

2016 CHC ANNUAL REPORT—submit completed report to THC by February 28, 2017

Direct questions about reporting to Amy Hammons, call 512/475-2692 or email amy.hammons@thc.state.tx.us.

General Information

1. Name of your county

Polk

2. Name of 2016 CHC chair

PATRICIA SNOOK

Name of 2016 CHC co-chair (if 2 chairs)
--Vice-presidents are NOT considered co-chairs

Name of 2017 CHC chair--comment if new chair not selected to date

Name of 2017 CHC co-chair (if 2 chairs)
--Vice-presidents are NOT considered co-chairs

3. Contact info for individual filling out report IF OTHER THAN CHAIR.

Name of the individual filling out report

His/her email address and telephone number

CHC Volunteer Hours--Please provide hours for your appointees and any other volunteers that may contribute to CHC projects and programs. Include time spent at meetings, events, and travel to/from meetings and events, etc.

4. How many volunteer hours were contributed to CHC meetings, projects, and programs in 2016? If you do not track hours, enter an approximate number. Enter the number "0" if your CHC is inactive.

Number of volunteer hours 1935

5. Provide the number of individuals who served as CHC appointees in 2016.

Number of CHC appointees 15

6. Provide comments/clarifications about the volunteer hours you entered above. Skip if you don't have comments.

Many hours spent preparing for new exhibit space, open house and reception as well as interviewing for new curator. One member wrote pamphlet, members took pictures and compiled marker book.

CHC Meetings and Appointee Participation

7. Indicate the number of CHC meetings held in 2016. Enter the number "0" in both boxes, if your CHC was inactive in 2016, i.e., did not provide services to the county.

CHC full commission meetings in 2016 8

CHC committee meetings in 2016 4

8. A majority of all individuals appointed to a CHC must be present to constitute a QUORUM. Check box next to the percentage that best reflects how often a QUORUM was present for your full commission meetings in 2016.

- Our CHC did not meet in 2016
0% of full commission meetings made quorum
1-25% of full commission meetings made quorum
26-50% of full commission meetings made quorum
51-75% of full commission meetings made quorum
76-99% of full commission meetings made quorum
100% of full commission meetings made quorum

**Open Meetings/Records** training is offered on the Texas Attorney General's website. THC recommends that all appointees take this training so that each CHC adheres to existing laws/ policies concerning appointed roles.

9. Check percentage that best reflects the number of appointees who have completed Open Meetings training.

- 0% of our CHC appointees have taken Open Meetings training
- 1-25% have taken Open Meetings training
- 26-50% have taken Open Meetings training
- 51-75% have taken Open Meetings training
- 76-99% have taken Open Meetings training
- 100% of our CHC of appointees have taken Open Meetings training

**CHC Financial Information**—Provide the following information to the best of your ability, so that our agency, other CHCs, and county governments gain a better understanding of the statewide financial investment in CHCs.

10. Which serves as the repository for CHC money? Check each answer that applies to your CHC.

- County treasury
- Private bank account
- Not sure how CHC money is accounted for
- Nonprofit partner
- No public or private accounts

11. Enter the amount of money provided to your CHC next to each line item. Please round up to the nearest dollar when necessary. Enter the number "0" if no monies are associated with the line item.

Balance carried over from 2015: \_\_\_\_\_

Annual county allocation for 2016 (not including money for museums): 0

County money allotted for museums in 2016: 3200.00

Any other money issued by county during 2016 (one-time amount for special projects, etc.): 0

CHC fundraising proceeds (events, book sales, etc.) during 2016: 258.00

Grant money provided to CHC in 2016: 0

Partner/nonprofit money donations made in 2016: 12,000.00

"Membership" dues (though not recommended, some CHCs do request dues): 0

Any other money amounts for 2016 not already included above; do not include CHC appointee out-of-pocket expenses, which will be requested later in the report: 0

12. Provide any clarifications about above amounts; skip question if you have no comments.

13. If your county employs an individual as a CHC liaison or as some other support position, please let us know if his/her salary comes out of the CHC county allocation or from some other budgetary line item. Also, let us know what responsibilities have been assigned to this individual.

