

FIRST AMENDED BY-LAWS OF THE WILLIAMSON COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION

ARTICLE I: AUTHORITY AND NAME

1.01 The existence and operation of a county historical commission is authorized by the State of Texas under Chapter 318 of the Texas Local Government Code, as amended. Such a county historical commission is not required to incorporate as a non-profit organization.

1.02 The organization designated to coordinate and supervise historic preservation under the direction of the Williamson County Commissioners Court shall be known as the WILLIAMSON COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION, hereinafter referred to as the "WCHC".

1.03 The principal office of the WCHC shall be located at 716 S. Austin Ave., Georgetown, TX 78626.

ARTICLE II: PURPOSE AND POLICY

2.01 The purpose of the WCHC shall be to preserve, protect and promote history within the county and to that end the WCHC shall:

- a) support, whenever possible, the programs of the Texas Historical Commission; and when appropriate, communicate and cooperate with similar organizations in the Central Texas region and adjacent counties;
- b) conduct continuing programs of historical marker recommendations and placements in accordance with the Texas Historical Commission requirements;
- c) promote the preservation of historic cemeteries;
- d) make recommendations to the Williamson County Commissioners Court for property acquisition, real or personal, which is of historical significance;
- e) sponsor and encourage the work of Williamson County Junior Historians;
- f) maintain historical marker files for the public; and
- g) comply with all the requirements of Chapter 318 of the Texas Local Government Code.

2.02 It shall be the policy of the WCHC that historical markers placed on private property will be paid for, whenever feasible, by the property owner.

ARTICLE III: MEMBERSHIP

3.01 Eligibility. The membership of the WCHC shall be composed of at least seven (7) Williamson County citizens who have demonstrated an interest in the preservation of Williamson County's historical heritage. The voting membership shall reside in Williamson County, Texas. If the Commission membership consists of more than seven (7) Williamson County residents, the Williamson County Commissioners Court shall have the discretion to appoint non-residents as voting members to the Commission. To be considered for Commission membership, those residing outside of Williamson County must demonstrate a strong interest in Williamson County history and have family connections to or former residence in Williamson County.

Non-resident members shall not make up a majority of the voting Commission membership. Others interested in preserving county history but residing outside of Williamson County can serve as non-voting Associate Members. In making recommendations for appointments, the WCHC shall seek to have every geographical section of the county represented on the WCHC. The voting commission membership should be balanced between gender, ethnicity, and age. Voting members must be 18 years of age or older. All members must be approved by the Williamson County Commissioners Court. Names of prospective members shall be presented quarterly or as needed to the Williamson County Commissioners Court. Individual members can be removed by three-fourths (3/4) of the entire voting membership of the WCHC at any time for just cause or at the sole discretion of the Williamson County Commissioners Court.

3.02 Term. Membership shall be appointed by the Williamson County Commissioners Court during the month of January of odd-numbered years and such appointed members shall serve for two year terms. The Williamson County Commissioners Court shall fill a vacancy on the WCHC for the remainder of the outgoing member's term. Members may be reappointed but should indicate their willingness to continue to serve by communicating with the Chairperson, Secretary or another officer. A member absent for a period of three (3) consecutive meetings or absent four (4) meetings in a fiscal year shall be reclassified as an Associate Member without voting power. Such reclassified Associate Members may be restored to regular active membership when attendance and/or work resumes. After a period of twelve (12) months without official communication with an officer of WCHC, Associate Members may be removed from the membership roll.

3.03 Resignation. Resignation from the WCHC may be accepted after a letter of resignation has been read into the official minutes by either the Chairperson or Secretary and forwarded to the Williamson County Commissioners Court. As set forth above, the Williamson County Commissioners Court shall fill a vacancy on the WCHC for the remainder of the resigning member's term.

3.04 Ex-Officio Members. Ex-Officio, non-voting members may include the County Judge, the County Commissioners, sponsors of Junior Historian groups, and representatives of related organizations.

ARTICLE IV: OFFICERS

4.01 Enumeration, Election, and Term. The officers of the WCHC shall consist of a Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Historical Marker Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer. These officers shall be elected by a majority vote of the members present at the January meeting of odd-numbered years. This slate of officers will be presented to the Williamson County Commissioners Court in January for approval. Upon approval of the Williamson County Commissioners Court, officer terms shall be for two years. Officers elected in-term will serve until the November meeting of the next even numbered year.

4.02 Chairperson. The Chairperson shall be the Executive Officer for the WCHC whose responsibility shall be to preside at all meetings; appoint standing committees, task forces, and their chairperson; report to the Williamson County Commissioners Court quarterly or as frequently as the Court deems necessary on the activity and progress of the WCHC.

4.03 Vice-Chairperson. The Vice-Chairperson shall preside at the meetings in the absence of the Chairperson; and, in the event the Chairperson is no longer able to serve in that capacity, the Vice-Chairperson shall possess all the duties and responsibilities of the Chairperson until a new Chairperson is appointed.

4.04 Secretary. The Secretary shall notify members of all meetings; keep an accurate record of attendance; record the minutes of the meetings; and perform such other duties normally pertaining to the office.

4.05 Treasurer. The Treasurer shall receive any monies given to or earned by the WCHC; shall act as custodian for these monies and deposit them in the WCHC bank account; present accurate accounting of the funds at each meeting; disburse funds upon approval of the WCHC; and perform such other duties as normally pertain to the office.

4.06 Historical Marker Chairperson. The Historical Marker Chair serves as the sole liaison for the public with the Texas Historical Commission (THC) throughout the historical marker process, from the online submittal of the application to the review and approval of the inscription.

