

Archeology Committee

October 24, 2024



TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

AGENDA ARCHEOLOGY COMMITTEE

The Copper Rose
415 N. Grant Ave.
Odessa, TX 79761
October 24, 2024
8:30 A.M

This meeting of the Archeology Committee has been properly posted with the Secretary of State's Office according to the provisions of the Texas Open Meetings Act, Chapter 551, Texas Government Code. The members may discuss and/or take action on any of the items listed in the agenda.

- 1. Call to Order** – *Chairman Bruseth*
 - A. Committee Introductions
 - B. Establish a Quorum
 - C. Recognize and/or excuse absences

- 2. Consider approval of committee minutes** – *Bruseth*
 - A. Archeology Committee Meeting (July 25, 2024)

- 3. Division Director's Report**
 - A. Update on Archeology Division Programs – *Jones*
 1. Landowner Assistance Programs
 2. Marine Archeology Program
 3. Texas Archeological Stewardship Network
 4. Texas Archeology Month
 5. Curatorial Facility Certification Program
 - B. Upcoming activities/events – *Jones*

- 4. Adjournment** – *Bruseth*

NOTICE OF ASSISTANCE AT PUBLIC MEETINGS: Persons with disabilities who plan to attend this meeting and who may need auxiliary aids or services such as interpreters for persons who are deaf or hearing impaired, readers, large print or Braille, are requested to contact Paige Neumann at (512) 463-5768 at least four (4) business days prior to the meeting so that appropriate arrangements can be made.

TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

MINUTES ARCHEOLOGY COMMITTEE

Hilton Garden Inn
Ballroom
220 E. Grande Blvd.
Tyler, TX 75703
July 25, 2024
8:30 A.M.

This meeting of the Archeology Committee has been properly posted with the Secretary of State's Office according to the provisions of the Texas Open Meetings Act, Chapter 551, Texas Government Code. The members may discuss and/or take action on any of the items listed in the agenda.

1. Call to Order

The meeting of the Archeology Committee was called to order by Chair Commissioner James Bruseth at 8:30 am on July 25, 2024. He announced that the meeting had been posted with the Secretary of State's Office according to the provisions of the Texas Open Meetings Act, Chapter 551, Texas Government Code.

A. Committee Introductions

Committee members present included:
Commissioner James Bruseth (Chair)
Commissioner Donna Bahorich
Commissioner Pete Peterson
Commissioner David Gravelle

Excused Absences:
Commissioner Tom Perini

B. Establish a Quorum

Chairman Bruseth reported a quorum was present and the meeting was opened.

C. Recognize and/or excuse absences

Commissioner Bruseth moved to approve the absence of Commissioner Tom Perini. No objections were raised, and the absence was approved.

2. Consider approval of committee minutes

Commissioner David Gravelle moved to approve the Archeology Committee Meeting Minutes from April 2, 2024, and the Archeology Committee voted unanimously to approve.

3. Division Director's Report

A. Update on Archeology Division Programs

AD Director Jones presented a general overview of activities in the division. There has been a lot of activity that the staff has been doing across the state. Jones elaborated on the roles that all the Regional Archeologists share in regards to the review of National Historic Preservation Act and Antiquities Code projects. West Texas Regional Archeologist, Drew Sitters, recent trip was highlighted as an example. In June, Sitters visited Big Bend National Park with stewards and National

Park Service (NPS) park staff, to discuss the current project to demolish and rebuild the Chisos Basin Lodge, which is located atop a 9000-year-old, deeply buried, archeological site. Sitters works closely with the NPS archeologist on this project to ensure the project runs smoothly. Sitters also visited the site of Loma Alto to assess potential damage from a Customs and Border Protection (CBP) surveillance tower constructed on private land. Loma Alta is a 16th century village visited by the early Spanish entradas. Jones showed a photo demonstrating a road that leads to an antenna that was not included in the project coordination and damaged a part of the site. Sitters was able to confirm that the site was not badly impacted, but it reinforces the need for better communication about projects from CBP and AD staff are working to ensure CBP staff are aware of the requirements. In Presidio and Redford, Sitters met with Christina Hernandez who represents The People of La Junta for Preservation. AD has coordinated with this group regarding the Cementario del Barrio de los Lipanes in Presidio and is coordinating with them on their recent purchase of a portion of the SAL-designated Polvo Site in Redford.

