or corrections were needed for the July 25th, 2022, AC minutes, and hearing none, called for a motion to approve. Commissioner Donna Bahorich seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

3. Division Report

Commissioner Peterson called on Brad Jones to present his division report.

Jones opened by showcasing a permitted archeological project taking place behind the THC offices in Austin. He presented an introduction to the seven fall semester interns and stated the importance of their assistance but also of this opportunity for their professional development.

Jones updated the AC on the Battle of Medina project. He stated that the project was currently conducting fieldwork and that the pieces of the project were coming together. He anticipates Brandon Seale will present an update to the committee in 2023.

Jones recognized that October is Texas Archeology Month (TAM). He highlighted the over 6,000 "Pinch Pot Kits" that were distributed and provided a brief overview of the management, events, products, and volunteers involved with the project. He also previewed the Spanish-language version of the 1554 shipwrecks TAM poster.

Jones provided an update from the Marine Archeology program focused on THC's application for the "National Maritime Heritage Grant Program Application". The grant is a collaboration between the Archeology and Architecture Divisions and the Friends of the THC. If successful the grant would fund a granting program for maritime resources in the state, but that part of the grant program would involve a "project" for the identification of the French privateer Aury's 1817 settlements in Matagorda Bay. A combined marine and terrestrial survey, it would explore his shipwrecks, settlements on land, and the impact of coastal change on site preservation.

Jones shared an update on the recent publication of the Texas Archeological Stewards Network (TASN) newsletter and drew attention to upcoming events – particularly the TAS Annual Meeting in Tyler - where staff would be presenting on THC programs.

Jones concluded his presentation.

Item 4. Adjournment

Commissioner Peterson motioned to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Bahorich seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

MINUTES
ARCHEOLOGY COMMITTEE

DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel
Phoenix Ballroom South
6505 N IH 35
Austin, TX 78752
January 31, 2023
9:00 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 512.463.6100

1. Call to Order

The meeting of the Texas Historical Committee (THC) Archeology Committee was called to order by Chairman Jim Bruseth at 9:01 am on January 31, 2023. He announced that the meeting had been posted with the Secretary of State's Office according to the provisions of the Texas Open Meetings Act, Chapter 551, Texas Government Code.

A. **Committee Introductions**

Committee members present included:
Commissioner Jim Bruseth
Commissioner Pete Peterson

Commissioners absent included:
Commissioner Tom Perini
Commissioner Donna Bahorich
Commissioner Earl Broussard

B. **Establish a Quorum**

Due to the inclement weather affecting travel and Committee attendance, the Archeology Committee was unable to establish a quorum.

C. **Recognize and/or excuse absences**

Due to the lack of a quorum, this action was deferred until the April Quarterly meeting.

2. Approval of Minutes of Archeology Committee Meeting (October 17, 2022)

Because the Archeology Committee did not have a quorum, no action was taken and the minutes for the October 17, 2022, Archeology Committee meeting will be approved at the subsequent April Quarterly Meeting.

3. Division Director's Report

Archeology Division (AD) Director Bradford Jones provided an update on AD and staff. Jones provided an overview of the successful October 2022 Texas Archeology Month (TAM) programming that was supported by the AD and other THC staff, including the production and distribution of

over 6,000 pinch-pot kits by staff and public volunteers, the first TAM event at the THC's French Legation Historic Site, and 52 events that occurred with partners in 34 counties across the state.

Jones summarized recent work conducted by the Marine Archeology Program, including State Marine Archeologist Amy Borgens participation in several television and news stories relating to Texas underwater archeology and the recording of the current exposed shipwreck on Boca Chica Beach in Cameron County with interns and local volunteers.

Jones described AD's ongoing Monthly Tribal Coordination Meetings. Established two years ago, AD Director Jones and Tribal Liaison Marie Archambeault offer an informal monthly meeting with the 29 federally-recognized tribes that have expressed an interest in Texas. This monthly meeting provides an important forum for tribal representatives and THC staff to discuss issues of shared concern as well as provide ongoing information on THC programs that may be of interest.

