

**Historical Advisory Committee (HAC)  
Minutes June 8, 2022**

Meeting held at the Mid County Regional Library, Meeting Room A/B.

**Committee Members**

Dianne Munson  
Theresa Murtha  
Pat Spence  
Valerie Colbert  
Clare Riggs  
Stephen Valdes

**Present**

Pat Spence  
Clare Riggs  
Stephen Valdes  
Theresa Murtha  
Valerie Colbert  
Dianne Munson

**Not Present**

**BOCC Liaison:**

Commissioner Stephen R. Deutsch

**Guests**

**Libraries & History Staff**

Jennifer Zoebelein  
Tina Ranney

**9:00 a.m. Roll Call:**

**Approval of April and May meeting minutes: Not completed**

- **Agenda Items:** Vote to approve May minutes
- Historic markers – discussion of potential list
- Heritage tourism

Meeting began with discussion of historic markers. Theresa had mentioned that she had been working on a list and looking into the various state, county, city etc. markers. She doesn't think there is a complete list of markers anywhere. She then went on to say there is no marker at the site of the first bridge over Charlotte Harbor and that (she thinks that would be an important one) either side of the bridge would be fine. It was suggested maybe Live Oak Park would be a good location. Also, perhaps a Charlotte Harbor marker, and/or one for the site of the first post office. It was also discussed whether the Hickory Bluff markers contain info about the first settlement. Valerie said it mentions it, but does go into a lot of detail. Theresa also brought up Chadwick Beach. It was determined that the area is Englewood which is still Charlotte County area. Chadwick Beach (also known as Punta Gorda Beach) is also a potential marker site. Dianne asked for a copy of the list, and Theresa said she would send it through Jennifer or Tina. Other potential markers could be Marion Ave, (even though it would be City of Punta Gorda), Rotunda (need funding), Frizzell Ranch, Seminole Hotel in Punta Gorda (had other names also), the Municipal Trailer Park, the Punta Gorda Elks Lodge, HW Smith building (The first mall), Winslow, Bethel Church, the Ice House, Methodist Church in Punta Gorda, and Punta Gorda Isles. This was what she could come up with for a list. Stephen brought up that there is no marker for Ponce de Leon (It was mentioned there is a marker, but it is a state marker and not on the list). He believes it should be a county marker. He thinks it is the best way to promote tourism. As well as the Indian carving. Valerie mentioned the Historical Society in Punta Gorda; had a gentleman come by the name of Charles Noble who is a friend of

Peter Todd who is the original artist of the statue. It is coming up to the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the statue and he is trying to get funding for the celebration and to have the statue refurbished. The landscaping around the statue has been neglected due to staffing and money shortages in Punta Gorda City and they will work on getting it taken care of when they can. Currently Mr. Noble is trying to get the statue insured and looking for contractors to work on the refurbishing. So, when considering a marker, perhaps it would be a good idea to reach out to Charles Noble and start there. Pat then mentioned that she received the marker application from Jennifer, and they are working on it. Theresa asked what they want to do about the list of potential markers. It was decided that each member should create their own list of what they think is a priority, and then reach out to the different areas to see if they are interested in sponsoring a marker, then determine a list that might need alternative funding. Then it was asked if sponsorship can be placed on the marker, and it was determined that it cannot be done. Sponsorship credit is only listed on the website. (Could maybe be added to a QR code) Markers as a rule don't contain sponsorship information. Theresa added one more marker suggestion, it would be for the Banyan Tree (Marion McAdow story) in Punta Gorda. Pat asked Jennifer if there is anything at the site of the turpentine factory by Jacobs on El Jobean. Stephen asked about the pilings behind the outboard club in Punta Gorda. Theresa said that a sign has been commissioned for there. It is for the fertilizer plant. She will look up the dates or the dedication. Theresa mentioned that when reviewing the lists, they should decide who will follow up with each of the different locations.

Dianne turned the meeting focus to historical tourism, and Theresa said that the last they talked, it was determined they needed to come up with areas that are historically significant and provide tourism with content to have it put on the website. She has come up with some areas, but she is looking for more input from others. Stephen brought up the military areas, but they are all intercounty. The only place in our area in the airport. Commissioner Deutsch expressed that he thinks they need to get the word out and discuss this with other members of the community. He used the potential Maritime Museum as an example. He thinks it is important to market to veterans coming to Charlotte County and to try to get everyone onboard including the different county depts. Theresa returned to the topic of providing Tourism with content for the website. She would like to address how to give them what need. She has come up with a list of some areas, but she needs more support from the others in the group. Clare said she thinks the current list is a good place to start, and the various areas should be incorporated into a physical map including local markers. Theresa would like to include areas other than marker locations. Clare suggested they start with the airport and Pat mentioned El Jobean locations also. Theresa added two other areas (Marion Ave & Historic District in Punta Gorda). Clare also said that cemeteries are important historical locations. She also suggested using other websites as templates for their content. Theresa then mentioned Lemon Bay, Babcock Ranch, military sites, and various others. Theresa then mentioned about bringing in someone for tourism, and it was decided not the next meeting but the one after (August) would be appropriate, hoping they would be ready with a more solid list of information for the tourism marketer. Stephen asked about approaching property owners for potential markers and how to pitch for funding.

**Member Input:** None

**Public Input:** None

**Meeting Adjourned: 10:00 a.m.**

**Next HAC Meeting:** - Wednesday, July 13th, 9a.m. at Mid County Regional Library, 2050 Forrest Nelson Blvd., Port Charlotte, FL.

cc:  
Commissioner Ken Doherty  
Commissioner Stephen R. Deutsch  
Commissioner Bill Truex  
Commissioner Christopher Constance  
Commissioner Joseph Tiseo  
Hector Flores, County Administrator  
Emily Lewis, Deputy County Administrator  
Tommy Scott, Director, Community Svcs Dept.