



City of Richmond

Where History Meets Opportunity

Monument Ad Hoc Committee Workshop via Video Conference call (pursuant to Texas Government Code, Section 551.127)

Thursday, September 24, 2020 at 3:00 P.M.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/95486634572>

Meeting ID: 954 8663 4572

One tap mobile

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+19292056099,,95486634572# US (New York)

Dial by your location

+1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose)

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+1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)

+1 301 715 8592 US (Germantown)

+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

+1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)

AGENDA

- A1. Call to Order, Quorum Determined, Meeting Declared Open.
- A2. Approve minutes of meeting held on September 17, 2020.
- A3. Discuss and consider approval of notice to submit claim to artifact.
- A4. Discuss and consider approval of notice of public comment.
- A5. Discuss information needed to fulfil charge for possible recommendations to the City Commission.

Any item on this posted agenda may be discussed in Executive Session provided it is within one of the permitted categories under Chapter 551 of the Texas Government Code.

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- A6. Set Future Meeting date(s).
- A7. Discuss Future agenda items.
- A8. Adjournment.

If, during the course of the meeting covered by this Agenda, the Commission shall determine that an executive session of the Commission, should be held or is required in relation to any item included in this Agenda, then such executive session, as authorized by the Texas Open Meetings Act, will be held by the Board at the date, hour, and place given in this Agenda concerning any and all subjects and for any and all purposes permitted by Sections 551.071-551.084 of the Texas Government Code, including, but not limited to, Section 551.071 – for purpose of a private consultation with the Board’s attorney on any or all subjects or matters authorized by law.

NOTICE OF ASSISTANCE AT THE PUBLIC MEETING

The City of Richmond City Commission meetings are available to all persons regardless of disability. This facility is wheelchair accessible and accessible parking spaces are available. Requests for accommodations, should you require special assistance, must be made 48 hours prior to this meeting. Braille is not available. Please contact the City Secretary’s office at (281) 342-5456 ex. 505 for needed accommodations. If you have any questions please let me know.

Terri Vela



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A1. Call to Order, Quorum Determined, Meeting Declared Open.



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A2. Approve minutes of meeting held on September 17, 2020.



STATE OF TEXAS
COUNTY OF FORT BEND
CITY OF RICHMOND

The City Commission for the City of Richmond, Texas met in Monument Ad Hoc Committee on September 24, 2020 at 3:00 p.m.

Committee Chairman Alex BeMent proceeded to call the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. via video conference pursuant to Texas Government Code, Section 551.125, as amended, and as modified by the temporary suspension of various provisions thereof effective March 16, 2020, by the Governor of Texas in accordance with the Texas Disaster Act of 1975, all as related to the Governor's proclamation on March 13, 2020, certifying that the COVID-19 pandemic poses an imminent threat of disaster and declaring a state of disaster for all counties in Texas. All members of the public may participate in the meeting via video conference call.

A quorum was present, with the following members in attendance:

Alex BeMent, Committee Chair (City Commissioner, Position 4)

Terri Vela, City Manager

Rob Quarles, Representative of Vincent Morales, County Commissioner Precinct 1

Keely Knipling, Vice President of the Fort Bend History Association

Gary Smith, City Attorney

Roy Cordes, County Attorney

Agenda item A2, Discuss Rules of Procedure and introduction of Chair of the Committee. Committee Chair Alex BeMent inquired if the Rules and Procedures needed to be read aloud to the Committee. All committee members stated they had read them. Committee Chair BeMent introduced himself and provided his background and then requested all board members introduce themselves. The agenda item was closed.

Agenda item A3, Elect the Vice Chair. Committee Member Terri Vela nominated Rob Quarles to hold the office of Vice Chair. Committee Chair BeMent seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous to approve. Rob Quarles will serve as the Vice Chair of the Monument Ad Hoc Committee.

