

MINUTES OF THE TEXAS CENTENNIAL COMMISSION, DALLAS, SEPTEMBER 6, 1934

Pursuant to the call of President Thomas, the Texas Centennial Commission met at the Baker Hotel, Thursday, September 6, 1934, and was called to order by the President at 10:20 a.m. Present: Anderson, Birney, Briggs, Caldwell, Cline, Farnsworth, Force, Griffith, Hawk, Hughes, Kulon, Josey, Martin, Middleton, Miller, Ochs, Snow, Taylor, Thomas, Wornack, and Hayes (Secretary). Governor Ferguson wrote regrets that she could not attend. Lieutenant Governor Witt wired that he could not be present.

President Thomas stated that he had called the Commission together to hear and to consider the Dallas proposal for the main celebration and to visit the site offered and that the body would proceed to Houston Friday and to San Antonio Saturday for the same purpose, and would go from San Antonio to Austin for final discussion of the proposals and selection of the site either Saturday afternoon or Sunday morning.

R. C. Bowen, of the Bowen Motor Coaches, was introduced by the President and offered the use of a forty-passenger bus without cost to transport the Commission from Dallas to Houston and from Houston to San Antonio, stating that he would regard it as an honor to do this.

President Thomas stated that he had tentatively engaged two pullmans to take the Commission to Houston and San Antonio over either the Southern Pacific or Katy roads; that it might be too hard for some of the older members of the Commission to ride the bus lines, though the matter should be decided by a vote of the Commission itself. Griffith moved and Briggs seconded the motion that thanks be extended to Mr. Bowen for his generous offer and spread upon the minutes of the Commission. The motion was unanimously adopted.

Cline moved and Force second the motion that the Commission go by the Southern Pacific train leaving Dallas at 11:35 p.m. The motion was adopted by a vote of thirteen to four.

President Thomas stated that the committee on reception of bids met in Austin, September 1, and received three written proposals--one from Dallas, one from Houston, and one from San Antonio--that these proposals were held as executive and confidential until this meeting of the entire Commission. When bids were opened, only Cline, Chairman of the Executive Committee, Thomas, President, Middleton, Chairman of the Planning Committee, and Hayes, Secretary, were present, and the Secretary had been instructed to keep the bids without revealing their contents to anyone. He announced that after an oral presentation by Dallas representatives, an executive session would be held, and the same proceeding would be followed in Houston and San Antonio.

Briggs presented R. L. Thornton, President of the Dallas Chamber of Commerce, who said he thought the presentation should be made after a visit to the proposed site and after luncheon. He said that a better picture could be arrived at following a visit to the grounds and that he preferred to take the Commission to visit the grounds first, though he was willing to follow its wishes as to procedure. He extended an invitation to the Commission to have luncheon at the guests of the Dallas Chamber of Commerce at 1 p.m., and on motion of Griffith, seconded by Taylor, the invitation was accepted. The Commission recessed at 11:15 to visit the site offered by Dallas.

AFTERNOON SESSION

President Thomas called the Commission to order at 3 p.m., all those who were at the morning session being present. A vote of appreciation for the luncheon was extended the Dallas Chamber of Commerce.

President Thomas presented Mayor Charles E. Turner, of Dallas, who welcomed the Commission and stated that the citizenry of Dallas is solidly behind the Centennial movement, will carry out all conditions in its proposal, and will reflect credit upon the judgment of the Commission if given the Centennial.

While waiting for a court stenographer to take down the address of R. L. Thornton, who spoke for Dallas, Griffith, at the request of President Thomas, read an original patriotic poem.

At this time, Middleton asked to be excused to attend a Federal Reserve Bank meeting, and Miller announced that he must leave by plane for South Texas.

