

# Alachua County Historical Commission Minutes September 9, 2019

## Members Present

Melanie Barr, Kali Blount, Penny Dodd, Bonita Dewiliby Moore, Karen Kirkman, Peggy Macdonald; Pat Moore (Chair), Robert Moore, Tina Sessions, Linda Vlacos, Ashley Wood

## Members Absent

Charles Horn

## Others Present

Kathleen Pagan (County Staff Liaison); Nigel Rudolph (FPAN)

Meeting was called to order by Chair Pat Moore at 6:00 pm. Motion to approve agenda passed unanimously. Minutes of August meeting were reviewed with the following corrections noted. (Karen corrected spelling of orvis, Tanya Peterson. Ashley corrected projectile points. Dr. Peggy noted her support for teaching history and correct spelling of Macdonald. Motion to approve as amended passed.

There were no citizens to speak on matters not on the agenda.

## New Business

### A. Citizen Request- Building Naming

Staff thanked Penny Dodd for photos. Staff will communicate info to Manager's staff.



## B. Florida Main Street

Staff Kathleen Pagan stated she viewed some of the webinar recording. She noted the application process requires a budget and much other documentation and letters of support. State staff informed her that in 2018 letters of support were received on behalf of Waldo yet no application was completed. Linda Vlacos reported there is a 501 c 3 working in Waldo on the Main Street effort and City Manager Kim Worley thinks an application may be possible in 2020. [Staff note: This is a video created to depict possible transportation enhancements in Waldo, provide in an email from Manager Worley]-

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eIPQAsfoAhQ&feature=youtu.be>

Kathleen reported previously a Florida Main Street program in Hamilton County included 3 communities and there may be opportunity here for a County level program to include both US 301 small towns (Waldo and Hawthorne) yet the complexity of many community partners would be challenging.

## C. Election of Officers- Nominations

Discussion of upcoming year officer positions began.

For Chair, Peggy Macdonald nominated Pat Moore.

For Vice Chair, Pat Moore nominated Bonita Dewiliby Moore.

For Secretary, Melanie Barr volunteered (self-nomination) if Tina Sessions didn't want to continue. Tina affirmed she did not wish to.

Motion by Ashley Wood, with 2<sup>nd</sup>- Close nominations and accept the slate of officers for 2019-2020. Passed unanimously.

## D. Indexing project for Ancient Records

Karen Kirkman reported from Jim Powell, County Ancient Records Clerk, on the transcription effort that she helps with along with other community volunteers. Jim is recruiting more volunteers since, to date, around 36,500 pages are transcribed and online but the entire record set numbers 500,000 pages! Staff will scan the email from Jim Powell for record in minutes. (Note the page count changes daily). The email states that by law certain records are not available online—including (20) Soldiers and Sailors Books. For persons who want to volunteer, Jim Powell can be reached at [jep@alachuaclerk.org](mailto:jep@alachuaclerk.org) or (352) 384-3174. This is the information in the text of the email (with Karen's email address removed).

Staff will also share the Transcription Project information with faculty at the UF History Samuel Proctor Oral History program and ask they share with students.

Someone also mentioned UF History Professor Jon Sensbach does work on Early American History including slavery.

Date: Thursday, September 5, 2019, 09:41 AM EDT

I guess it should be short ... We have over 1/2 million online document images. There are many more file images that you can see in Official Records, that we can not place online. You and a few others have transcribed as of now 36,573 documents that are every word searchable. We have an online index of Deeds from the first existing deed through the end of 1927. OR has an index that starts in January 1958 to present (Index, not all are imaged) That leaves a gap from January 1928 to December 1957. All the Deed Books for this time period are online, all we need is the entries in the database to make them easily accessible. We have a brand New user friendly online form to do this. We need a few good Volunteers to help out. Please sign up and try it, if it isn't fun, or fulfilling don't continue to do it, but you owe yourself the chance to see if it is something you might like to do. We also have 20 Soldier's & Sailor's Discharge Record books from 1919 to January 1947 that can only be seen in OR, but the indices for those books are online and there is a form to enter the information from them into the database. We also have a lot of Mortgage Books that can be indexed by the page. And of Course our AWESOME Transcription Project continues. And anything else you would like to add.

What do you think?  
Jim

## Reoccurring Business

### Truth and Reconciliation

Staff reported that a presentation will be made to BoCC by several County staff.

### History Readings

Melanie Barr presented a narrative history on Tom Petty. There was discussion as to why "Beatle" George Harrison was identified with a band name, as well as other minor points including attendance count (estimated rather than average). An interesting comment made by Melanie was that Tom Petty's father was a salesman for Eli Witt and managed a General Store near the Cotton Club in SE Gainesville, where young Tom played with African American children while his father worked. When they returned to their NE Gainesville neighborhood Tom wondered why there were no African American children there. This will be scheduled in October [Staff note: Reading will be Tues. 10/22].

Future reading topics were mentioned. Robert Moore will work on Chester Shell for Feb. 2020 and Dr. Peggy Macdonald will present Women's History in March 2020.

### Historic Cemeteries

Nigel Rudolph of Florida Public Archeology Network (Central Region) is adding Alachua County Cemetery site information to the Florida Master Site File (FMSF). He stated one that is listed on the "Virtual Cemeteries" webpage is no longer accessible. [Note: Karen Kirkman is also working on the FMSF]

Karen Kirkman mentioned she was contacted about a site where construction uncovered unmarked grave(s). A professional archeological survey is underway. She also stated State legislation regarding abandoned cemeteries requires that an owner make a 'reasonable effort' to find descendants.

Nigel also mentioned on Oct. 8 there will be discussion about the Zion Cemetery in Tampa at the Tampa History Center, free and open to the public. Kali Blount noted an Alexandria VA cemetery matter. <http://www.freedmenscemetery.org/brochure/brochure.pdf>

### Teaching History

Staff noted she found mentioned of work done by former ACHC member Bobbie Powell. Melanie Barr will ask Bobbie if she may share this information.

### Staff Report

Staff will contact Charles Horn regarding repeated absences.

Staff will work with UF student regarding RSVP Scrapbooks. If others wish to view these please contact and schedule appointment.

### Member Briefing Points

Kali Blount announced his band, "Jazz Bandits," will play at Cypress & Grove on September 20.

Ashley Wood mentioned the Evinston Paint Out. He is reading the last book by Zora Neale Hurston, published posthumously, titled *Barracoona*. He also mentioned a Florida Crossroads show about the Underground Railroad in Florida; African descendants called Gullah Geechee fight to preserve their identity.

Linda Vlacos mentioned the Waldo Area Spaghetti Dinner on September 20. Also the Historic Society there will be moving.

Penny Dodd attended the recent lecture and book signing. The event piqued her interest in Bellamy Road history, particularly Bellamy Station, and she plans to research this topic.

Bonita Dewiliby Moore reached out to Pastor and Mrs. Harrison regarding the Church history.

Robert Moore is working on space planning at the Hawthorne Historical Museum.

Melanie Barr mentioned that "Gospel Meets Jazz" will perform at Thomas Center on September 20.

Ashley Wood concluded the meeting by congratulating the new officers for the upcoming year.

Meeting adjourned at 7:25 pm

Next meeting is October 14, 2019.