14. Check each of the IN-KIND DONATIONS that was given to your CHC in 2016 by your COUNTY (county government). IN-KIND donations are goods and/or services provided to your organization at no charge.

- We do not receive in-kind donations from our county. **NOTE:** if you check this box, then none of the boxes below will be checked for this question.
- Meeting and/or office space for CHC

- Space for a CHC-operated museum
- Space for a CHC-sponsored exhibit (history, projects, photographs, etc.)
- Space for archive or records storage
- Utilities associated with any spaces mentioned above
- Exterior maintenance or heavy equipment
- Project/event supplies and/or equipment
- Administrative supplies or services--postage, paper, ink, copier, etc.
- Assistance from county staff--posting meetings, financial reports, legal consultations, etc.
- County liaison whose job description involves providing services to CHC
- Professional expertise of county staff (for any subject/need)
- Computer hardware or software
- Internet access
- Web hosting on county website

15. Check each of the IN-KIND DONATIONS that was given to your CHC in 2016 by individuals or organizations (other than your COUNTY). Include in-kind donations made by CHC appointees.

- We do not receive in-kind donations from non-county entities. **NOTE:** if you check this box, then none of the boxes below will be checked for this question.
- Meeting and/or office space for CHC
- Space for a CHC-operated museum
- Space for a CHC-sponsored exhibit (history, projects, photographs, etc.)
- Space for archive or records storage
- Utilities associated with any spaces mentioned above
- Exterior maintenance or heavy equipment
- Project/event supplies and/or equipment
- Administrative supplies or services--postage, paper, ink, copier, etc.
- Computer hardware or software
- Internet access
- Web hosting on partner website
- Marketing/graphic design/creative professional services
- Architectural professional services
- Preservation consulting professional services
- Professional services of a historian
- Professional services of an archeologist
- Any other professional service or advice

**This report used to ask for estimated monetary value of in-kind services.** While we no longer track this info, we recommend that CHC tracks this info and thanks the individuals and organizations for his/her/its generosity.

**Planning CHC Projects/Programs**—State statutes direct CHCs to align planning efforts with Texas' Statewide Preservation Plan. Following questions address CHC planning and work applicable to each Statewide Plan goal.

16. A work plan defines project tasks, participants, time estimates, and a schedule. Check the option that best reflects how often is your CHC work plan updated.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Our CHC does not have a work plan | <input type="checkbox"/> Updated annually              |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Updated after each CHC meeting    | <input type="checkbox"/> Updated every 2 years         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Updated every 6 months                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Updated every 3 years or more |

17. Check each of the parties who participates in your CHC planning process.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Our CHC does not have a plan/planning process | <input type="checkbox"/> County commissioners                             |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CHC chair                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Other county officials                           |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CHC officers                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Partner organizations                            |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CHC appointees                     | <input type="checkbox"/> City and/or community officials from your county |
| <input type="checkbox"/> County judge                                  |   |

State statutes direct CHCs to align planning with Texas' Statewide Preservation Plan. The following report sections indicate what CHC accomplishments contribute to the Plan. **Goal 1 of the Statewide Preservation Plan for Texas** is to conduct comprehensive surveys of the state's diverse historic and cultural resources.

**Report is NOT referencing typical county property surveys**—we want cultural and historic resource surveys for above-ground resources (residential and commercial buildings, etc.) that indicate significance as well as the physical condition of individual resources within a given area.

Please distinguish survey work from general inventories that provide basic listings and locations of resources.

18. Check the **ONE statement** that best reflects your county's involvement with survey work. Please reread the survey description above to ensure that you are providing an accurate answer.

- I am not sure if our county has a historic resources survey
- No survey—CHC does **not** keep inventories of historic properties
- No survey—CHC keeps inventories of county historic properties
  
- Have initiated survey—CHC volunteers work on survey forms
- Have initiated survey—CHC volunteers and professional consultants work on survey forms
- Have initiated survey—Professional consultants hired to complete all survey forms
- County-wide survey exists—Survey has not been updated in the last 10 years
  
- County-wide survey completed—CHCs maintain/update existing volunteer-generated survey
- County-wide survey completed—CHCs maintain/update volunteer and professionally generated survey
- County-wide survey completed—CHCs maintain/update professionally generated survey

19. If you have a historic and cultural resources survey, check the formats that apply to your survey.

- Paper copy
- Electronic format in Word or similar type of software
- Electronic format in Excel or similar type of spreadsheet software
- Electronic format in database software (Microsoft Access, Filemaker, etc.)
- Survey information available online

**This report used to ask for endangered and demolished properties** but we have removed those questions from this report. We will continue to track this data but will collect the info in summer of 2017. If you don't already, please maintain a list of endangered and demolished properties.