Thornton presented and explained the Dallas proposal, his address being recorded by a court stenographer and later presented to each member of the Commission. George L. Dahl, an architect, then explained some of the physical aspects of the Dallas proposal. Manager H. H. Hudson, of the Baker Hotel, representing President J. G. Herndon, of the Dallas Hotel Association, presented a letter pledging Dallas hotel members to maintain present rates during the Centennial year, the highest rate for one person in a room being \$5.00, for two persons \$6.00, the lowest rate to be \$2.00. On request, Col. Nathan A. Adams, President of the First National Bank in Dallas, and Otto Herold, President of the State Fair, delivered short addresses and each pledged the untied cooperation of Dallas people to the success of the Centennial.

Cline asked a question that he stated he would ask of all bidding cities: "assuming that Dallas is chosen as the Centennial city, would Dallas carry on anyway without any State or Federal aid?" Thornton replied: "Dallas has already said 'Yes.' The State Fair will carry on regardless of where the Centennial is, and the Dallas bid stands firm as it is for the Centennial."

Thomas urged members of the Commission who had not read the proposals of the various cities, which had been passed out at the morning session, to read them at the earliest opportunity in order to understand their conditions.

At 5 p.m., the Commission recessed to meet in Houston at 10 a.m., September 7, 1934.

MINUTES OF THE TEXAS CENTENNIAL COMMISSION, HOUSTON, SEPTEMBER 7, 1934

The Centennial Commission was joined in Houston, September 7, 1934, by Trucks and Shary. After breakfast at the Rice Hotel, the Commission, in charge of Houston representatives, inspected Houston's site for the Centennial, rode down the Houston Ship Channel to the San Jacinto Battlefield, and had dinner at the San Jacinto Inn as guest of the Houston Chamber of Commerce.

At the dinner, Clarence Wharton, of Houston, delivered a patriotic address, welcoming the Commission and urging the selection of Houston as the main Centennial city.

After the dinner, there was some discussion as to whether the session should be made executive and held then or at the Rice Hotel later in the day on the return of the Commission to Houston. The Houston representatives withdrew pending the discussion. On motion of Taylor, seconded by Caldwell, the Houston delegation was invited to return and present its proposal in any way it desired.

Mayer Oscar Holcombe, speaking for Houston, explained that the \$5,000,000.00 placed in Houston's bid would be used to build the exposition on the grounds donated by Houston; that the approval of a large majority of the bond voters of Houston had already been secured, over 7000 signatures having been obtained; that \$1,000,000.00 in bonds had already been voted for a city hall and \$1,500,000.00 for a hospital, which are tendered the Commission for Centennial for Centennial uses; that these buildings will be located on the Centennial grounds and can be so arranged as to be admirably adapted to Centennial purposes. This he stated, assures that Houston will have \$5,500,000.00 ready for the Centennial; that in addition the use of the city auditorium, seating 5100 people, and of the municipal library, costing \$700,000.00, are tendered the Commission, together with Sam Houston Hall on which no valuation is fixed.

He explained that improvements already available on the grounds cost \$1,600,000.00; that the grounds would be cleared as the Commission wishes; that the site is in the heart of the city and is worth at least \$11,250,000.00.

He affirmed that Houston wants a Texas Centennial and that a small fair is not to be considered; that if the Centennial is located in another city, Houston will be represented there and will help as it should, regardless of location.

The Ashburn, of Houston, stated that Houston wants only a State, national and international event; that waterways can not be had elsewhere; and that historic background should be given much consideration in the location of the Centennial. He exhibited blue prints showing the location of historic points around Houston and stressed these as a principal incentive in deciding the place for the main celebration. He said that a memorial should be created on the San Jacinto Battlegrounds; that the exposition should be the show window of Texas; and that commodities that make Texas great are centered to a large extent in Houston.

Cline submitted the same question asked at Dallas: "If the Commission should locate the Centennial at Houston and no State or Federal aid should be given, what would Houston then do?" Holcombe answered that Houston would not be interested, for in that case it would be a Houston fair and not a Texas Centennial in reality. Cline also asked: "What would be the minimum amount that Houston would accept as State participation?" Holcombe answered: "Approximately \$3,000,000.00; about the same as Houston's cash bid." On question asked by Hughes, "If Texas gives \$2,500,000.00, regardless of Federal Government appropriation, would Houston then go on?" Holcombe answered, "Yes."

