

**FLORIDA HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA  
December 1, 2006**

**MINUTES**

**Commission Members Present:** Dr. Judith Bense, Chairman; Marion Almy; Joseph Amon; Dr. Titus Brown; Mimi Reid Hardman; Lex McKeithen; Dr. Angelo Perez; Carter Quina

**Commission Members Absent:** Margo Dundon; Ernestine Ray; Ellen Ugucioni

**Department of State Staff Present:** Frederick Gaske, Director, Division of Historical Resources; Barbara Mattick, Chief, Bureau of Historic Preservation; Robert Jones, National Register Program; David Ferro and Scott Edwards, Preservation Services Program

Prior to the beginning of the meeting, Chairman Bense asked for a brief history of the restoration of the historic Ribault Club, the Commission meeting site on Fort George Island. Mr. Steve Martin, formerly of the Florida Park Service, provided information on the building restoration. Ms. Leslee Keys, of Flagler College, added information on the restoration funding sources.

Chairman Bense called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

Commission members and Department staff introduced themselves.

Chairman Bense called for a motion to approve the minutes of the September 18, 2006 meeting.

**Motion was made by Commissioner Perez to approve the minutes as written. Motion seconded by Commissioner Amon. Motion passed unanimously.**

Chairman Bense asked Division Director Gaske to proceed with the State Update agenda item. Director Gaske discussed the Powerpoint slides on the Division which have been prepared for the new Governor's and Secretary of State's transition teams and were included in the Commission's briefing book. Information in the slides relates to the economic impact of historic preservation in Florida, the increase in activities and workload conducted by the Division, and the reduction of Division staff in recent years (over 10% since 2001).

Chairman Bense asked Malinda Horton, Executive Director of the Florida Association of Museums, to address the Legislative Update agenda item. Ms. Horton discussed the drafting of a white paper to use in lobbying efforts designed for new legislators with a focus on Compliance Review Section activities. She also discussed Division of Historical Resources rate issues and the effect on staff resources and proposed solutions, the Constitutional amendment relating to non-recurring revenue, a proposed supplemental budget request for Division rate and salary increases, and the need to get comparative data from other state agencies and other entities relating to salaries. Commission members discussed the situation and proposed solutions.

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Chairman Bense asked Barbara Mattick to address the Bureau of Historic Preservation Update agenda item. Ms. Mattick, in turn, asked Bob Jones to present a summary of the National Register Review Board meeting held the previous day. Mr. Jones reviewed the eight nominations received by the Board, all of which were approved. Ms. Mattick updated the Commission on the National Historic Landmark designations of the Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings House and Mud Lake Canal. She also gave update on the Florida Folklife Program including the designation of a National Heritage Fellowship winner from Florida. Ms. Mattick advised Commission members of the Florida Main Street Award Winners and gave an overview of the 2006 Florida Main Street Annual Conference in Fort Pierce. Ms. Mattick then provided an update on the Statewide Historic Preservation Comprehensive Plan and the Contributions of Historic Preservation to the Quality of Life in Florida publication.

Chairman Bense and Ms. Mattick discussed the Special Task Force on St. Augustine State-Owned Historic Properties and the recommendations for a “University Plan” to manage and restore the state-owned historic properties and programs in St. Augustine.

Chairman Bense asked Director Gaske to address the Bureau of Archaeological Research agenda item in place of State Archaeologist Dr. Ryan Wheeler who could not be in attendance at the meeting. Director Gaske discussed recent Bureau activities such as the Blessing of the Animals Program at Mission San Luis. He also discussed the status of the proposed new Archaeological Conservation and Curation Facility which is on hold until funding issues can be addressed.

Chairman Bense asked Director Gaske to address the Historic Preservation Awards Program agenda item. Director Gaske stated that three nominations had been received by the Commission’s Nominating Committee of Commissioners Almy, McKeithen and Uguccione. The Committee recommended that all three nominations – Sylvia “Nootchie” Vega Smith of Tampa, Professor E.L. Roy Hunt of Gainesville, and Dr. James Nathaniel Eaton, Jr. of Tallahassee – be forwarded to the Secretary of State for approval.