20. Check the work items in which your CHC was actively involved during 2016.

- Reviewed applications for historical **MARKERS**
- Maintain an inventory of subject **MARKERS** in your county
- Periodically assess the condition of subject **MARKERS** in your county
- Cleaned or repaired **MARKERS**
- Provided an inventory of subject **MARKERS** for public use (brochure, website posting, etc.)
  
- Maintain inventory of properties **DESIGNATED** by Texas or the Secretary of the Interior as historic (i.e., National Register, Recorded Texas Historic Landmark, or State Antiquities Landmark)
- Periodically assess condition of properties **DESIGNATED** by Texas or the Secretary of the Interior as historic
- Provided inventory of properties **DESIGNATED** as historic for public use (brochure, website posting, etc.)
  
- Maintain an inventory of **CEMETERIES** in your county
- Periodically assess the condition of **CEMETERIES** in your county
- Cleaned or repaired objects in **CEMETERIES**
- Provided an inventory of **CEMETERIES** for public use (brochure, website posting, etc.)
- Maintain an inventory of **CEMETERY ORGANIZATIONS** in your county
- Compared **THC's** current inventory of **ROSENWALD** schools with your county inventory

**Statewide Preservation Plan—Goal 2: Emphasize Cultural Landscapes** encourages Texans to emphasize the identification, protection, and interpretation of cultural landscapes. Considering the environmental context of resources provides a broader understanding of what is required to preserve the story of a place.

21. Check the box next to each work item in which your CHC was actively involved during 2016.

- Identified and/or researched areas of development within county that could impact cultural/historic resources
- Identified and/or researched historic highways, roads, and trails in your county
- Identified and/or researched historic farms and ranches in your county
- Identified and/or researched historic bridges and/or bridge types in your county
- Identified and/or researched waterways, dams, irrigation districts, etc. in your county
- Identified and/or researched parks and/or open spaces

Comment on other work involving these cultural landscape themes in the box below.

Our CHC has begun pictorial history of different county bridges.

22. Check the box next to each work item in which your CHC was actively involved during 2016.

- Participated in work that altered your historic county courthouse square
- Researched or pursued repair for a historic school complex/campus
- Researched or pursued repair for a public plaza
- Participated in activities associated with El Camino Real de las Tejas National Historic Trail Association

Comment on work involving these cultural landscapes in the box below.

**Goal 3 Statewide Preservation Plan—Goal 3: Implement Policies and Incentives** is pursued when cities, counties, state agencies, federal agencies, and/or tribes implement preservation policies/incentives to protect historic/cultural assets. CHCs influence these policies and may participate in review process for these incentives.

23. Check the box next to each of the comments that apply to your CHC's 2016 body of work.

- CHC participated in community planning activities to ensure historic and cultural resources were considered when development or zoning is discussed by city officials
- CHC uses the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties to determine appropriate repair and new construction when making recommendations for exemptions or incentives
- CHC participated as a consulting party in a federal Section 106 undertaking review

Tell us more about your CHC's involvement in the areas checked above. Skip if no boxes are checked.

24. Check the box if the statement applies to your CHC.

- County offers historic tax exemptions/incentives for qualified properties
- CHC has a role in reviewing and/or making recommendations for COUNTY historic site tax exemptions/incentives

If your CHC has a review and/or recommendation role, please enter your county and explain the extent of your review authority for COUNTY historic tax exemptions or incentives.

Partner with Main Street board to make recommendations when asked. Polk County

**Statewide Preservation Plan—Goal 4: Leverage Economic Development Tools for Preservation**—CHCs contribute to Goal 4 if they are involved in activities in which counties and/or communities leverage preservation-based and traditional economic development tools to revitalize historic areas.