Taylor moved and Briggs seconded the motion that thanks be expressed for Houston's fine hospitality and for the wonderful spirit shown by its representatives before the Commission. The motion was adopted unanimously.

The Commission recessed at 4:30 p.m. for a ride over the San Jacinto Battlefield and back to Houston.

The members of the Centennial Commission were guests of the San Antonio Chamber of Commerce at breakfast at the Plaza Hotel at 8:30 a.m., Saturday, September 8, 1934, at which Perry Robertson, President of the Chamber of Commerce, presided and made a brief welcome address. Following the breakfast, the morning was spent in inspecting the Witte Museum, Brackenridge Park, and Alpine Drive, the Japanese Garden, the open air theater bowl, the Mexican Village, the site of the proposed stadium, and all the land included in the 1500 or 1600 acre site offered for the Centennial location. The Commission then went to the St. Anthony Hotel where it had luncheon at 1:30 p.m., as guest of the Chamber of Commerce.

After the luncheon, the Commission went into session and Perry Robertson presented Mayor C. E. Guin, who welcomed it in a patriotic address, to which response was made by Miller of the Commission. Mrs. Ralph Jackson President of the San Antonio Federation of City Clubs, also welcomed the Commission on behalf of the 5000 or 6000 women in her club groups. Frank Buschick, member of the San Antonio City Commission and of the San Antonio Centennial Committee, expressed his appreciation at the visit of the Commission and promised San Antonio's cooperation in the Centennial regardless of the location.

Henry B. Diekmann was introduced and spoke of the attractions of San Antonio as the Centennial city. He stated that the city and its parks, its missions, its shrines, its many beauties speak for themselves—a city most beautiful, a land warm with the blood of patriotic Texans. He said that he would not go into the details of San Antonio's bid but would present three fundamental facts: (1) San Antonio has shown something tangible and appropriate for the proper work of the Commission, a logical place for the central celebration. (2) Over all the great cities of Texas, San Antonio alone can bring to Texas and the world the historic past and a century of American progress within a small territory—Texas today, Texas 100 years ago. (3) San Antonio peculiarly belongs to Texas; the Alamo belongs to Texas; San Antonio is a Text-book of Texas history; therefore, the pilgrimage of people should lead to San Antonio, and Texas should dedicate themselves to the task of carrying on the American glory on this continent.

Porter Whaley stated that the law provides for consideration of the financial offer and other features, also; that a value cannot be placed on the Alamo, the Governor's Palace, and other shrines and historic spots. He referred to the missions, Randolph Field, and the vast holdings and interests of the Federal Government as distinct assets to the Texas Centennial, stating that San Antonio is the largest military center of its type in the United States, and the only city where there is a full division of the United States Army. He spoke of the vast investments of the United States in San Antonio and the willingness and ability of the Government to cooperate to any extent possible in featuring governmental activities in any San Antonio celebration. He stated that San Antonio's offer could not be duplicated on another city for less than \$15,000,000.00 to \$20,000,000.00 and that San Antonio's background of history will make up for any lack of money.

Harvey Smith explained in some detail the setting of the Centennial site visited by the Commission and showed at length San Antonio's suggestion for putting on the Centennial in a way use to facilities already afforded on the site and to add other Centennial buildings of the Spanish Colonial style typical of that section of the State. He stated in the answer to a question from Hawk that transportation and railroad facilities were available right at the site, and in answer to a question from Jossy that there were 220 acres in one section of Brackenridge Park, about 550 in another, and 1700 in the entire grounds offered.

In answer to Oline's question propounded to other cities as to whether San Antonio's bid was contingent upon an appropriation of the State or Federal Government of \$1,000,000.00 each, Porter Whaley answered that it was contingent on at least \$1,000,000.00 from of these sources without which there could not be a creditable celebration. In answer to Caldwell as to hotel, cafe, and garage rates, Whaley stated that there are 20,000 tourists in San Antonio during the winter months with 1000 small hotels accommodating from five to 100 each, besides the larger hotels, and that there has never been any complaint on the part of visitors as to hotel or boarding house rates. He added that San Antonio's climate is such that many visitors use tourist camps and other inexpensive housing facilities. He offered to give a written guarantee that prices would be held within certain rates.