Jones reported on a recent meeting with representatives from Southern Methodist University regarding their ongoing work to establish themselves as a certified repository under the THC's Curatorial Facilities Certification Program. Additionally, Jones informed the Committee that AD was continuing to work with Peter Fix at the Texas A&M Conservation Research Lab to continue assessing conservation needs for the *La Belle* collection, including a visit to the Matagorda County Museum to assess and make recommendations for the continued care of the bronze cannon on display.

Finally, Jones noted that AD staff were presenting at the Real Places Conference, that AD staff Jones, Emily Dylla, Amy Borgens, and Rebecca Shelton would be attending and presenting at the Society for American Archaeology Conference in Portland, Oregon in late March and early April, and finally that staff would be involved in the April Council of Texas Archeologists meeting.

4. **Adjournment**

At 11:22 Commissioner Bruseth adjourned the Archeology Committee meeting.

Quarterly Report

Archeology Division
January–March 2023

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE DIRECTOR

The past quarter will mark the final months of AD's Team Lead for Review and Compliance, Bill Martin. He has been a fixture of the state's regulatory review process for over 34 years, participating in the THC's most important project reviews across the state, presenting to conferences and classrooms, and serving as a mentor to numerous staff in AD and other THC divisions. We wish him the best in his well-deserved retirement.

Other staff activities of note:

• January 16—Met with David S. Duke and Charlie Angell to discuss ground disturbances at El Polvo, a State Antiquities Landmark located along the northern banks of the Rio Grande in Presidio County. (Drew Sitters)

• January 17—Met with Big Bend Ranch State Park archeologist, Tim Gibbs, to discuss the preliminary results of archeological testing at sites 41PS116 and 41PS449. (Drew Sitters)

• January 18-19—Traveled to El Paso to meet with Valerie Venecia (El Paso County's Heritage Tourism Coordinator) and Peter Condon (El Paso County Historical Commission) to discuss the need for archeological investigations at Casa Ronquillo in San Elizario. Met with International Boundary and Water Commission archeologist, Mark Howe, to discuss upcoming projects along the border. (Drew Sitters)

• January 30-February 2—AD staff participated in two sessions at the Real Places conference discussing the archeology and history of the lower Rio Grande Valley and tribal perspectives on historical markers (Amy Borgens, Bradford Jones, Marie Archambeault)

• March 6-9—Attended U.S. Forest Service Annual Bridge the Gap tribal consultation meeting in Quapaw, Oklahoma (Marie Archambeault, Drew Sitters)

• February 7—Conducted a site visit to the Candlelight Ranch in Burnet County, a camp for underprivileged and differently-abled children, to consult on archeological sites and educational programing (Tiffany Osburn)

• February 25—Participated in the annual Washington-on-the-Brazos Texas Independence Day Celebration, manning a shared information booth with participants from our History Programs Division and Historic Sites Division. (Jeff Durst)

• February 28—Attended a half day meeting in Wimberley with regional land trust leaders centered on scaling land conservation capacity in the Hill Country (Tiffany Osburn).

• March 1-3—Attended the Texas Land Trust Conference in Austin, interacting with land conservation professionals from across the state and attending sessions focused on new conservation methods, funding sources, and stewardship practices that can be applied to archeological conservation and heritage lands. (Tiffany Osburn, Rebecca Shelton)

• March 8—Conducted an initial site assessment of the 4,200-acre Weston Ranch Foundation property in Guadalupe County to help inform their goals of conservation and preservation of historic resources. (Jeff Durst)

• March 29-April 2-Attended Society for American Archeology Annual Meeting in Portland, Oregon. (Emily Dylla, Brad Jones, Amy Borgens, Rebecca Shelton)

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 Archeology Division reviewed 1812 proposed development projects during the period of January 1 through March 13. Of those, 56 archeological surveys were required to determine whether any significant cultural resources would be adversely affected, and approximately 19,304.64 acres were surveyed. About 130 historic and prehistoric sites were recorded, and

of those, 13 were determined eligible for listing in the National Register and 106 were determined not eligible, with eleven of undetermined eligibility.