Jones highlighted the roles of AD staff in this year's Texas Archeological Society Field School in June, which took place in Nacogdoches for a second year. A portion of the fieldschool focuses on an archeological survey program that works with private landowners to record and protect archeological sites. Mary Jo Galindo, AD's South Texas Reviewer, led the survey team and they documented the history of logging on a property. In addition, other staff assisted in excavations at the Belle Gallant site, a historic period Caddo village.

Jones then provided an update on the Curatorial Facilities Certification Program, noting that the application for the Galveston County Museum was approved and will be moving forward to the self-evaluation phase.

Jones noted that the Texas Archeological Stewardship Network had its 40th anniversary this year. The stewards assist with public outreach across Texas. This year's annual workshop was held at the Environmental Research Center at Hornsby Bend outside of Austin, where staff provided updates and staff and stewards presented on various ongoing projects.

Jones also summarized a recent site visit in Webberville. In the spring, descendants of the John Webber family reached out to get a Historical Marker for Webber's ferry. Jones proceeded to give a brief history on John Webber, the original settler and early ferry operator. Jones, Amy Borgens, Travis County CHC Chair Bob Ward, three Preservation Scholars, and a Webber descendent made a site visit in early July to the location presumed ferry site at the invitation of the Cook family who own the land. The visit confirmed the location.

A final AD program discussed was the Tribal Engagement Program, led by the regional reviewer for southeast Texas, Marie Archambeault. For over three years, AD has hosted a monthly informal meeting open to all 29 federally recognized tribes with connections to Texas to communicate projects of interest and issues of concern. Recently, the meeting has also been used as an avenue to connect Historic Sites Division staff with tribal representatives. Recently, the AD was invited to tribal events in Texas, including the Alabama-Coushatta Powwow, the only event of its kind that occurs on tribal lands in Texas, attended by Brad Jones, the Ysleta del Sur's Feast of St. Anthony celebration attended by Marie Archambeault and Danielle Julien.

B. Upcoming activities/events – Jones

Jones continued his update, noting that Archeology staff will be attending the TxDot annual consultation meeting being held in partnership with Texas Parks and Wildlife and THC in late September and early October. This year, it will be held at Palo Duro State Park.

1. Texas Archeology Month

October is Texas Archeology Month, and Jones noted that 12,000 pinch pots kits have been prepared for distribution, as well as a new activity booklet. Jones thanked Communications, Historic Sites Division, and the History Programs for their assistance in the creation of this book, also noting that they worked with teachers to develop TEKS-oriented assignments.

2. Upcoming Field Work

For upcoming field work, Jones summarized a project in Austin at the site of the freedman's community of Kincheonville, which is partially in a City of Austin nature preserve. Jones is working with Jordan Davis, a UT-Austin doctoral candidate, who is conducting his dissertation fieldwork at the site and will be undertaking an archeological survey in the fall. Lastly, Jones spoke about the Pirate Aury Project, funded by an NPS Maritime Heritage Grant, to search for evidence of the French privateer in Matagorda Bay, where he lost many men, nine ships, and founded and abandoned three settlements in 1817. In late July, Jones, Amy Borgens, and Tiffany Osburn conducted an initial reconnaissance of the project area. In September, a maritime survey is planned that will be followed up by a terrestrial survey. Jones noted that the shallow water depths will be studied using a remote-controlled drone watercraft towing a magnetometer, in addition to a standard magnetometer towed by the THC's Anomaly II vessel.

4. Adjournment

Commissioner Bruseth adjourned the Archeology Committee meeting at 8:45 am.