Briggs moved and Vornack seconded a resolution of thanks and appreciation of the hospitality extended by the citizens of San Antonio. The motion was unanimously adopted, Mayor Quin returning the city's thanks to the Commission for its cordial feeling, open-mindedness, and patient hearing.

Gels, speaking for San Antonio, made a strong appeal for a proper historic observance and for due attention to the spiritual as well as the material side of the Centennial in order that the present generation and its posterity may be inspired to become better Texans through reverence for the sacred surroundings of San Antonio, stating that Texas needs a spiritual reconstruction first and an economic one next.

Captain Miller Ainsworth, newly elected Commander of the American Legion was introduced and pledged the cooperation of the Legion in putting over the Centennial and stated that regardless of any misunderstandings in the past, the Legion wishes to cooperate with the Commission and is willing to take any part that may be assigned it. President Thomas assured him that an arrangement would be made for a meeting between the Commission and representatives of the American Legion to work out a cooperative program for the Centennial.

On motion of Miller, seconded by Taylor, the Commission recessed at 4 p.m. to meet at the Triskill Hotel in Austin at 10 a.m., Sunday, September 9, 1934. Following the recess, most members of the Commission escorted by San Antonio local committeemen visited the Spanish Governor's Palace and several missions in and near San Antonio. A group picture was taken in front of the Alamo, several direct descendants of Cynthia Ann Parker being included in the picture.

MINUTES OF THE TEXAS CENTENNIAL COMMISSION, AUSTIN, SEPTEMBER 9, 1934

The Commission was called to order by President Thomas at 10:25 a. m. in the Briskill Hotel in Austin, September 9, 1934. Roll call showed the following members present: Anderson, Birney, Briggs, Caldwell, Cline, Farnsworth, Foree, Griffith, Hawk, Hughes, Helen, Josey, Martin, Middleton, Miller, Neff, Sels, Shary, Shary, Snow, Taylor, Thomas, Witt, Womack, and Mayo (Secretary).

An invocation was offered by Commissioner Caldwell, Chairman of the Board of Trustees of Hardin-Simmons University.

Secretary Mayo presented telegrams from various persons; that from Jesse H. Jones read: "Sorry to have been unable to attend any of the Centennial meetings but hope conditions will permit my being of real assistance later on step with best wishes"

Martin presented the report of the Publicity Committee, gave a copy to each member present, and asked that the report be accepted and the Committee excused. This request was granted and the thanks of the Commission were extended to the Publicity Committee for the splendid work accomplished under its direction.

The Commission then went into executive session. The resignation of Bealy, of Galveston, was presented, and a motion of Miller, seconded by Neff, was accepted. After some discussion as to methods of procedure and precedent, Miller moved that Louis C. Albert, of Galveston, be elected to fill the vacancy. The motion was seconded by Shary, and Albert was unanimously elected, notified by Sharp, Miller, Caldwell, and Briggs, and by them introduced to and seated as a member of the Commission.

A general but informal discussion was held in regard to the proposals submitted by the three competing cities, methods of raising additional funds and securing legislative appropriation, and other matters pertinent to the Centennial movement, most of the members of the Commission participating in the round table debate.

On motion of Middleton, seconded by Taylor, the Commission recessed at 12:20 p.m. to meet again at 2 p.m.

AFTERNOON SESSION

The Commission was called to order at 2:25 p.m. by President Thomas who read the provision of the law for locating the Centennial, as follows: "The Legislature of Texas hereby selects and designates as the location for the holding of the central exposition and principal celebration that city or community in Texas that offers to Texas through the Texas Centennial Commission hereinafter set up, the largest financial inducement and support therefor."

