

Fort Concho Museum Board Minutes

April 20, 2021

I. OPEN SESSION

A. Call to Order - President Roger Banks called the meeting to order at 3:29 p.m. at the Fort Concho Officers' Quarters 8, 215 Avenue D.

B. Determination of a quorum –Site Manager, Bob Bluthardt established that a quorum was present with eleven members.

Members present at 3:29 p.m.: Roger Banks, Sherley Spears, Joyce Lowe, Lisa Marley, Brandon Allen, Lori Barton, Dave Schaller, Major Don Barger appeared in the seat for the Goodfellow AFB US Army 344th Military Intelligence Battalion, Don Barnhart, and Dr. Jason Pierce. Yukio Kuniyuki arrived at 3:34 p.m.

C. Approval of excused absences – Kathy Keane and Curtis Milbourn were absent. Absences were approved by unanimous vote.

D. Introduction of guests – Diann Bayes, San Angelo Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB); Conrad McClure, living history volunteer; Cory Robinson, Fort Curator of History and Hannah Hill, ASU intern assisting Mr. Robinson.

E. Presentations – Diann Bayes, CVB, spoke about the effects of the pandemic. Travel in 2020 was down 31%. Employment was down 18%. Tax revenue was down 24%. Decreases in tax revenues hit at the state and city level. San Angelo tax revenues were at about the 2017 level, or just slightly higher, but things will get better. Travel and hotel occupancy in January and February of 2021 were down, even with the stock show event. Some things have already started coming back, such as meetings. There are 120 meetings on the books for March. Work is ongoing to schedule more meetings. The CVB is in the process of hiring a sales manager. The bureau is conducting a lodging survey and a tourism study to prepare a tourism master plan. Ms. Bayes was in Austin last week meeting with Representative Drew Darby. San Angelo has an application pending to be designated Visual Arts Capital of Texas. This is a ten-year designation and we will know the outcome by the first week in May. In addition, an intern from Angelo State is working on a “Bird City Texas” designation. There are many exciting events planned this year. There will be a Formula 1 Air Race at the airport on Halloween weekend. The first Sky West flight of the new service to Houston leaves tomorrow. The Fort Concho Board is invited to the Tourism Luncheon at the Stables Hall on May 11th. The theme is “The Power of Travel.”

F. Public Comment - None.

II. CONSENT AGENDA

1. Consideration of approving the March 16, 2021 Minutes – Lisa Marley moved to accept the minutes of 03/16/2021. Lori Barton seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

2. Treasurer's Report - Treasurer, Lisa Marley, presented the following:

We are half way through our city budget year. Revenue from the earned and donated income, city General Revenue, and hotel occupancy tax is at \$473,547.00. Our six-month operating expenses are at \$443,913.00. We are \$29,634.00 in the black. We are still not collecting admission fees; however, donations are up. We will determine when to resume admission fees in the next month or so. The gift shop is doing well. We are still down \$74,000.00 from the cancellation of Christmas at Old Fort Concho in 2020. However, our expenses were down as well so that is a good thing. There were increased heating expenses because of the cold snap in February, but we will still be at or near a balanced budget. Brandon Allen moved to accept the treasurer's report. Dave Schaller seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

3. Site Manager's Report -Bob Bluthardt, Site Manager, deferred to items 8 and 9.

III. REGULAR AGENDA: PUBLIC HEARING AND COMMENTS

8. Update on Exhibit Improvements at Barracks 2 – Cory Robinson and Hannah Hill reported that they are taking photos of the collections and inputting data to implement the master plan for interpretation. They are putting together an exhibit at Barracks 2 to feature artillery and wagons. Ms. Hill presented the plan for creating platforms to draw the eye and to create a setting so that items are staged and not just 'stored' for visitor viewing.

9. Update on Memorial Plaque for Fort Concho Living History Program Volunteers – Conrad McClure expressed thanks for the board's approval of the plaque. He reported on the progress in obtaining the plaque as a memorial to honor the volunteer soldiers who have passed on. The memorial plaque will be located in the living history stables. Placement will provide maximum exposure for visitors to see and appreciate the volunteers' service. Roger Banks pointed out that Mr. McClure began his work at the fort as a volunteer in 1982 and became a staff member in 1983. He retired in 2005, but remains the quintessential volunteer living history reenactor due to his extensive knowledge and exacting appearance.

4. Fort Board Nominations Update – Bob reported that there are two slots available on the board. There are no new nominations at this time. Bob reported on the terms and expiration of terms for current board members.

6. 2021 Membership Drive Report – We are at \$27,000.00 in memberships. Bob asked board members to remember to submit their memberships and to recruit new members.

7. Update on Barracks/Mess Hall 3-4 Project and 13. Fort Concho Foundation Report – Roger reported that the Foundation Board met today. The market is good, oil and gas investments are doing well. Roger provided a handout of the barracks/mess hall project milestones. The handout is attached to these minutes. All portions of the project required by the city have been accomplished. The project is now in the hand of the San Angelo Area Foundation. Bids are out and eight companies are interested in the project. It is a large project, but not a complicated one.

5. Consideration and Approval of Collections – No acquisitions to report today. Tom Railsback 'wrote the book' on military music. He is donating his collection of historic military instruments. Gordon Chappell 'wrote the book' on military helmets. Mr. Chappell passed away last week and Dr. Langellier is working with the Chappell estate to assess the collection and to get the relevant portion of

it donated to Fort Concho. We expect the Chappell collection to arrive on site in 2022. The Railsback collection, donated last week, will be here soon. Bob will keep the board informed of progress on both collections.

10. Review of topics for Joint Board Meeting with San Angelo Museum of Fine Arts – Following today’s board meeting, we will reconvene at SAMFA in the main building for dinner and discussions in a joint meeting with the SAMFA board. Topics are the cultural district and the Oakes Street Bridge.

11. Staff Reports - Bob reported that all is well with the staff. The part-time guide position is posted and there were 20 applications. The maintenance position, previously held open, is posted. The administrative assistant position remains open so that we stay on budget, but it will be posted later in year.

12. Building Maintenance and Repairs Updates – Bob reported that masonry and window work continues. There is a second contractor crew needed for some of the roofing work. Fort maintenance staff will work on columns. Soon all roofs at the fort will be younger than three years for the first time ever.

14. Future Agenda Items – Email Bob or Roger if you have future agenda items.

15. Announcements – The Regional Cavalry Competition starts tomorrow and continues through Saturday. There will be 25 riders this year. The Cowboy Concert will be Saturday, May 1st at the bandstand. This is a preview of the October 7-11 event. There is a Speaker Series installment tomorrow with one more to follow in the series. We need volunteers to staff a table at Officer’s Quarters 4 for Frontier Days on Saturday. Roger circulated a sign-up sheet. There was a discussion of San Angelo Gives and incentives. Members will work to maximize donations to obtain \$35-37K needed for shelving units. Bob will email members regarding the May 11th Tourism Luncheon. There are limited spaces so you will need to email your RSVP to Bob.

16. Adjournment and Meeting at San Angelo Museum of Fine Arts - Sherley Spears moved to adjourn. Dave Schaller, seconded the motion which carried unanimously. Roger adjourned the meeting at 4:44 p.m. Members reconvened for dinner and discussion at SAMFA.

Respectfully submitted,

Joyce K. Lowe
Board Secretary