



**STATE OF TEXAS
COUNTY OF FORT BEND
CITY OF RICHMOND**

The Monument Ad Hoc Committee for the City of Richmond, Texas met on October 8, 2020 at 3:00 p.m.

Committee Chairman Alex BeMent proceeded to call the meeting to order at 3:02 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 - Absent
Keely Knipling, Vice President of the Fort Bend History Association
Gary Smith, City Attorney
Roy Cordes, County Attorney - Absent

Agenda item A2, Approve the minutes of the meeting on September 24, 2020. Committee Member Terri Vela made the motion to approve the minutes from September 24, 2020 meeting. Committee Member Keely Knipling seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous to approve, and the agenda item was closed.

Agenda item A3, Public hearing to receive comments related to the proposed City/County joint relocation of 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, to a historic cemetery in Fort Bend County, and telling the complete story of the event. The following individuals were signed up to speak:

Naomi Carrier * 2646 So. Loop West, Suite #100, Houston, Texas 77054
Phillip Bartholomew * 2459 Hodges Bend Circle, Sugar Land, Texas 77479
Robert Quarles * 301 Jackson Street, Richmond, Texas 77469

Ms. Carrier and Mr. Bartholomew both provided history of the artifact and the Jaybird/Woodpecker Battle. They stated this is an opportunity for change. They

supported the relocation of the artifact. City Attorney Gary Smith read a letter from Robert Quarles stating he is recusing himself from the Committee due to a conflict of interest as he works for Fort Bend County.

Committee Member Vela stated that was all of the submittals for public comments however Committee Chair BeMent could open the floor for comments.

Sha'Terra Johnson, Vice President of Black Heritage Society stated her preference would be to destroy the monument but would support the relocation to a low traffic area.

Ms. Carrier provided additional comments regarding the Sienna Plantation Sugar Plant and the possibility of turning it into a museum. This would provide an opportunity for healing and reconciliation. Committee Chair BeMent inquired if Ms. Carrier was suggesting a different site? However, he stated Sienna would be out of the City's jurisdiction and although it would be worth pursuing, it does not fit the timeline of getting the relocation completed.

The public comments agenda item was closed.

Agenda item A4, Review and discuss Interlocal Agreement between the City of Richmond and Fort Bend County related to the relocation of the artifact. Committee Member Vela requested the Chair, or the City Attorney Smith review the highlights of the Interlocal Agreement. The Chair deferred to City Attorney Smith. The County has offered to provide services to relocate the artifact to another location at the County's expense. A contract will be entered into with a third party to perform the services. The discussion has been to relocate the artifact to Hodges Bend Cemetery. The artifact will be located by Shamblin's grave with an enclosure around the perimeter. The funding is limited to \$100,000. Current fencing at the cemetery will need to be replaced in order to move the artifact to its placement and a foundation to support the artifact will need to be created. Committee Member Vela stated the Ad Hoc Committee does not have the authority to approve the Interlocal agreement, the City Commission and Fort Bend County would approve the document. Committee Member Keeling inquired if the relocation was less than the allocated \$100,000, could the balance be utilized for the modification of the sign and its content. Committee Member Vela indicated the Fort Bend Historical Commission would be resubmitting the application to the state for an historical designation. Therefore, additional grant funds may be available. The agenda item was closed with no further comments.

Agenda item A5, Review and discuss language providing historic context related to the artifact. Committee Chair BeMent stated the information provided in the packet was very helpful and the most information that had been reported to date. Committee Member Knipling will take the language to the board of the Fort Bend History Association for input. Committee Member Vela stated it is important to tell the entire story of the battle. Committee Chair BeMent stated the Committee has done a great job and expressed his appreciation.

Agenda item A6, Discuss and consider taking action on recommendations to the City Commission related to the artifact commonly known as the Jay Bird monument or the Frost, Gibson, and Shamblin monument. It was requested to have language to include if the relocation is less than the allocated funds from the County to possibly provide for the content. Committee Member Vela made the motion to relocate the artifact with an Interlocal Agreement between Fort Bend County and the City of Richmond being submitted to the City Commission for approval with modified language. There will also be an agreement with Hodges Bend Cemetery. Committee Member Knipling seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous to approve.

Agenda item A7, Set Future Meeting date(s). It was decided to meet on Thursday, October 15th which is after the County Commissioners Court on October 13th and the City Commission Meeting on October 19th. The next meeting will be October 15th at 3:00 p.m.

Agenda item A8, Discuss Future Agenda items. There was no discussion.

With no further business to discuss, Committee Chairman BeMent declared the meeting adjourned at 3:53 p.m.

APPROVED:



Alex BeMent, Committee Chairman

Attest:



Laura Scarlato, City Secretary