Quarterly Report

Archeology Division

July-September 2024

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE DIRECTOR

On September 19, AD staff were joined by TASN members Jim Schmidt and Larry Ripper and three UT students to conduct an intensive survey and assessment of site 41TV1791 in eastern Travis County. The site is protected by a Conservation Easement granted to the THC by the GLO when the property was transferred to private ownership. The original survey by GLO archeologist Bob Skiles identified both a prehistoric occupation and a late-19th through 20th century occupation. Prior to the transfer, the property was part of the Texas State School and served as a working farm. In coordination with the landowners, staff conducted the research to assess the site and determine the extent of significant deposits and develop a plan for future management. This fieldwork is part of an initiative by staff to develop a plan for assessing and monitoring over 100 archeological conservation easements currently managed by the THC (Tiffany Osburn, Rebecca Shelton, Mary Jo Galindo, Drew Sitters, Danielle Julien, Tabitha Tracy)

- Starting in August, AD staff are collaborating with UT-Austin Anthropology professor Dr. Liz Ibarrola on the development and implementation of a field methods course that prepares students to work in cultural resource management programs during the fall semester. This includes providing guest lectures on regulatory compliance in Texas, the use of remote sensing and hands-on instruction in shovel testing methodologies. (Brad Jones, Tiffany Osburn)
- On September 11, at the invitation of TxDOT, Brad Jones presented an overview of THC programs at the TxDOT Environmental Conference in Corpus Christi. This was the first time the THC has presented to this audience and it was a success, prompting requests for future presentations by THC programs.
- September 26—Presentation to Dr. Alan Covey's Cultures in Contact seminar at UT-Austin, focusing on Spanish colonialism and indigenous responses in Texas. (Brad Jones)

MARINE ARCHEOLOGY PROGRAM (MAP)

The Marine Archeology Program (MAP) has 45 active underwater antiquities permits that have been issued since January 2021 for investigations in advance of proposed marine-based constructions projects including pipelines

and shoreline restoration projects. Seventeen underwater permits have been issued this fiscal year, including four this quarter, exceeding the average number of permits typically issued by the MAP each year (10).

The Marine Archeology Program participated in several coastal area investigations during the quarter. In July, the state marine archeologist joined Tiffany Osburn in response to a landowner request to examine sites in Refugio County. These shell middens may be associated with 41RF14 recorded in 1975. The same weekend, Borgens and Osburn joined Archeology Division Director Brad Jones, underwater archeologist Bob Gearhart of Bob Hydrographics, LCC., and volunteer Larry Beavers to conduct a reconnaissance investigation in portions of Pass Cavallo in advance of larger, upcoming joint underwater and terrestrial archeological surveys funded in part by the National Park Service Maritime Heritage Grant.

In late September, the THC visited Boca Chica Shipwreck No. 1 (41CF125) with help from the local stewards and volunteers who assist the THC by monitoring the shipwreck. The site is on the beach at Brazos Island and has been known to the agency since 1980, though the THC went nearly 30 years without hearing of the site's exposure. Since 2017, the 19th-century shipwreck has been more regularly unburied as it is now located at the surf zone due to long-term effects of shoreline erosion. Passing storms and hurricanes, such as Alberto, Beryl and Francine, though not directly making landfall at the shipwreck's location, frequently uncover it. The THC visit this quarter was the highest-level of wreck exposure observed first-hand by THC staff.

Boca Chica Shipwreck No. 1, also a State Antiquities Landmark, is one of the Texas archeological sites featured in a new chapter authored by Borgens. Final edits were submitted this quarter for the peer-reviewed chapter: "Don't Come and Take It: Chronicling Environmental and Anthropogenic Impacts on Historic Shipwrecks in the Texas Coastal Zone" for the University Press of Florida book *The Intertidal Shipwreck: Management of a Historic Resource in an Unmanageable Environment*. This will be published in 2025.