25. Check the box for each work item in which your CHC was actively involved in 2016.

- Promoted historic and cultural sites to develop and sustain heritage tourism initiatives
- Supported Main Street Program activities in a community within your county
- Secured private grant money to fund or partially fund a CHC project
- Secured Certified Local Government grants for CHC projects/training
- Secured other state or federal money to fund/partially fund a CHC project
- Used inventories of surveyed properties to promote rehabilitation through grants and/or tax incentive programs
- Involved in local economic development plans/projects/organizations
- Used hotel/motel tax revenue to fund preservation projects

Tell us a bit more about your CHC's involvement in the areas you have checked above.

*CHC member on Main Street Board - Help to promote fundraising, community service projects, used museum archives to assist with pictures of County shown on Facebook and video of County Hotel/motel Tax used for preservation signs and Texas Independence signs placed by CHC members and school students in front of historic properties.*

**Statewide Preservation Plan—Goal 5: Learn and Experience History through Place**—CHCs contribute to Goal 5 when providing events/activities that enable people to learn and experience the state's diverse history through education, recreation, and everyday interactions with historic places.

26. Check the box for each work item in which your CHC was actively involved in 2016.

- Provided educational events/presentations/info on preservation/history to audiences outside your CHC
- Provided educational events/presentations/information on preservation/history geared toward youth/schools
- Initiated projects to diversify interpretation of historic and cultural resources
- Participated in a regional preservation or tourism event (Texas Archeology Month event, Preservation Month event, history conference, cultural heritage festival, etc.)
- Coordinated a regional preservation or tourism event
- Supported activities sponsored by one or more of the Texas Heritage Trails regions
- Provided tours of a HISTORIC COURTHOUSE in your county
- Provided tours of other historic buildings and/or sites within the county
- CHC appointees volunteered at a historic site that is open to the public at large
- CHC managed a historic site that is open to the public at large

27. List events in which your CHC was involved that are associated with boxes checked above. Details for these events should be saved for the Project Description section at the end of this report.

*Open House involving members as docents - school children attended Open House and toured the museum artifacts. Program involving state representative and county officials. Historical books were sold on event day. A month before event articles on history of County and Museum appeared in local paper.*

**Statewide Preservation Plan—Goal 6: Connect Preservation to Related Fields**—These efforts build a stronger and more diverse preservation community. Related fields include archeology, anthropology, geography, architecture, conservation, planning, economic development, tourism, education, museums, and genealogy.

28. Partnering requires more than attending meetings of other organizations; partnering is an ongoing relationship. Check each of the individuals and organizations with which your CHC partnered during 2016.

- |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> County officials | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Local businesses | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cemetery organizations |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> City officials   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Libraries        | <input type="checkbox"/> Archeology organizations          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Local law enforcement       | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Museums          |  |

- Landmark commissions or local historic design/review boards
- Educational institutions (school districts, community colleges, universities)
- Texas Archeology Stewardship Network (work with the stewards)
- Tourism organizations / visitors bureau / chambers of commerce / downtown business association
- Main Street managers and/or board members
- Texas Heritage Trails Program
- Other nonprofit organizations not already listed above (societies, associations, etc.)
- We don't partner with any organizations

29. Check the boxes that reflect your CHC's role with museums.

- CHC appointees volunteer with museum/s
- CHC operates a museum
- CHC operates more than one museum
- CHC operates a museum that adheres to professional standards in the care, collection, management, and interpretation of artifacts
- CHC appointees sit on board of a county museum
- CHC is considered to be the board of the county museum
- Our CHC has no role with museums

30. Enter your county name and provide the name and location for each of the museums your CHC operates. Please skip this question if your CHC does not operate museums.

Polk County      Polk County Memorial Museum  
 314 Mill Street - LIVINGSTON, TEXAS 77351

31. When considering your overall workload, check the range that applies to your CHC.

- 0% of CHC time spent on museum related work
- 1-25% of CHC time spent on museum related work
- 26-50% of CHC time spent on museum related work
- 51-75% of CHC time spent on museum related work
- 76-90% of CHC time spent on museum related work
- 91-100% of CHC time spent on museum related work

**Statewide Preservation Plan—Goal 7: Cultivate Political Commitment**—CHCs should cultivate political commitment for historic preservation on local, regional, state, and national levels. Cultivate commitment to CHC work and preservation by reporting CHC accomplishments to elected officials and inviting them to CHC activities.

