

**El Camino Real de los Tejas
National Historic Trail Association
Board of Directors Quarterly Meeting
July 16, 2016
3710 Cedar St., Suite 161, Austin, TX**

Meeting called to order by Chris Talbot at 10:24am. A quorum was present (see 4/16/16 motion).

Board Members in Attendance: Tom Byrd (online), Lucile Estell, Sarah Gould, John Kisalus, Duke Lyons (online), Henry Mayo, Carl Mica, John Pruett, Chris Talbot, Jeff Wright, and Maureen Winn.

Others in Attendance: Steven Gonzales, Aaron Mahr (NPS), Brad Patterson (THC), Daniel Quintanilla (ELCAT unpaid intern)

Board Members Absent: Chief Davis, Irene Ramos

Review of April 2016 Minutes - John Pruett noted a mistake in the minutes. It was John Pruett not Henry Mayo who presented the Brazos Region report. Minutes will be amended.

Minutes from April 16, 2016 Board meeting were unanimously approved with the above change by motion (John Kisalus¹, Lucile²).

Chris Talbot called for reports from the committees.

Finance Committee Report

Lucille stated that the latest financials were circulated and she received no questions (financial reports in Board meeting notebooks).

Steven added that we had a lot of expenses this past month as a result of the Dos Caminos workshop in Laredo, and there are a few more expenses that will be coming in, but as we received \$14,750 from NPS for the workshop, raised \$2,250 in sponsorships, and about \$1,800 in registration fees, Steven anticipates that once all expenses are settled we will end up making about \$2,000 from the workshop.

Steven also described the current finances around the Rancheria Grande project. We received three \$5,000 donations from area landowners and

Carl raised a concern about the finance committee not meeting prior to this meeting. Steven noted that the finance committee has been receiving monthly finances.

The finance committee report was unanimously approved by motion (Henry¹, Maureen²).

Executive Committee Report presented by Chris Talbot (written report in Board meeting notebooks).

Robertson County - Chris asked Maureen to report on the status of signage in Robertson County. She reported that things are in limbo. Robert Hicks succeeded in confusing a County Commissioner and another got cold feet and abstained. The County Judge had signed the AFA prior to the meeting on July 11th, but by getting the court to conduct the meeting on the 11th, Hicks was able to get the Commissioners to deadlock on whether or not to file the Advanced Funding Agreement with TxDOT for the signing. The Assistant County Attorney explained that the Commission had already signed the agreement and if they withdrew they would be in breach of contract. Hicks tried to argue that the Camino follows a different route than what has been designated. The attorney kept saying it's already been decided. Maureen and the attorney explained that only Congress can change the trail route and that it was set by law. Ultimately it was a 2-2 vote. Steven has been asked to speak to the Commissioner's Court on July 25th. The Judge wants to file the AFA with TxDOT. Carl and Chris emphasized keeping our focus on Robertson County and the legislation that has established Robertson County as part of this NHT. Whatever may be happening in Freestone and Limestone Counties are not our concern.

Robert came into possession of an unknown number of the signs we ordered for Robertson County. Maureen is going to oversee an inventory of the Robertson County signs so we can determine how many are missing. Henry said we may need to file a report with the sheriff about the missing signs, but as Carl pointed out, it is not our job to retrieve them – that will be for local officials. It was ELCAT money (that we got from NPS federal funds) that was used to purchase the signs. Aaron said an argument could be made that the signs are federal property.

Steven asked about having an agreement in the future that includes language along the lines of “these signs cannot be released to anyone outside of ELCAT or the county, city, or TxDOT road departments.”

Multiple Members asserted that the Association is in favor of the AFA moving forward to TxDOT.

By motion it was unanimously agreed that the Association will work to expedite delivery of the AFA to TxDOT. (Henry¹, Carl²)

Maureen will visit the County Clerk and County Attorney on Monday to see about filing the AFA.

Membership Cycle - Steven has little to no help in the summer and the current membership cycle necessitates renewals in the summer, which is quite a bit of work. Chris asked about how we can make less administrative work in the summer. Steven added that summer is when much of the prep work for the annual membership meeting happens. He did not think the membership cycle necessarily needs to change, but would benefit from funding to pay a summer intern. Chris suggested that the development committee look at the membership cycle for the long-term, but for the short-term look at our surplus to possibly hire a summer helper.

The issue of the membership cycle and summer help will be taken up by the Development Committee.

Lobanillo Swales – Steven met with Sabine County Judge Melton in late May about the status of Lobanillo. They are having a tourism assessment done next month. The Judge would like to see the site visitor ready by December. They could provide in-kind donations of machinery and natural materials such as boulders. We have about \$21-22,000 for Lobanillo site development. The Lobanillo Task Force will continue to work on the plan and budget. We will try to get a PDF of the Lobanillo plan circulated soon.

Aaron had an informal discussion with Mark Wolfe of THC about long-term goals for Lobanillo. Mark expressed that it could be a possibility for THC to acquire Lobanillo once it's fully developed.

Brad described a two-step process at THC for acquiring property: 1) assessment of suitability of site 2) assessment of operational needs. Lobanillo could potentially work as a satellite site to Mission Dolores.