At the request of the President, Secretary Mayo read the Planning Committee's Proposal Form No. 1 containing the basic requirements made of cities submitting proposals.

Neff moved "that the Chair appoint a committee of seven to study and analyze the several propositions submitted by the bidding cities and that this committee be given authority to negotiate with the bidding cities in reference to their propositions and that the bidding cities be given authority to change the basis of their propositions or to add to or take from their propositions and that this committee after having analyzed and studied these several propositions and after having negotiated with the bidding cities report back at the earliest date possible to the full

Commission any recommendations and propositions that they may see fit to make as a result of these conferences with the bidding cities." This motion was seconded by Miller and discussed at length by Neff, Briggs, Thomas, Taylor, Witt, Cline, Martin, Sharp, Birney, Middleton, Ochs, Griffith, and Farnsworth. The motion was defeated by a vote of seven to sixteen.

Hughes moved that regardless of the city selected by the Commission, the State government be asked for an appropriation of at least \$5,000,000.00 for the Centennial. Griffith seconded the motion, and it was unanimously adopted.

Taylor moved to proceed to a secret ballot for the location of the Centennial. The motion was seconded by Cline and unanimously adopted. Farnsworth and Anderson were named by President Thomas to collect the ballot. Neff moved and Womack seconded the motion that absentee ballots be accepted if presented by those authorized by the absentees to vote for them. The motion was adopted by a vote of twelve to nine. Announcement was made that two absentees, Jones and Rucks, had authorized Jossey and Thomas, respectively, to cast their ballots. At request of Ochs, on motion of Neff, seconded by Griffith, he was allowed to cast the vote of Morris Stern, absent.

On the first ballot, Dallas received thirteen votes, Houston eight, San Antonio six. The Chair announced that no city had received a majority of those voting. On the second ballot, Dallas received sixteen votes, Houston eight, San Antonio three. Jossey moved that the selection of Dallas be made unanimous. Ochs seconded the motion, which was adopted unanimously on a rising vote.

On motion of Martin, seconded by Taylor, press representatives and the delegations from the three competing cities, who were waiting outside the room, were invited to come in and hear the decision of the Commission. Martin and Elbert were appointed by the Chair to conduct them in.

President Thomas said that he had been asked by the Commission to announce the result of its deliberations as to the location of the main Centennial celebration and stated that on the final ballot Dallas had been selected by an unanimous vote, all members standing in approval of the choice of Dallas. He referred to the splendid spirit shown throughout by representatives of the three cities and by all members of the Commission, stating that such a spirit will build a great Centennial just as it has built a great commonwealth.

Ochs moved and Neff seconded the motion that the Commission express its sincere appreciation of the faithful devotion, service, and impartial manner in which President Thomas had conducted the sessions of the Commission, the entire State owing him a debt of gratitude. This motion was adopted unanimously.

Mayor Oscar Holcombe, of Houston, said that while Houston was disappointed in the decision, that city tendered to the Commission and to Dallas the service of its entire citizenship in any way to help make the Centennial the success it ought to be.

Ochs, of San Antonio, said that he concurred in all that Holcombe had said, that San Antonians are good losers, and would unitedly go before the Legislature to help put over the Centennial in a true Texan way.

Thornton, of Dallas, said that while Dallas appreciated beyond words the responsibility entrusted to it and would do unitedly all in its power, that city bespoke the patriotic help of all Texas, pledging itself to do all that human mind can direct the human hand to create.

Former Governor W. P. Hobby, of Houston, said that his interest heretofore had been as a citizen of Houston; now it is that of a citizen of Texas; that the Centennial is not a Dallas, a San Antonio or Houston proposition now, but an all-State proposition in which all the State should do its part.

Neff expressed his gratitude at the fine spirit of cooperation manifested by Houston, San Antonio, and all members of the Commission, stating that the Centennial is now a Texas proposition with Texans 100% behind Dallas to put on the greatest Centennial ever held anywhere on this continent.