32. Check each way your CHC officially reported 2016 activities to your county officials.

- Presented summary of 2016 accomplishments to commissioners court in late 2016
- Plan to present summary of 2016 accomplishments to commissioners court in early 2017
- Presented to county commissioners court about a particular project/s
- Attended county commissioners court regularly
- Met with the county judge
- Met with county commissioners
- Submitted CHC meeting minutes
- Submitted a CHC budget
- Submitted CHC treasury reports
- Submitted CHC bylaws
- Provided suggested CHC appointments

33. Check the elected officials that your CHC regularly invited to events and activities in 2016.

- County judge
- County commissioners
- Mayor/s of cities in your county
- School board members
- Law enforcement officials
- State legislators
- U.S. legislators
- City council members within county
- We do not regularly invite elected officials to our events

34. Please enter your county name and the names of elected officials who attended one or more of your CHC events in 2016. Skip this question if no elected officials attended your events.

Polk County - Polk Co. Judge, State Representative, City Mayor, City Council Members

35. Check activities and communications undertaken in 2016 in support of Texas history and preservation.

- Attended "county day" events at the Capitol for your county
- Issued information to the public at large--newsletters, email, press releases, etc.
- Submitted articles and/or letters to media outlets
- Invited key decision-makers to celebratory preservation events
- Worked with preservation nonprofits who advocate for specific projects
- Worked with preservation nonprofits who advocate for preservation in general
- Made telephone calls to state legislators
- Made telephone calls to federal legislators
- Wrote letters/email to state legislators
- Wrote letters/email to federal legislators
- Had face-to-face discussions with state legislators
- Had face-to-face discussions with federal legislators
- Provided public testimony at legislative hearings as to the benefits of preservation
- Attended Preservation Day at the Capitol in Austin

**Statewide Preservation Plan for Texas—Goal 8: Build Capacity of Preservation Community** encourages existing preservation groups to develop organizational capacity to strengthen and expand their preservation skills. CHCs work toward this goal by seeking continuing education and improving the projects and services provided.

36. Check all of the ways in which your CHC tried to improve and educate appointees in 2016.

- Initiated projects to diversify CHC membership
- Provided educational presentations for your CHC appointees
- Used the THC website information to educate appointees
- Used the CHC Handbook to educate appointees
- Hosted a THC-affiliated workshop in 2016
- Met regionally with other CHCs to share experiences and efforts
- Organized a CHC regional meeting for the purposes of sharing CHC experiences and efforts

37. If you organized a CHC regional meeting in 2016, please indicate:

- the counties that participated (including your county);
- topics or themes discussed; and
- how many times you have met formally as a group over the years.

[Empty box for regional meeting details]

38. List workshops that your CHC hosted in 2016, including information on the educational topic.

Southwest Museums gave CHC workshop on preserving artifacts and scanning and copying articles and pictures - showed best lighting for displays and placement of objects

39. Reflecting 2016 activity, enter the number of CHC appointees that attended each training type.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <u>6</u> THC CHC Orientation (day-long) | <u>1</u> CHC Orientation Webinar (available since Dec. 8) |
| <u>    </u> THC regional workshop       | <u>    </u> THC oral history workshop                     |
| <u>    </u> THC marker workshop         | <u>0</u> THC Archeology Steward training                  |
| <u>    </u> THC cemetery workshop       | <u>1</u> Texas Main Street Program                        |



- THC/Texas Archeology Month event
- Friends of the THC grant writing workshop
- Texas Heritage Trails Program
- Texas State Historical Association
- American Association for State and Local History (AASLH)
- Local/regional historical association educational opportunity

- THC/Texas Association of Museums
- Texas Association of Museums (other than THC partnered training listed above)
- Texas Archeological Society (TAS)
- National Trust for Historic Preservation conference
- Preservation Texas (PT) event
- Any other history-related opportunity that was offered locally/regionally