Agenda item A4, Discuss charge provided by the City Commission. Committee Chair BeMent proceeded to read the charge which provided the guidelines and tasks assigned to the committee by the City of Richmond City Commission. The charge stated a report would be provided to the City Commission of its findings and recommendations by September 25, 2020. Committee Chair BeMent stated the deadline may be difficult to adhere to but would strive to act swiftly and resolve the issues as soon as possible. Committee Member Quarles echoed that statement stating the County Commissioner is highly motivated to find a resolution. With no further discussion, the agenda item was closed.

Agenda item A5, Discuss information needed to fulfill charge for possible recommendations to the City Commission. Committee Chair stated the charge takes two options off the table; destruction of the monument and doing nothing. Committee member Vela stated her position is to move the monument to an historical location. This would free up the space if perhaps the City needed to increase the footprint of the current building. The options that have been reviewed are the Morton Cemetery which requires some allowances and a cemetery not within the city limits but still in Fort Bend County called Hodges Cemetery. The Fort Bend Historical Association has stated it does not have a location available. Committee member Knipling stated the monument should now be considered an artifact, it is no longer a monument. Committee Member Knipling stated her opinion would be to move the artifact to another location and provide it as an education artifact tool. Committee Member Quarles stated he was in agreement with both committee members and stated it was, “refreshing to know they are all on the same page”. Committee Member Vela reviewed the potential costs of relocating the artifact which was a range of \$45,000 to \$75,000. Committee Member Vela stated she was not in favor of using citizen tax dollars to relocate. Committee Member Quarles stated the County is reviewing other funding sources and trying to be creative. Committee Chair BeMent inquired if a *Go Fund Me* account would be an option. Committee Member Knipling inquired if Wessendorff Park would be an option. Also, it was stated that three private citizens had offered locations. One private citizen had attempted to claim ownership. The question of the ownership issues and how that should be determined was discussed with comments from the City Attorney Gary Smith. Attorney Smith stated in researching the county records that there is no record of conveyance to the county, no conveyance to the City and in 1940, the artifact was on the property when the City purchased the property. The easement (not the artifact) was deeded to the City by Fort Bend County. Publishing in the newspaper a Public Notice to the unknown owners was suggested. County Attorney Roy Cordes stated that he was not authorized to release his conversations with the County. Committee Member Knipling stated the results of the monument survey should be used as a starting point or foundation for discussion. There were 617 responses from the survey that provided suggestions as to what should be done with the monument. Some of those suggestions were as follows; Decker Park, Austin, and out of the state. Committee Chair BeMent stated his preference would be for the artifact to stay in Fort Bend County. In

discussing the costs, Committee Member Vela stated the costs estimates previously provided were to relocate locally. There are more costs involved such as the base which is very heavy. The relocation should be paid for by non-taxable revenue and use the Fort Bend Historical Association as the entity to whom donations may be made. The debate has brought awareness to the other individuals that were involved, Arizona Fleming and Willie Melton. Committee Chair BeMent provided a recap stating the next meeting will have the draft for the notice in the paper to claim ownership and citizen input. Also, funding options will be discussed. City Attorney Smith stated a draft for a Public Notice to solicit input for location suggestions would be provided. Committee Chair BeMent stated as custodian of the artifact it is our obligation to act upon it.

Agenda item A6, Set Future Meeting date(s). Committee Member Vela made the motion for the next meeting was set for September 24, 2020 at 3:00 p.m. The motion was seconded by Committee Member Quarles.

Agenda item A7. Discuss Future Agenda Items. Financing the movement or relocation of the artifact/monument. Publishing notices for intent to move and citizen input will be reviewed. Committee Member Vela inquired as to the time frame of the input. Committee Member Knipling stated it should include the responses from the first survey, letters received by City staff and responses received from the future request for input.

With no further business to discuss, Committee Chairman BeMent declared the meeting adjourned at 4:08 p.m.

APPROVED:

Alex BeMent, Committee Chairman

Attest:

Laura Scarlato, City Secretary



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Thursday, September 24, 2020 at 3:00 p.m.