Mayor Charles E. Turner, of Dallas, introduced by Thornton, thanked the Commission for its time and the gracious manner in which it had served the State in making an impartial selection of the Centennial city. He said that Dallas is thankful that it is to be the host town of the Centennial and will do its utmost to help produce a Centennial that will reflect credit upon Texas.

Lieutenant Governor Witt, being called upon, said that the Commission had reached a happy consummation of a difficult task to which it had given very careful thought and on which it may well be congratulated.

Fred F. Florence, of Dallas, Otto Herold, of Dallas, and Tom Flaxman, of Houston, spoke along the same lines, Flaxman stating that Houston will respond to any call for support and render any help possible to make the Centennial a great and glorious success.

After some discussion as to character and methods of publicity, Albert moved that Secretary Mayes, Martin, and Briggs be appointed to prepare and give out a story to the press. Cline seconded the motion, which was amended to add Albert to the committee and was adopted as amended.

Witt moved that the vacancy on the Commission caused by the resignation of Mayes be filled by the election of Senator Margie E. Neal. Attention was called to the fact that the Commission had gone on record that the vacancy should be filled from the city that secured the main celebration. Taylor moved that Dallas waive this right in favor of Senator Neal's election. Briggs waived the right for Dallas and seconded the nomination of Senator Neal, who was unanimously elected a member of the Commission.

On the suggestion of Briggs that Sharp should renew her motion as to some definite method of filling vacancies, Sharp moved that each member of the Commission be furnished the name of anyone hereafter nominated for membership on the Commission or to fill a vacancy thereon at least ten days before the meeting of the Commission to fill vacancies or add new members. Briggs seconded the motion, which was adopted unanimously.

Secretary Mayes read a telegram from Mrs. Velney W. Taylor, Chairman of the State Centennial Advisory Board, asking the Commission to pay actual expenses of officers of the Board, subject to the approval of the President and the Secretary of the Commission. Sharp moved that the Commission allow Mrs. Taylor's stationery and postage account to an amount not to exceed \$250.00 but that traveling and other expenses of the officers of the Advisory Board should not be paid. The motion was seconded by Hulien and adopted.

Hulien moved that \$5000.00 be allocated to conduct immediately publicity needed for the Centennial at Dallas under the direction of Briggs and the President. This motion was seconded by Cline and unanimously adopted.

Mayes spoke of the action of the Advisory Board in making the organization of the "Texas Million Centennial Club" its immediate major activity, and the Board was instructed to help carry on the necessary publicity in connection with Briggs at Dallas.

Miller moved that the four present members of the Executive Committee, Cline, Cohn, Middleton, and Hughes-- Caldwell having resigned for lack of time--be retained as permanent members and that two members be added from Dallas, these to be nominated by the Dallas local committee. The motion was seconded by Briggs and adopted unanimously.

Secretary Mayer announced that the State Department of Education had in preparation a bulletin for the use of the schools of the State, outlining projects, programs, and courses of study in relation to the connection of Texas history with the Centennial, the same to be published at an early date.

Mayer stated that the equipment and supplies left over in Corsicana by the Publicity Committee should be moved to Dallas where it can be used to advantage by the newly created Publicity Bureau. Martin reported that all this equipment with records would be gladly turned over to the Commission as soon as the final report of the Publicity Committee could be made, which would probably be Monday, September 10.

Caldwell moved and Cohn seconded the motion that State headquarters be moved to Dallas as soon as convenient. The motion was adopted.

Cline moved that though the Commission may at times have differed from the Publicity Committee, it was deeply grateful to Lowry Martin and the two other members and again wished to express its sincere appreciation of this work. Taylor seconded the motion, which was adopted unanimously.

Following some discussion as to when, how and what legislation should be sought for the support of the Centennial, Shary moved that the President appoint a steering Committee of not more than seven, of which the President would be Chairman, to see the Governor, prepare bills, consult industries, and work out ways and means of securing proper legislation. This motion was seconded by Cline and adopted. The President announced that he would take time to appoint this committee and would notify them soon, selecting members largely because of their nearness to Austin.