MARINE ARCHEOLOGY PROGRAM (MAP)

Among the projects reviewed during the spring quarter, the MAP has been working with the contract archeological firm, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the Port of Corpus Christi Authority to resolve concerns regarding the underwater archeological survey and reporting for the Corpus Christi Channel modification project. In the continuing effort to improve accessibility of THC underwater data to registered users of the Texas Archeological Sites Atlas (Atlas), additional legacy MAP project reports were reformatted or completed and added to Atlas. This includes editing and collating 20 years of annual underwater permit reports (1998–2018) into a single volume and finalizing project reports for THC investigations led by former State Marine Archeologist Steve Hoyt at Indianola and Sabine Pass. The Indianola report was unfinished and completed by State Marine Archeologist Amy Borgens with the assistance of student intern Hunter Johnson, who also served as a co-author.

In March, Borgens was interviewed by reporters from KRGV-TV, RGV, and *Texas Highways* magazine. The focus of the KRGV news story is the Boca Chica Beach shipwreck, exposed since November 2022. The *Texas Highways* article will discuss aspects of Texas underwater archeology. The episode "the Alamo" of the National Geographic series "Drain the Ocean" was broadcast at the end of December 2022, and is available on the National Geographic Channel and Disney+. The opening segment of the episode is the Pass Cavallo Shipwreck, discovered by the National Underwater and Marine Agency in 1998 and subject to a limited data recovery project led by former state marine archeologist Steve Hoyt that same year. The conservation and study of the artifacts at the Conservation Research Laboratory was helmed by Borgens as her thesis project (1998–2004) while a student in the Nautical Archeology Program at Texas A&M University. This vessel may represent the wrecked remains of an 1817 privateer that was part of a fleet that aided Mexico in the years leading up to the Mexican Revolution.

CURATORIAL FACILITIES CERTIFICATION PROGRAM (CFCP) and AD COLLECTIONS

The THC's CFCP ensures that state-associated archeological collections are properly curated. AD maintains over 300 archeological site collections and is currently managing several research projects. On January 19, Bradford Jones visited Southern Methodist University to continue discussions on CFCP certification with new collections manager Dr. Adler. Interns Samantha Hernandez (Angelo State), Ryann Ramirez (UT-Austin), Faizan Khan (UT-Austin) assisted in the ongoing rehabilitation of AD collections. Of note, Hernandez is working on a THC blog post and gallery page for Texas Beyond History on Spanish colonial grater bowls from THC excavations at the Keeran Site and collections from the Old Socorro Mission State Historic Site.

TEXAS ARCHEOLOGICAL STEWARDSHIP NETWORK (TASN)

The current steward membership is 130, with 38 stewards up for renewal in 2023. We sent renewal request letters in December 2022, and received confirmation from 33 stewards to continue their terms. We received six nominations for new members, which AD staff reviewed and provided recommendations to State Archeologist Jones. TASN Coordinator Becky Shelton and Jones met with the Advisory Committee on February 21 to review the nominations. Invitation letters have been sent, and we will finalize these nominations next month. Shelton was invited to present on the TASN at the Society for American Archeology Annual Meeting in Portland, Oregon, April 1. The symposium, "Site Stewardship Matters: Comparing and Contrasting Site Stewardship Programs to Advance Our Practice" will include site steward coordinators from seven states. All the presenters have been involved in a national effort to learn which methods and practices can help develop and strengthen our programs. The national organization is the Partners for Archeological Site Stewardship sitestewardship.org. The Spring 2023 issue of the steward newsletter is undergoing the final production and should be on the TASN webpage by April 1: thc.texas.gov/tasn Finally, the annual meeting and workshop will be held May 6 at Fort Concho National Historic Landmark in San Angelo.