A3. Discuss and consider approval of notice to submit claim to artifact.

Notice to submit claim to artifact

NOTICE TO SUBMIT CLAIMS TO ARTIFACT (JAYBIRD MONUMENT) LOCATED AT SOUTHEAST CORNER OF CITY HALL SITE, 402 MORTON STREET, RICHMOND, TEXAS, BY PUBLICATION TO ALL PERSONS INTERESTED IN SAID ARTIFACT:

The City of Richmond, Texas, has formed an ad hoc committee to make recommendations regarding the relocation and/or modification of the artifact located on the southeast corner of the City Hall site at 402 Morton Street, commonly referred to as the Jaybird Monument. The artifact, also referred to as the Frost, Gibson and Shamblin Monument, as consented by Fort Bend County Commissioners Court on October 14, 1895, was erected on the site of the former Fort Bend County Courthouse by the Jay Bird Democratic Association of Fort Bend County on March 18, 1896.

If you claim an interest in the artifact described above, you must provide to the City of Richmond written notification and justification of your claim to the artifact. The written notification and justification of your claim may be delivered to the City of Richmond, 402 Morton Street, Richmond, Texas 77469 by personal delivery, mail, or delivery service; may be faxed to the City at (281) 232-8626; or emailed to the City Secretary at lsCarlato@richmond.tx.gov. Your written notification and justification must be received on or before October 21, 2020.

The Committee will proceed with recommending the relocation and/or modification of the artifact if you fail to submit your claim by October 21, 2020.



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A4. Discuss and consider approval of notice of public comment.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

LOCATION/DATE: The City of Richmond Obelisk/Monument Ad Hoc Committee will hold a public hearing on Thursday, October __, 2020, at ____ p.m. In compliance with the recommendation of the CDC and other governmental agencies, to limit meetings to less than ten persons and avoid the spread of the COVID19 Virus, the Ad Hoc Committee meeting will be held as a teleconference on Zoom virtual meeting platform. Following are the details to join the Zoom Meeting.

Details to join the Zoom Meeting will be included on the Meeting Agenda posted on the City of Richmond Website; <https://www.richmondtx.gov/> and on the City Hall Bulletin Board located at 402 Morton Street, Richmond, TX 77469.

Comments may also be submitted via email or request made to be contacted by phone during the meeting to make comments during the public hearing to the City Secretary at lscarlato@richmondtx.gov

PURPOSE: To receive comments related to the removal, relocation, modification by adding context to the artifact commonly known as the Jay Bird monument or the Frost, Gibson and Shamblin monument located at the southeast corner of the City Hall site, 402 Morton Street, Richmond, Texas.

PRESENTATIONS: Speakers may be limited to a three (3) minute time to present their comments, reasoning, and recommendations. Speakers may submit written comments in addition to or in lieu of spoken comments by forwarding the written comments to Ad Hoc Committee, Attn: Laura Scarlato, City Secretary, 402 Morton Street, Richmond, Texas 77469; by fax to (281) 232-8626; or by email to lscarlato@richmondtx.gov.

A speaker may not indulge in personalities, use language personally offensive; question motives of AD Hoc Committee members, staff, or the public; charge deliberate misrepresentation; or use language tending to hold a member of the Committee, staff, or the public up to contempt; or to utter loud, threatening, personal, or abusive language; or to engage in any other disorderly conduct that disrupts, disturbs, or otherwise impedes the orderly conduct of a meeting. This provision shall not be interpreted or applied to prohibit public criticism of the Commission or Committee, including criticism of any act, omission, policy, procedure, program, or service.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: Additional information and a map of the subject site are available upon request for review. You may contact the City of Richmond City Secretary's Office by email at lscarlato@richmondtx.gov or by phone at 281-342-5456.



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- A5. Discuss information need to fulfill charge of possible recommendations to the City Commission.



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A6. Set Future Meeting date(s).



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A7. Discuss Future Agenda Items.



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A8. Adjournment.