**Motion was made by Commission Amon to accept the Nominating Committee’s recommendation and forward the names to the Secretary of State. Motion seconded by Commissioner Hardman. Motion passed unanimously.**

Chairman Bense asked Kathy Fleming to address the Historic Lighthouses of Florida agenda item. Ms. Fleming provided a detailed presentation on the state’s lighthouses including their importance to maritime history, ownership issues, statutory issues, and laws and processes relating to property transfers from federal agencies to not-for-profit organizations.

Chairman Bense called for other Commission business. Commissioner Almy announced that she has been appointed as the new Regional Advisor for the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

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The Trust is interested in conducting projects in Florida such as a Rosenwald Schools Survey and an additional Florida Lighthouse Study.

Chairman Bense called for Public Comments.

Ms. Gail Joubert, from Greenville, addressed the Commission regarding state funding for historic preservation projects. She believes that millions of dollars are being awarded for “special interest” historic preservation projects while child welfare issues are being ignored and the child welfare system is in crisis mode. She believes that Commissioners are awarding grants to “private entities” in their “own districts” and it appears that Commissioners “may be benefiting from those allocations.” It is her belief that “self-serving” Commissioners are allocating monies to “non-essential” projects which have all the earmarks of “pork barrel projects” for “non-essential buildings for private corporations who profit from it.”

Commissioner Hardman stated that she disagreed with this assessment that there is no benefit to children, and gave an example of the Lake Wales Boys and Girls Club meeting in adaptively reused historic buildings.

Commissioner McKeithen stated that he resents the accusation that Commission members are “self-serving” and stated that there are no personal benefits to members from serving on the Commission.

Commissioner Perez stated that many of the buildings which receive grant funding are owned by non-profit organizations and run by volunteers; that these grants prevent history and important historic buildings from being lost; and that these state funds generate local funding and private donations.

Commissioner Hardman stated that the Commission members do not personally benefit from their decisions.

Ms. Joubert stated that child welfare should take precedence over funding for history.

Mr. Tom Pertierra, advocational archaeologist from Greenville, addressed the Commission regarding the relationship of West Florida Historic Preservation, Inc. to the Department of State. Director Gaske stated that the Department’s relationship is through the agency’s grants program. Mr. Pertierra asked Commissioner Quina if he is a Director of West Florida Preservation, Inc., to which Mr. Quina stated that he is. Mr. Pertierra then asked Chairman Bense about the recent audit report regarding the University of West Florida and West Florida Historic Preservation Inc. Chairman Bense responded that she was only aware of what she had read in the newspaper about it. Mr. Pertierra addressed grant funding received by West Florida Preservation, Inc.

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Commissioner McKeithen stated that he resents the implication that Commission members are personally benefiting from their grants recommendations.

Ms. Kathy Hugo addressed the Commission regarding the historic St. Paul's Catholic Church in Jacksonville. The church received a small matching historic preservation grant, which provided great impetus to leverage local funds, and they are thankful to the state for this assistance.

Ms. Lisa King from historic St. George's Episcopal Church offered to give the Commission members and audience a tour of the building after the Commission meeting.

Ms. Malinda Horton gave an update on the status of Commissioner Dundon who is undergoing chemotherapy treatment. Several Commissioners recommended that members send her personal messages wishing her the best.

Ms. Caroline Weiss, Executive Director of the Florida Trust for Historic Preservation, gave an update on the upcoming Trust Historic Preservation Week Reception in Tallahassee and the upcoming Annual Conference in Sarasota.

As the last order of business, Chairman Bense asked Director Gaske to update the Commission on future meeting dates. The meeting schedule is as follows:

1) March 26-29, 2007 - Heritage Week Activities, Tallahassee:

March 26-28 – Grant Review Panels (Commissioners Hardman and Perez)

March 27 – National Register Review Board (Commissioners Almy, Bense, Brown, Quina, and Uguccione)

March 28 – Joint meeting of Florida Historical Commission, Florida Folklife Council, Florida Arts Council, State Library Council, and State Historical Records Advisory Board (All Commission members)

March 29 – Florida Historical Commission business meeting (All Commission members)

2) May 19, 2007 – Sarasota – Florida Historical Commission business meeting held in conjunction with the Florida Trust for Historic Preservation Annual Conference.

3) September 24-27 – Florida Historical Commission business meeting and review of Special Category grant applications.

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4) November 2007 – Site and exact date to be determined.

There being no more business, the meeting adjourned at 12:10 p.m.