Aaron suggested we walk through the Lobanillo plan with a site visit during the October meeting in Nacogdoches.

By motion, the Lobanillo Task Force was unanimously granted authority to begin discussions with the THC about the possible acquisition of the site (John K.¹, Carl²).

John K. suggested that the Task Force also explore possibilities of easements on adjacent properties in order to create a buffer around the site.

Executive Director's Report presented by Steven Gonzales (written report in Board meeting notebooks).

In late April, a PBS documentary about the National Parks of Texas came out and the Trail was featured for about 3 minutes – all 16 national park sites in Texas were included so this was a great opportunity to raise the Trail's profile. There's a link on the ELCAT website.

In June Steven did a TV segment on KHCE in San Antonio – it was broadcast throughout South Texas and has been run a few times. Steven is trying to get a web link to the story.

The National Trails Day event at McKinney Falls State Park was postponed due to rain. The new date should be determined soon.

Steven attended the PNTS Historic Trails Workshop in June in Missouri. ELCAT interns Daniel Quintanilla and Monica Bradford gave presentations and were recognized as trail apprentices.

The Association was part of the Dos Caminos Workshop in Laredo in late June. Representatives from Mexico and the US engaged in conversations about how to preserve, promote, and interpret the trails on both sides of the border. This dialogue may become an annual event.

By motion the board commended Steven for his leadership and great work in coordinating much of the logistics of the Dos Caminos workshop (Lucile1, Chris2).

---[end of reports]---

NEW BUSINESS

Regional & At-Large Reports

East Texas Region presented by Chris Talbot.

Signs are on the way to Nacogdoches. The CVB put forth \$6,000 and the DRT's Peggy Jasso secured a grant for \$11,000 – this with the money from NPS will cover much of the costs for signage in the Nacogdoches area. Steven thinks we'll be able to do all the Nacogdoches signage at once instead of the previously planned two phases.

As part of Nacogdoches' anniversary celebration there was a rededication of the Mission and Chris hopes to invite some of those people to the October meeting.

Brazos Region Report (written report submitted by John Pruet in Board meeting notebooks).

Regarding people who donated money for the Rancheria Grande project in Milam County, Carl asked if we are giving the donors ELCAT memberships. It was noted that 5% of the three \$5,000 donations from families in Milam County (\$15,000 total) will go to ELCAT administrative costs.

By motion, the board unanimously agreed that the three \$5,000 donations received from Milam County residents for the Rancheria Grande project will be counted as memberships at the \$250 level and we will follow up with the donors to invite them to renew in the next membership cycle (Carl¹, Henry²).

San Antonio-Goliad Region Report (written report submitted by John Kisalus in Board meeting notebooks).

John K. reported that there was an unveiling of new marker at Tonkawa Bank in Victoria.

We do need to elect a new member to represent South Texas at the annual meeting as Irene is rolling off the board. Steven has 3 candidates for the South Texas region position.

By motion, the board unanimously agreed that the quarterly board meeting minutes will be distributed within two weeks of the meetings (Carl¹, Maureen²).

OTHER REPORTS

National Park Service Update presented by Aaron Mahr.

The remaining 2016 funding will cover signage at San Marcos Springs (Hays), Los Corralitos (Zapata), and Laguna Espantosa (Dimmit).

Signs are planned for Dimmit and Wilson Counties in FY17, and Goliad and Travis Counties in FY18.

Working with University of New Mexico on biographical sketches on people related to the Trail history. This will help expand the history of the trail. If you know of anyone who should be included, please let Aaron know by the end of the month.

Has been working on certifying properties – about 15 this year – Aaron will give an overview of them and the certification process at the October meeting.

Working on Lobanillo interpretive signage.

Aaron and Steven met with Texas Parks and Wildlife yesterday. TPWD has funding to do bricks and mortar work, but some of the funding will go to interpretation. We talked about ways to link state parks to travel itineraries and signage so that the Camino is part of those parks' stories. This is an opportunity to get people physically on accessible parts of the Camino.

There is an NPS Centennial poster for the Camino Real de los Tejas available to download on the website.

Henry asked if NPS has a sign for landowners who have a certified property. Aaron says they have a logo that can be used and site ID sign.

Henry also suggested that ELCAT have a special sign to give members who also own a certified site on the Camino. Brad suggested giving newly certified landowners a one-time gift membership as a way to recognize their effort. Steven added we could give awards like "best steward" or other recognitions for certified landowners at the annual meeting.

Texas Historical Commission Update presented by Brad Patterson.

THC has a quarterly meeting of the Commission coming up. They are developing their funding requests for the next cycle. They will likely ask for courthouse funding, heritage tourism funding, and operations funding for historic sites. A tourism assessment program is currently underway for Sabine County through the governor's office.

THC has created Camino interpretation panels at locations of the trail at Caddo Mounds and Mission Dolores.

Note on Annual Meeting

We might do a visit to Lobanillo on October 14th and then the official meeting on the 15th.

Adjournment

Meeting adjournment at 1:40pm was unanimously approved by motion (Carl¹, Henry²).

Respectfully submitted by Secretary Sarah Gould.