

TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
real places telling real stories

November 1, 2022

Re: County Historical Commission (CHC) Appointments

Dear County Judges and Commissioners,

CHC appointments are professional commitments to represent the county's interests in preserving historic and cultural heritage. During 2021, CHCs reported having contributed 284,046 hours of service to counties across Texas, which carries a monetary value of \$8.5 million using rates published on independentsector.org.

This extraordinary contribution is thanks to the dedicated and productive individuals who are appointed by county commissioners courts to serve on your county's CHC. Now is the time to identify potential appointees who will contribute consistently during the 2023–2024 term of service. Consider how your county can benefit from a CHC comprised of experienced and active appointees.

Chapter 318 of the Texas Local Government Code directs county commissioners courts to make CHC appointments in January of odd-numbered years for a two-year term. To ensure a smooth transition between terms, consider approving 2023–2024 appointments by December 31 with a start date of January 1, 2023.

We encourage you to appoint individuals that demonstrate an active interest in preserving historic and cultural resources in your county. CHCs should represent the age range and ethnic diversity of all precincts in your county.

The enclosed flyers provide supplemental information on recommended appointee criteria and submitting appointee rosters to our agency as required by state statutes. This information will help you appoint individuals who can assist in efforts to preserve historic resources, encourage heritage tourism, and revitalize communities.

Thank you in advance for sharing CHC appointee contact information for the 2023–2024 term of service.

Emiliano Calderon, Coordinator
County Historical Commission Outreach Program

Enclosed: CHC Organizational Flyers 1 & 2, 2021 CHC Annual Report Summary



Texas Local Government Code, Chapter 318, enables county commissioners courts to appoint individuals to serve on county historical commissions (CHC). Section 318.003(d) directs county commissioners courts to provide the Texas Historical Commission (THC) with a list of appointees and their mailing addresses. The information below will help county officials and staff submit accurate information to the THC.

Montgomery CHC receives a 2021 Distinguished Service Award (DSA).



Prior to Submitting Appointments

Before selecting appointees, please verify that potential appointees and those proposed for reappointment are willing and able to serve. Ensuring an active level of commitment is important since many appointees have responsibilities outside the CHC that may require them to change the focus of their service. Please work with CHC appointees to determine preservation activities that the county and appointees feel confident pursuing.

CHCs have resumed indoor and outdoor activities in increasing numbers since the pandemic. To support these efforts, THC staff have provided recommendations for preservation-related work here: www.thc.texas.gov/thc-recommendations-chcs-2020-interim. These webpages highlight ongoing CHC projects to demonstrate how appointees continue to preserve and protect resources during this time.

Ensuring Accurate Appointee Contact Information

Please gather the names, physical addresses, phone numbers, and email addresses for CHC appointees and enter the information into the roster template provided here: www.thc.texas.gov/chc-appointments. Submitting appointee information using this Microsoft Excel template enables our agency to merge data from 254 counties, creating a mass mailing list to promote opportunities and services that contribute to the livelihood of your CHC.

Submitting 2023-2024 CHC Appointee Rosters

Please ask county staff to complete the CHC appointee roster template noted above in Microsoft Excel and email the roster to CHC Outreach Specialist, Jaelyn Zapata- (512) 475-2692, jaelyn.zapata@thc.texas.gov.

Goliad CHC appointees conduct a headstone inventory at the Pettus Cemetery.



Texas Local Government Code, Chapter 318, enables county commissioners courts to appoint individuals to serve on county historical commissions (CHC). Visit the following webpage to reference a record copy of these statutes: www.statutes.capitol.texas.gov/Docs/LG/htm/LG.318.htm. The statutes provide minimal direction for appointment methodology and appointee criteria. This flyer comments on both issues in response to county official inquiries.

Statutory Directives for CHC Composition

- CHC must be composed of at least 7 county residents; statutes do not include a maximum number of appointees.
- Appointees serve a two-year term, ideally beginning in January of odd-numbered years.
- Appointees must broadly reflect the age, ethnic, and geographic diversity of the county.
- Appointees must have an interest in historic preservation and an understanding of local history and resources.

Appointment Methodology

Statutes do not address the exact methodology for appointing CHCs. Our research shows that this process varies somewhat from county to county. Some county officials interview individuals seeking the appointment and others accept recommendations from existing CHC appointees. Whatever method your county selects, please consider the following recommendations prior to appointment. Applying statutory criteria along with our recommended criteria ensures that appointees are active, work well with others, and leave a positive impression with the public.

Recommended Appointee Criteria

Please appoint individuals who can contribute in a variety of ways. If possible, appoint individuals who have Internet access (home, CHC office, or public hub), can leave home to perform site visits, and will maintain a positive attitude. Appointees should be able to meet the following recommended criteria.

- Able and committed to attend full commission meetings; statutes require at least 4 meetings per year.
- Able and willing to volunteer time to plan and manage projects, programs, and events.
- Able to receive/respond to public inquiries about county historic resources in a timely manner.
- Able and willing to attend preservation education opportunities outside of their county.
- Able to provide site visits to historic properties within the county to update property inventories and provide current information on site conditions to THC staff.



Young CHC appointees refinish a State Historical Marker.

2021 CHC Annual Report Summary

County Historical Commission (CHC) Performance Highlights

The Texas Historical Commission received reports from 193 County Historical Commissions (CHC) for the 2021 year of service. Below are primary reporting statistics that demonstrate the breadth and value of CHC services.

- **284,046 CHC volunteer hours represents work of 136 employees and has a monetary value of \$8,507,177.***
- **Return on investment**—for every \$1 counties invested in CHCs, \$8.19 worth of service was returned by CHCs.
- CHCs supplemented county money with \$353,167 from grants, donations, and fundraisers.

Financial data from 2021 CHC annual reports	Average allocation	Reporting Totals
Annual county allocation—117 CHCs received 2021 allocation:	\$6,436	\$753,104
County money allotted for museums—16 CHCs provided amounts:	\$8,779	\$140,463
Any other money issued by the county:		\$144,159
Total county monies invested:		\$1,037,726

General information about Texas CHCs based on 2021 CHC reports

- Average size of reporting CHCs is 16 appointees and usually hold five meetings per year.
- CHCs provide an average of 1,472 volunteer hours per year; reports show zero hours upwards to 10,000 hours.
- CHCs participate in a wide range of activities, some of which are noted below.

Select preservation activity based on 193 CHC reports for 2021 year of service	# of participating CHCs
Visit sites to monitor the physical condition of subject markers in your county	111
Visit sites to monitor the physical condition of cemeteries in your county	105
Visit sites to monitor the physical condition of designated properties (RTHL, NR)	55
Promoted historic and cultural sites to sustain heritage tourism initiatives	82
Made concerted efforts to improve online presence of CHC and/or county	83
Provided educational events/presentations to audiences outside your CHC	99
Provided educational events/presentations to youth/schools	72
CHC appointees volunteered at a historic site that is open to the public at large	82
Provided tours of historic buildings and/or sites within the county	67

* Current estimated volunteer hourly rate is \$29.95 as per independentsector.org.

Reporting data as of 6/17/22