

Hidalgo County Historical Commission Bylaws (2013)

Article 1 Authority

1.01 The existence and operation of a County Historical Commission is authorized by the State of Texas under Texas Local Government Code Chapter 318, as amended.

Article 2 Name

2.01 The name of the organization shall be the Hidalgo County Historical Commission, hereinafter referred to as the "HCHC" or the "Commission".

Article 3 Purpose

3.01 The purpose of the HCHC shall be to identify, protect and interpret the history of Hidalgo County. These goals shall be accomplished through surveys of historical buildings and sites, Texas Historical Commission designations of historical buildings and sites, preservation of the County's heritage through written and oral history, and public education about the County's history. The HCHC shall strive to create countywide awareness and appreciation of historic preservation and its benefits and uses. The work at the HCHC is not to duplicate the work of other historical preservation efforts in the County, but to supplement and encourage this work.

Article 4 Membership

4.01 Eligibility. Each Commission Member shall be an adult resident of Hidalgo County. Each Commission Member must have an interest in historic preservation and an understanding of local history and resources.

4.02 Term. Members shall be appointed by the Commissioners Court for two year terms beginning on January 1 of odd numbered years. The Commissioners Court shall fill a vacancy on the HCHC for the remainder of any unexpired term.

4.03 Membership

- a. Membership shall be composed of twenty-five residents of the County. Members of the HCHC must be individuals who broadly reflect the age, ethnic, and geographic diversity of the County. Each County Commissioner may nominate five members from her/his precinct. The

County Judge shall appoint five members at large.

- b. Any member may resign by filing a written resignation with the chairperson, who shall, in turn, inform the Commissioners Court of such resignation at its next regularly scheduled meeting.
- c. The Commissioners Court may accept recommendations From the HCHC to fill any vacancies on the Commission. Appointments will not be official until action is taken by the Commissioners Court at their next regularly scheduled meeting. Any appointments made during a term will only serve until the next regular appointment date.
- d. The chairperson of the HCHC shall be appointed from among its members by the Commissioners Court at the same time regular appointments are made to the Commission.
- e. **Member Emeritus** status may be accorded to any active member who has served at least three (3) terms but can no longer be active because of age, health, or demands of occupation. Nomination to the emeritus status must be authorized by a majority vote of current voting members. Emeritus status shall be a non-voting member.
- f. **Ex-Officio Member** status shall include the County Judge and the County Commissioners. Ex-officio status shall be a non-voting member.
- g. **Friend of the Hidalgo County Historical Commission** status may be granted to any individual who expresses an interest in the historic preservation of Hidalgo County and wishes to play an active role in the HCHC's activities and efforts but does not desire to be appointed to the HCHC by the Commissioners Court or when a person desires to be active with the HCHC before no vacancies exist. Friend of the HCHC status is a non-voting member.

Article 5 Attendance

5.01 Any Board Member who misses two (2) consecutive regularly scheduled Board meetings automatically vacates his/her Board appointment unless the Board member can provide a medical validation in which case one or more of the absences may be waived. An exception to the attendance policy may be made by a majority of the Board if the member subject to removal has demonstrated continuing interest in the work of the Commission by:

- a. Attending the Texas Historical Commission's Annual Preservation Conference, and at least one Texas Historical Commission sponsored workshop; or
- b. By participating actively in projects which foster the purpose of the Commission; or

- c. By doing any substantial work for the Commission in area of historical preservation for Hidalgo County which furthers the goals of the Commission.

5.02. The Secretary shall present an attendance report at each meeting showing attendance by members during that calendar year.

Article 6 Meetings

6.01 Regular Board meetings shall be held at least six (6) times each year. The location and time of the meetings shall be determined by the Board Officers.

6.02 **Special Meetings.** Special meetings may be called by the Chair or any two voting Board Members.

6.03 **Notice of Meetings.** In accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Act, notice of any meeting of the HCHC shall be posted 72 hours before the scheduled time of the meeting in a place readily accessible to the general public at all times. Therefore, in addition to notifying each voting member by mail, a notice shall be posted at the Hidalgo County Court House which shall indicate the date, hour, place and subject of each meeting.

6.04 **Records of Open Meeting.** The Commission shall prepare and keep minutes or make a tape recording of each open meeting. Such minutes shall state the subject of each deliberation and shall indicate each vote, order, decision or other action taken. In accordance with the Open Meetings Act, the minutes or tape recordings shall be available for public inspection and copying on request to the County Judge's Office

6.05 **Quorum.** A quorum shall be a simple majority of the membership present unless otherwise defined in the Bylaws.

Article 7 Officers

7.01 **Officers and Duties.** Officers shall be appointed by a majority vote of the Board Members present at a meeting no later than the second regularly scheduled meeting of odd-numbered years, except that the Chairperson shall be appointed by Commissioners Court.