4.07 Nominations and Election Procedure. Nominations for these offices shall be made by a committee composed of three appointed members. Officer nominations shall be made and presented to the general membership at the January meeting of odd-numbered years. In the event more than one candidate is nominated for an office, election shall be by written ballot. A majority vote of all members qualified to vote shall constitute election. Proxy or absentee voting will not be allowed in officer elections.

4.08 Resignation and Vacancy. An officer may resign the office while not necessarily resigning membership on the WCHC by submitting a letter to the WCHC, which shall be read into the official minutes. Vacancies occurring in any office other than the Chairperson shall be filled for the remainder of the term by electing a substitute at the regular meeting following the resignation. Vacancy in the office of Chairperson shall be filled by appointment by the County Judge. The elected officer shall fill out the remainder of the vacating officer's regular term.

ARTICLE V: FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION

5.01 Fiscal Term. The fiscal term for the WCHC shall coincide with that of the Williamson County Commissioners Court.

5.02 Budget. The proposed budget for the ensuing year shall be prepared by the Budget Committee and presented in writing to the general membership of the WCHC at the June meeting. Once the general membership of the WCHC approves the proposed budget, the WCHC shall then present the proposed budget to the Williamson County Commissioners Court for consideration and approval. The Budget Committee shall consist of the Treasurer, who shall serve as the committee chairperson, along with two appointed members.

5.03 Allocations. Funds shall be disbursed by the Treasurer upon authorization by the general membership.

5.04 Receipt of Gifts. The WCHC shall be authorized to accept gifts of money and other property from any source for use in the furtherance of its lawful purposes.

5.05 Public Accountability. The Williamson County Auditor or its designated agent shall have the right to audit the financial records of the WCHC at any time.

ARTICLE VI: MEETINGS

6.01 Regular Meetings. There shall be a minimum of six (6) regular meetings per year for the general membership as specified by the Texas Historical Commission. The date, time and place shall be determined by WCHC. Meeting notification shall be by mail, phone or e-mail. Meeting agendas will be filed for record with the County Clerk's Office 72 hours prior to each meeting.

6.02 Organizational Planning. A planning meeting shall be held once each year; specific date, time and place shall be set by WCHC recommendations. The purpose of this meeting shall be to form a well-balanced program of work to encourage participation of all commission members; and to consider any other such business as is proper.

6.03 Quorum. A quorum shall be required for the transaction of business at any meeting. A quorum shall be composed of not less than a simple majority of the total voting membership, which must also include at least two officers.

6.04 Parliamentary procedure. Parliamentary procedure will be according to Robert's Rules of Order.

6.05 Special Meetings. It is the policy of the WCHC to meet once every other month in regular session. One-third of the voting membership may request special meetings if necessary to conduct business between regular meetings.

6.06 Open Meetings Act. All meetings of the WCHC shall be conducted in accordance with the open meetings law, Chapter 551, Texas Government Code, as amended.

ARTICLE VII: COMMITTEES AND TASK FORCES

7.01 The Chairperson of the WCHC shall appoint a chairperson for each of the standing committees and task forces as needed. The chairpersons for the committees shall serve the same term as the officers. Members of the WCHC will be encouraged to join a committee in accordance with the member's preference. Outside advisors or counselors may serve as non-voting committee members.

7.02 Standing committees. In accordance with the recommendations of the Texas Historical Commission, the following five (5) committees shall be on-going:

- a) Historical Preservation support the Williamson County Historical Museum; write or update county history; reprint scarce historical materials and publications; assist in the preservation of historic buildings, sites and historic cemeteries.
- b) Historical Markers – study, survey, research and review subjects and sites for possible marking; prepare and submit appropriate applications; update and maintain marker lists and marker files in cooperation with the Williamson County Historical Museum to make them accessible to the public; secure locations and obtain permission for erecting markers.
- c) History Appreciation – promote Texas and County History Appreciation through appropriate activities, programs or announcements; publicize Commission work; cooperate with schools and civic organizations, as well as other historical societies, on county history programs, historical tours, dedications, commemorations and observances, and promote Junior Historian activities.
- d) Finance and Budget – prepare budget for adoption by WCHC voting members and present proposed budget to the County Commissioners; raise private funds to supplement that which was allocated by Williamson County Commissioners Court as is necessary; monitor Treasurer's records when requested by the WCHC by two-thirds vote of the total voting membership.

e) Advisory – provide advice and direction on citizen interests; serve as liaison between WCHC and others seeking advice, assistance, support or sponsorship for history-related projects and programs.

7.03 Special Committees or Task Forces. The Chairperson of WCHC may appoint chairpersons and members of special committees which will serve to accomplish a specific goal or project. Each committee will be terminated at the completion of the goal or project unless otherwise directed by the WCHC.

ARTICLE VIII – AMENDMENTS

8.01 These by-laws may be amended by two-thirds (2/3) vote of all voting members provided the amendments were submitted in writing to the general membership two weeks prior to that meeting and are approved by the WILLIAMSON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT.

ARTICLE IX – DISSOLUTION

9.01 If the WCHC should be dissolved by vote of the Williamson County Commissioners Court, the property and records of the WCHC shall become the property and records of the WILLIAMSON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT who will ensure that the records are made available to the public or transferred to an organization with a similar mission.

ADOPTED by the Committee for the Williamson County Historical Commission on _____, 20____ and affirmed by the Williamson County Commissioners Court on April 14, 2009.

By: _____

Printed Name: _____

Title: Chairperson of the Williamson
County Historical Commission

By:  _____

Printed Name: Dan A. Gattis

Title: Williamson County Judge