40. Rank the degree to which your CHC chair shares information with fellow appointees.

**CHC listserv weekly messages**

- Didn't notice email messages
- Noticed but didn't read listserv messages
- Noticed but only read some messages
- Read all listserv messages sent
- Shared messages with fellow appointees

**THC website information specific to CHCs**

- Didn't notice website promotion
- Noticed but didn't read web material
- Access THC website only a handful of times year
- Access THC website on a regular basis
- Pointed appointees and/or public to THC website

41. Check the ways in which your CHC made concerted efforts in 2016 to improve work relative to previous years.

- CHC planning
- Bylaws
- Membership and attendance
- Preservation education for appointees
- Partnerships
- Community outreach to adults

- Community outreach to young people
- Presence of CHC and/or county history on Internet
- Relationship with county commissioners court
- Initiated a new CHC project
- Improved an ongoing effort
- Our CHC was not active this year

**Project Description Instructions—Please read this information before answering questions 43-45.**

THC uses descriptions to promote CHC work but only if descriptions provide all of the information requested. Each description should be 4 to 12 sentences in length. **Please use complete sentences.**

**NOTE:** Those interested in a Distinguished Service Award MUST provide 3 different descriptions—please do not provide the same project description for questions 43-45. Descriptions should reflect range/diversity of projects.

It may be that your CHC provided only minimal services in 2016, and therefore, do not have descriptions to share. If this is the case, simply skip questions 42-45 and go on to 46.

**42. Project Description #1 (of 3)**—Expand on question 28 and tell us about **ONE project/effort** during the 2016 year of service that demonstrates robust partnerships with multiple organizations.

Description must include the following information to illustrate the nature of efforts involved:

- your county name
- description of project/effort
- CHC's role and role of each partner organization
- results and/or impact of project on community

#1 is attached

## PROJECT #1

Our Polk County Historical Commission has been fortunate to have its Museum Curator for 25 years. This position is a full time employee of our county. She announced her retirement early during 2016. She was also totally involved in the renovation of our museum so she timed her retirement with the opening of our new exhibits. Since we could not have our regular meetings at our museum during this time, the City Library offered us a meeting room. We had to use this space for many additional meetings and hours as we went through the process of searching and hiring a new curator. Not only was the space invaluable, but getting to know the inner workings of our library and staff was great too and vice versa.

Since our curator is a county employee, our commission had to work under the County Commissioners' oversight in our search and hiring of our new curator. A county job request was posted on the county website for the required number of days. Twenty three (23) applications were submitted. The County Judge gave our commission the responsibility of narrowing the search down. So we met on a Saturday and went over all the resumes. We came up with three possibilities. We then interviewed these three and decided on our first, second, and third choice. The judge and commissioners took our recommendation and did their own interviews. Although we feel that they did not agree with our first choice, they did hire our choice for the job. In doing so, we have a curator that has intimate knowledge of our county and our museum. His first love is history and preservation of that – especially our history.

It is our feeling that we developed a better working relationship with the county during this time. We never understood some of the restraints and requirements that we had to do. But we delivered as they requested. Many of us met and visited with our own commissioner regarding our needs. We feel that the commissioners' court also has a better understanding of us and what we are doing for the county and our state.

**43. Project Description #2 (of 3)**—Share ONE project, effort, or service that resulted in a preservation and/or protection outcome.

Because historical markers do not provide legal protection nor preserve sites, **marker projects should NOT be used to answer this question.** Projects may include, but are not limited to, rehabilitations, clean-ups, digitization, oral history, etc.

Project, effort, or service must adhere to the following requirements:

- its primary association is with history/historic preservation
- is an ongoing effort or one that was completed in 2016

#2 is ATTACHED

**44. Project Description #3 (of 3)**—Expand upon your CHC's contribution to heritage tourism efforts in your region in 2016. Refer to question 26 for several heritage tourism examples.

Description must include the following information to illustrate the nature of efforts involved:

- your county name
- describe event/effort and your CHC's role in event/effort
- partners and community involvement in planning and/or implementation
- impact of the event (attendance, participation, profit, etc.) OR impact in effort (improvements made)

#3 is ATTACHED

## PROJECT #2

The Polk County Historical Commission spent most of 2016 dealing with renovation, creating new exhibit displays, and plumbing issues at our county museum. Our curator was the go to person with Southwest Museum Design Company and the County. Commission members gave many hours also to this great project.