- a. The **Board Officers** (the "Officers") shall consist of a Chairperson, Two Vice-chairpersons, Secretary and Treasurer.
- b. **Chairperson.** The Chair shall convene regularly scheduled HCHC meetings and shall preside or arrange for other members of the Executive Board to preside at each HCHC in the following order - a Vice Chair; Secretary and Treasurer. The Chairperson shall have executive supervision over the activities of the HCHC within the scope provided by

these Bylaws. The Chairperson shall report annually on the activities of the Commission to the Hidalgo County Commissioners Court, to the membership and to the Taxes Historical Commission as required. The Chairperson shall appoint members of committees and shall be an *ex officio* member of all committees.

- c. **Vice Chairperson of Preservation.** The Vice Chairperson of Preservation shall assume the duties of the chair in the event of absence, incapacity or resignation of the Chair. He/she shall oversee the work of preserving, restoring and recording local history and shall chair the Preservation & Restoration Committee.
- d. **Vice Chairperson of Research & Markers.** The Vice Chairperson of Research & Markers shall assume the duties of the chairperson in the event of absence of the Chairman or Vice Chairperson for Preservation. The Vice Chair of Research & Markers shall oversee the historical research and marker program and shall chair that committee.
- e. **Secretary.** The Secretary shall be responsible for keeping records of all HCHC actions, including overseeing the taking of minutes at all HCHC meetings, sending out meeting announcements, distributing copies of minutes and the agenda to each member, preparing member attendance report and assuring that certified records are maintained.
- f. **Treasurer.** The Treasurer shall be responsible for keeping adequate financial records, for depositing all funds with the County Treasurer, for preparing and recommending a budget and for expending budgeted funds in accordance with the procedures established by Hidalgo County. The Treasurer shall submit financial reports to the Commissioners Court as required and to the membership at each meeting. The Treasurer shall chair the Finance Committee, help develop fundraising plans and make financial information available to the Commission and the public.
- g. **Term.** Terms of the Officers shall be two (2) years commensurating in January of each odd number year. Terms may be successive.
- h. **Resignation of Officers.** Resignation of the Chairperson must be in writing and received by the County Judge. The Commissioners Court shall appoint a new Chairperson to complete the current term. Resignation of the Vice Chair, Secretary or Treasurer must be in writing and received by the Chairperson. The Chairperson shall select a replacement to complete the term, upon favorable vote of two-thirds of the Board Members.

Article 8 Committees

8.01 The Chairperson shall appoint all committee chairpersons. The Chairperson shall appoint *ad hoc* committees as needed.

8.02 **Executive Board.** The Executive Board shall be composed of the HCHC Officers - a Chairperson, two Vice-chairpersons, Secretary and Treasurer. Executive Board activities may include acting as liaison between the HCHC and the Texas Historical Commission, as well as between local citizens and other County commissions regarding special projects and meetings.

8.03 **Finance/Budget Committee.** The Finance/Budget Committee is responsible for all matters relating to the HCMC's fiscal responsibilities and shall be chaired by the Treasurer. The Committee shall follow all Hidalgo County government procedures in management of the budget. The Finance/Budget Committee shall create a working budget for each year's activities for submission to the Commissioners Court.

8.04 **Research & Marker Committee.** The Research and Marker Committee shall conduct research on the history of structures, places and people and shall nominate appropriate structures and subjects for historical marking and shall be responsible for updating landmarks listings for the County.

8.05 **Preservation & Restoration Committee.** Preservation & Restoration Committee shall survey those historic structures in danger of destruction and make efforts to preserve and restore such structures.

8.06 **Collections and Archives Committee.** The Collections & Archives Committee shall encourage and promote the acquisition and preservation of historic photographs, artifacts and documents.

8.07 **Publicity Committee.** The Publicity Committee is responsible for making sure that HCHC activities are well publicized, so that citizens of the County are aware of the Commission and its responsibilities in the field of preservation.

8.09 **Bylaws Committee.** The Bylaws Committee shall recommend to the membership any appropriate changes to the Bylaws.

Article 9 Financial Administration

9.01 **Budget.** The proposed budget for the ensuing year shall be prepared by the County Commissioners.

9.02 **Receipt of Gifts.** The HCHC shall be authorized to accept gifts of money and other property to further its historical preservation goals and for any use in the of its lawful purpose consistent with the Texas Historical Commission and Hidalgo County's stated policies. All gifts will be acknowledged in a regular meeting of the Commissioners Court and monetary gifts will be deposited into the general fund of Hidalgo County.

Article 10
Parliamentary Procedure

9.01 **Parliamentary Procedure.** Roberts Rules of Order, Newly Revised (latest edition), shall be the authoritative reference for all procedures not covered by these Bylaws.

Article 11
Amendments

10.01 **Amendments.** These Bylaws may be amended by two-thirds (2/3) vote of the qualified members present and voting at a regular Board Meeting provided the amendment has been submitted in writing to the full Board of Directors at least two weeks before the meeting at which the vote on the amendment is taken. The Bylaws will then be presented to the Commissioners Court for final approval at their next regularly scheduled meeting.

Adopted by the Board of Directors of the Hidalgo County Historical Commission on April _____, 2013.

ADELA ORTEGA, PRESIDENT

Approved by the Hidalgo County Commissioners Court on _____, 2013.

RAMON GARCIA, COUNTY JUDGE