

Minutes of Meeting Coppell Historical Society, January 9, 2016

Present: Dave Murph, Pat Lambert, Jackie Parrish, Barbara Lee, Kimberly Hil, Lauren Stang, Pat Quinlan, Katy Hinkle, Precious Ohalaja, Patti Carpenter, Rangan Steingl, Makenna Hill, Jean Murph, Cecil Dobecka, Martha-Allison Blewer, Betsy Wilcox, Gina Alamo, Sue Miller, Shaun Jex, Jan Lorrain, Pete Wilson.

In the absence of Don Carter, Pat Lambert called the meeting in the Kirkland House to order at 1:07 p.m.

The program consisted of Shaun Jex relating some stories from the history of Coppell. He mentioned the stories of Walter Praytor jumping from the bridge, the last buffalo killed in Dallas County, the start of the Assembly of God Church, and the Baptist and Methodist Women's baseball teams.

The business meeting began at 2:25 p.m.

Jean Murph recognized visitors from a Girl Scout troupe and its leaders who wish to do a project with the Society.

The minutes from the last meeting were approved as amended. Joyce Webb had corrected two items: It was Vert Parrish (not Bert) who worked at the Coppell cotton gin, and Joyce's ledger was for the years 1943-44. Moved by Jan Lorrain; seconded by Jackie Parrish. Motion carried unanimously.

The treasurer's report by Jan Lorrain included a report from November as follows:

General Fund:	
Income	\$10.00 dues
No expenses	
Ending balance	\$10,797.91
City Grant Fund:	
Income	\$10,000 received from the city grant
Expenses	\$78.95 Christmas decorations
Ending balance	\$14,902.37
CD:	
Approximate value	\$20,375.00

The treasurer's report from December (when there was no business meeting) was as follows:

General Fund:	
Income	\$10.00 dues
Expenses	(none)
Ending balance	\$10,807.91
City Grant Fund:	
Income	(none)
Expenses	\$133.89 Christmas decorations & refreshments for open house
Ending balance	\$14,768.48
CD:	
Approximate value:	\$20,375.00

The treasurer's report was approved unanimously. Moved by Jean Murph; seconded by Betsy Wilcox.

Committee Reports:

Archives – Dave Murph reported that the committee's work is currently complete.

Heritage Park – Pat Quinlan reported that the floor of the front porch of the Kirkland House is buckling badly. The city has been notified of the problem.

Historical Markers – Pete Wilson reported that the committee is ready to meet again. It is considering recommending the placement of four markers: (1) at the water tank in Old Town, (2) in front of the Coppel House of Style/Citizens' Advocate building, (3) at the small garden in the Main Street development which is now bordered by concrete slabs from an early Coppel school, and (4) the new Ratliff replica of an early Coppel store.

Historical Preservation – Pat Lambert reported that the city has established a small "garden" near the Farmers' Market with the slabs of concrete salvaged from the old foundation of Coppel's second school building.

Education – Jean Murph thanked the docents for all their work during the open houses, including Patti Carpenter and Sean Jex who spearheaded the tours. She listed future activities of the Education Committee as follows: a presentation at the February meeting by Betsy Wilcox of justice in the early days; a presentation by Janis Arthur from Theatre Coppel for the March meeting; a presentation of collections of various items from members. Jean has spoken to the fourth grade history teacher at Austin Elementary School about our preparing a book and/or guide to Coppel history, written especially for Coppel students. Jean's committee will be selecting individuals to write the chapters. The display case at the Senior Citizens' Center will be changed shortly with an exhibit of prehistoric artifacts supplied by Jan Lorrain and others. The archeological dig will, most likely, take place in the fall. The city has used the foundation stones from the old school building to border the flagpole area in Old Town.

After a break for refreshments, the meeting resumed at 1:56 p.m.

Old business: Jan Lorrain reminded us that various persons took a list of inventoried items inside the Minyard Store to do research. Shaun Jex reported that Kara Jex has located information about a number of the items.

New business: Pete Wilson was asked to report on the subject of the Infeldt house. Due to the immediacy of the opportunity, the executive committee had to make certain decisions in advance, and many of the members were not yet informed of the details.

