

MINUTES
TEXAS AMERICA250 COMMISSION
Bullock Texas State History Museum
1800 N. Congress, 4th Floor Boardroom
Austin, Texas 78701
June 12, 2025
11:00 AM
VIDEOCONFERENCE MEETING

The Texas America250 Commission convened with the following designated Members of Commission Agencies in attendance: Margaret Koch, Presiding Chair, Bullock Texas State History Museum, Rodney Franklin, Director of Parks, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, Pat Hardy, State Board of Education, Jelain Chubb, State Archivist & Director, Texas State Library and Archives Commission and Lynn Young, America250 Representative. Tim Fennell, Director, Travel Texas, Economic Development and Tourism, Governor's Office was excused.

I. Call to Order and Establishment of a Quorum, Introductions

Margaret Koch, serving as the Commission's presiding chair, called the meeting to order at 11:00 am and called roll. A quorum was established.

Chair Koch called on the Advisory Panel to introduce themselves. Advisors present: Kierstan Schwab, Texas PBS; Nathan Jones, The Alamo Trust; Monte Monroe, State Historian; Christine Jacobs, San Antonio Missions National Park and NPS A250 Liaison; Ali James, State Preservation Board; David Preziosi, Texas Historical Foundation; James Harkins, General Land Office (GLO); Nancy Foster, Museum of Western Art; Jeff Salmon, Frontier Texas; Nancy Davis, Texas Daughters of the American Revolution (Texas DAR) America250 Committee; Bob Ward, Camino Real de los Tejas; Dr. Krystle Matthews, Texas Veteran's Commission; Michael Abels, Texas Maritime Museum. Chair Koch introduced new advisory panel members Juan Velez, Historic Preservation Manager, City of Brownsville, and Doug O'Connell, Scouting America Capitol Area Council.

Additional attendees included: Steven McFarland, Harrison County Texas America250; Mark Ellison, Texas Sons of the American Revolution; Delaney Todd, Texas State Fair; Teresa Lenling, Director of the George W. Bush Presidential Museum.

II. Discussion and Possible Action on Approval of Minutes from Previous Meetings

Chair Koch called for a motion to approve the minutes of the last Commission meeting held on May 8, 2025, as presented. Pat Hardy so moved and Lynn Young offered a second. The motion carried and the minutes of the previous meetings were adopted.

III. Consideration of the Following Agenda Items:

Item 1. Report from Task Group Convenors on TXAM250 Goals

Chair Koch called on the subcommittee convenors to provide updates on their initial meetings.

a. Enhance civic knowledge of the founding principles of the country and the rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

Commissioner Jelain Chubb reported on the *Enhancing Civic Knowledge* task group's initial efforts. The group is exploring a range of initiatives, including:

- Creating a civic activity tailored to each grade level
- Designing a "reading passport" or reading lists to promote student engagement
- Focusing efforts on K–5 educators to introduce civic topics early
- Compiling a list of civic education resources for teachers to be posted on the Texas America250 website
- Organizing virtual tours of historic sites, such as the San Antonio Missions
- Launching a student essay contest, potentially in partnership with the General Land Office (GLO)

James Harkins (GLO) suggested involving his colleague Lila Rakoczy, who works on lesson plans that are relevant to American History.

Commissioner Pat Hardy emphasized the importance of aligning all educational resources with the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) grade standards. She also offered to gather reading lists for the group to review.

b. Encourage Texans to unite in commemorating the Semiquincentennial.

County Representative Steven McFarland discussed the subcommittee's strategies for promoting unity among Texans in preparation for the semi-quincentennial. Key ideas included:

- Rallying statewide support for a America's Potluck, in collaboration with food banks and the Salvation Army
- Encouraging each county to establish local America250 committees
- Promoting Fourth of July activities at the local level
- Developing a set of templates and communication materials targeted to community groups, educators, and media outlets to raise awareness of the Texas America250 initiative

Lauren Day will take the lead on creating a spreadsheet of key county-level contacts to support ongoing community engagement efforts. Commissioner Koch confirmed that Texas America250 introductory letters have been sent to county commissioners and judges.

c. Promote scholarship and research that illuminates the history of the American West and Texas's role in the formation of the nation.