REVIEW AND COMPLIANCE ACTIVITIES

Under the auspices of the National Historic Preservation Act and the Antiquities Code of Texas, the State and Federal Review Section staff of the AD reviewed approximately 1911 proposed development projects from July 1–September 30. Of those, about 63 archeological surveys were required to determine whether any significant cultural resources would be adversely affected, and about 43,519.79 acres were surveyed. Approximately 732 historic and prehistoric sites were recorded, and of those, 16 were determined eligible for listing in the National Register, while 594 were determined not eligible, with 122 of undetermined eligibility.

- July 31—AD and Architecture Division staff met with NPS staff at Mission Concepción to discuss forthcoming rehabilitation projects (Emily Dylla, Brad Jones, Danielle Julien)

- September 4—AD review staff met with HSD staff and project partners to review the current status of archeology at Washington-on-the-Brazos. The meeting also provided an opportunity for staff to consult with the project supervisors to discuss the best path forward for completing the project while finding the best outcomes for the cultural resources.

TRIBAL OUTREACH PROGRAM

The AD's Tribal Program continues to meet monthly with tribal representatives, providing assistance to other divisions developing tribal outreach activities. Marie Archambeault and Brad Jones continue assisting staff from Museum Services and TxDOT on the development of a workbook for museums and archeologists on the care and exhibition of Native American artifacts. This project is funded through the TxDOT-THC interagency contract and, in addition to agency staff, has an outside consultant and tribal participants working to complete the project.

- August 12-16—Marie Archambeault attended the National Association of Tribal Historic Preservation Officers in Wisconsin. This meeting provided an opportunity to meet with many tribal representatives with whom we have limited contact, as well as educational information on changing federal laws, particularly the recent revisions to the Native American Grave Protection and Repatriation Act.

- September 12—Attended morning recognition ceremony by the City of Austin for the Tonkawa Tribe's role in the protection of Austin during the 1840s, and a private evening reception to celebrate their acquisition of their ancestral origin place—Red Mountain in Milam County (Jones and Archambeault)

- September 28—Brad Jones and Marie Archambeault attended the 150-year commemoration of the Battle of Palo Duro organized by the Kiowa, Comanche, and Cheyenne and Arapahoe Nations in conjunction with Texas Parks and Wildlife and Texas Tech University. This is the first time all three tribes have been together at the site. THC staff from HPD and HSD were also present, providing information on THC programs to over 1,000 attendees.

CURATORIAL FACILITIES CERTIFICATION PROGRAM (CFCP)

The THC's CFCP ensures that state-associated archeological collections are properly curated. AD recently completed reviewing the application of the Galveston Historical Museum, initiating the second step in the process, the Self-Evaluation. Applying facilities are provided up to six months to complete the Self-Evaluation, but the Galveston County Museum completed the documents in September and submitted them to the THC. After review, a site visit will be conducted to assess the facility and the overall state of the collections and collection management processes

The Alamo staff also submitted an application for the certification of the new Ralston Family Collections Center at the Alamo. This facility will house all Alamo-related collections, including archeology. Staff have reviewed the application and approved it. The next step will be the completion of the self-evaluation and field review.

TEXAS ARCHEOLOGICAL STEWARDSHIP NETWORK (TASN)

The TASN welcomed five new stewards this past quarter: Mike Belcik, Victoria County; Keth Elwell, Collin County; O.C. Garza, Victoria County; Beth de la Garza, Cameron County; and Brendan Haas, Comal County. All the new stewards have already demonstrated a strong commitment to archeology and public outreach, and we look forward to working with them to improve outreach and preservation in their regions.

Sadly, longtime steward and TASN advisory board member Tom Middlebrook of Nacogdoches passed away in September. Tom was a passionate advocate for archeology and historic preservation, being involved in numerous excavations of significant sites in East Texas and acting as a mentor and colleague for students, fellow avocational archeologists, stewards, and professional archeologists. His knowledge, engagement, and love for the archeology will be truly missed by the many whose lives he touched across the state.