The owner of a house built in 1923, now located on Sandy Lake Road at Lodge Road, must be torn down or removed. The owner would prefer to preserve the original part of the house, and he is willing to donate the house to the Historical Society, pay a substantial portion of the moving cost, and personally prepare the house for moving. A search by the city and by Jean Murph provided no acceptable land for the relocation of the house. When it was determined that the house would fit into Heritage Park on the east end of the parking lot and the Wilson family agreed to the plan, the city

waived all permit fees and gave its total cooperation, permitting the house to be moved into the park, with official requirements of paperwork to be completed after the fact.

Then Pete Wilson's family reconsidered and expressed their view that a better plan would be to move the house off the parking lot, about 95 feet east to the family's east property line. The Wilsons felt that this move was in better keeping with their family's view for the land when they allowed part of their property to be designated Heritage Park. One consideration is that by relocating the house farther east, it would prevent the rest of the property from being blocked off from future convenient location of other historically significant buildings. Of course, a disadvantage, at least for now, is that it will be farther from the rest of the buildings, including the restrooms, in the park.

(By way of explanation: The Wilsons have an agreement with the city that Heritage Park can be situated on the northwest corner of their property, which now holds the Kirkland House, the windmill, the Minyard Store, the restrooms, and the parking lot. The only financial arrangement is that the city pays its prorated share of property taxes on that section of the land. The Wilsons are still the owners of the property. At some point in the future, the city will purchase the entire Wilson property, all of which will become Heritage Park, with the provision that the Wilson home may not be demolished or removed and therefore will probably become a museum in the park.)

The Wilsons' decision to recommend locating the Infeldt house farther east is a major change in plans in that it means that the family is willing for other buildings to be moved onto their land before the entire property is taken over by the city. As a matter of fact, with some exceptions, the family has moved up its expected timeline for disposing of the entire property; however, the city is not ready to purchase the property and this option will not be addressed any time soon, primarily because the city has specified that its allowing us to move the Infeldt house will not incur any expense by the city.

At the last minute – literally the night before today's meeting – it was revealed that the house moving company had miscommunicated its price for relocating the house. In short, the total expense for moving the house and placing it on its foundation will be \$28,000, which includes a \$2,000 donation by the moving company. The owner has agreed to pay \$9,000 of this. Additional expenses will include \$2,000 to an architect for preparing site plans required by the city. (Greg Frnka, a local architect, has agreed to this price, donating about 50% of his fee.) Eventually, the Society will have to take charge of reconstructing the front of the house to an appropriate appearance, and even farther in the future, to making the rest of the house usable, including ADA ramps, electrical, heating, and possibly air conditioning.

The most immediate action needed is to relocate the house and place it on its foundation. Then the Society must accomplish the reconstruction of the front of the house by April to meet city requirements. After that, any changes in the house can take place whenever the Society is willing and able to undertake the improvements. This probably will mean that the house cannot be used, at least by the public, until some reconstruction is completed, such as the ADA ramps. However, the Society is thinking that the house will not be restored to any one historical period as the Kirkland House was. It can become a meeting place and possibly a museum to house artifacts, depending on the Society's future decision.

The Society has slightly over \$20,000 in a CD that is left over from an earlier grant that is earmarked for just this kind of project. It also has additional money in its operating fund. Money from the current City Grand fund should not be used due to the specification that no city expenses will be incurred.

Therefore, Jean Murph moved and Pat Lambert seconded that the Society:

1. Approve the expenditure of \$19,000 for locating the house at Heritage Park and \$2,000 for architect fees, for a total of \$21,000.
2. That Pete Wilson be asked to negotiate with Hitchcock House Movers about the possibility of further reducing its fee, particularly since a number of permit fees have been waived by the city.
3. That a task force of members be assembled to address matters relating to this project, including the possibility of drawing on community volunteers to help with the reconstruction of the front of the house which is due in April.

The motion carried unanimously.

The task force, chaired by Pete Wilson, is composed of the following volunteers:

Patti Carpenter, Sue Miller, Cecil Dobecka, Jan Lorrain, Jean Murph, Pat Lambert, Martha-Allison Blewer.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:43 p.m.