Our museum had two rooms that still have the furniture displayed that had belonged to the family who donated the house and property to the county for the museum. It was decided that it was time to sell that and create new exhibits. These exhibits were a great calling card for our open house in October and also the perfect retirement for our curator of 25 years.

The new exhibits display artifacts that help illustrate early Texas history, beginning with the Republic of Texas and moving to Texas Statehood. There are examples of early businesses and industry and even a cannon ball from the San Jacinto Battlefield.

Three other themes were developed. One is a brief history of the development of Lake Livingston. There is a large amount of space given to Polk County's first schools and their extra curricular activities. And new space was developed for the Victorian Age complete with the social media of that time – very old valentine cards with handwritten messages.

### PROJECT #3

In October, on a Sunday afternoon, the Polk County Historical Commission hosted an Open House at our Museum. This event was to honor our retiring Curator, introduce our new Curator, and more importantly open our new exhibits and renovated museum to the public.

Leading up to this event, our local newspaper gave us front page coverage. So we showcased the museum's history, honored our retiring Curator, highlighted our new exhibits and the artifacts that would be shown, and introduced our new Curator.

A major effort was made to do much needed clean up and repair to the museum and the surrounding lawn. All commission members donated time and dollars to this effort. The Commission also donated funds. We repaired the cupola, exterior shutters, and brick work around the patio. A local resident joined our efforts and made a sizable donation for a new fountain for our patio. The county gave special attention to our grounds by replacing dead shrubbery and installing new color plants.

Our Curator worked with a Museum Design Company and renovated two rooms for our new exhibits. This was a 8 month project. Many hours by commission members were given in support of this project.

Invitations to the Open House were sent to City, County, and State officials. Our local paper carried the invitation in our paper along with our news articles. Over 150 visitors came to our museum. We did have a few county and state officials there. But the majority of the visitors were locals and many who had never visited our museum. We also have many visitors who have moved from Polk County but came back specifically for this event.

Historical Books were sold and words of appreciation have poured in. We feel that we have upgraded our presence in our county with this event. Groups and individuals are now more aware of our county history and what is available for them at our Museum. We have seen an increase in visitors from out of town coming to visit us.

**CHC Comments for the THC**

45. Share your thoughts on THC/CHC Outreach services that have helped your CHC.

Six Commission members attended the Caddo Mounds Workshop. Interesting and informative talks from TxDot and THC were brought back and shared with CHC Members

46. If you'd like, share information not already submitted in this report. Feel free to comment on specific preservation issues in your county (successes and/or challenges).

ATTACHED

\*\*\*\*\* End of Report.

Please go back through the report and check your report for accuracy. When done, send a copy of completed survey to the Texas Historical Commission.

If possible, please email a copy of this document to our office to

If you cannot email a copy, mail a copy of the report—Attn: Amy Hammons, Texas Historical Commission, PO Box 12276, Austin, TX, 78711.

Contact Amy Hammons (amy.hammons@thc.state.tx.us or 512.475.2692) with questions about this report.

We appreciate that you have taken the time to fulfill this statutory reporting responsibility and share what your CHC has accomplished in the past year. Thank you for your time and service!

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**A Historical Marker Book has been developed with pictures and descriptions of all county markers. This will be an ongoing project as new markers are approved. The book is available in our museum for viewing.**

**A member of our CHC published a booklet entitled, Earliest Settlers of Polk County, Texas Prior to Statehood-1846. This booklet is for sale in our museum with proceeds going to our CHC.**

**Our CHC partnered with several church groups and concerned citizens to prime and repaint the Old City Cemetery fence. A local funeral home has partnered with us in repairing and leveling old monuments in the cemetery.**

**Texas Independence Day signs were purchased and placed in the county by concerned citizens and school age children as a service project. The local paper partnered with us in covering the event.**

**A member of our CHC attended a workshop in Austin and brought back ideas about archeology and is sharing them with area principals and history teachers. This will be an ongoing endeavor.**