Advisor Bob Ward reflected on the *Promoting Scholarship* task group's initial meeting. The group discussed whether the primary goal should be to provide scholarship grants to support historical research, or focus on creating educational resources (books, articles, and partnerships) aimed at

building civic awareness. Bob Ward and Commissioner Jelain Chubb will explore potential overlaps and collaboration opportunities between their respective task groups.

d. Recognize the service and sacrifices of veterans and their families who have protected our liberties and independence for future generations.

Advisor, Krystel Matthews from the Veterans Commission provided an update on a meeting that took place on May 28th, where the group decided to create a traveling history exhibit and a video for rural areas to honor veterans and their families. Krystle acknowledged the valuable input from attendees, including Nancy Davis and Steven McFarland, and mentioned plans for ongoing meetings every third Friday of the month. The group aims to engage veterans and their families through educational initiatives and fundraising efforts. Christine Jacobs volunteered to join the subcommittee recognizing the service and sacrifices of veterans and their families.

Item 2. Update on Initiatives of the White House Task Force on America's 250th

Presiding Chair Commissioner Margaret Koch provided updates on the latest initiatives from the White House Task Force on America's 250th.

Key highlights include:

- **Grand Military Parade:** Celebrations are kicking off on Flag Day, June 14 in Washington D.C. with a Grand Military Parade to honor the 250th Anniversary of the U.S. military.
- **America Waves:** An initiative to create the largest American flag with hundreds of volunteers, with potential for the flag to travel to each state in the lead-up to the semiquincentennial.
- **National Fair:** A National Fair is being considered for July 4, 2026, in Washington, D.C., with dedicated spaces for representation from all states and territories.
- **Flag Vendors:** An approved list of America250 flag vendors has been released and will be posted on the Texas America250 website.
- **Logo Update:** The America250 logo has been updated to include a trademark (™). The Dropbox link previously shared with partners has been updated to include the new logo files for use under existing agreements.
- **Congressional Caucus:** The America250 Congressional Caucus has grown to 297 members, including 27 from Texas.
- **America's Field Trip Contest:** The national America250 Commission recently announced the winners of the America's Field Trip contest. Texas had six first-place and four second-place winners selected from thousands of entries nationwide.
 - **Motion:** Commissioner Margaret Koch made a motion for the Texas America250 Commission to formally recognize these young Texans for their extraordinary entries on what America means to them. Commissioner Pat Hardy seconded the motion, which received unanimous approval.

- **Young People’s Continental Congress:** Two Texas students and their teachers will travel to Pennsylvania in July to participate in the Young People’s Continental Congress in partnership with [Carpenters' Hall](#). These students are two of the 54 delegates selected nationwide.

IV. Public Comment

Commissioner Jelain Chubb suggested developing a visual map of Texas for the Texas America250 website to highlight areas participating in America250 events. While a national map exists, it may not retain past events for archival purposes. The Bullock Museum team will explore options for implementing a pin map feature on the website.

Commissioner Pat Hardy raised questions regarding the approved commemoration flag, specifically seeking clarification on how its design differs from the standard American flag. It is believed that the special edition flag will incorporate the America250 logo. Nancy Davis raised concerns about the potential misuse of the trademarked America250 logo by unauthorized vendors. The Texas America250 Commission will pose this protocol question to Ed Perez, the designated America250 liaison, to seek further clarification.

Advisor Juan Velez asked whether Texan cities founded before 1776, such as Laredo and El Paso, could have the opportunity to share their stories as part of the America250 commemoration. Commissioner Koch emphasized the importance of Texas’s role in American history and the need to encourage local communities across the state to engage in America250 initiatives.

Steven McFarland highlighted the personal impact of engagement in America250 initiatives. Through his work with the Harrison County Texas America250 Commission, he was thrilled to discover a family connection to an American Revolutionary War soldier.

V. Adjournment

Next meeting is currently scheduled for July 10, 2025 at 11am. Special guest at that meeting will be Andrew Mink, Executive Director of the Smithsonian’s Rural Initiative.

With no further business, the Chair requested a motion to adjourn. Jelain Chubb made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Lynn Young seconded, and the motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:57 a.m.