

MINUTES
TEXAS AMERICA250 COMMISSION
Bullock Texas State History Museum
1800 N. Congress, 4th Floor Boardroom
Austin, Texas 78701
August 14, 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, Jelain Chubb, State Archivist & Director, Texas State Library and Archives Commission, and Tim Fennell, Director, Travel Texas, Economic Development and Tourism, Governor's Office. Lynn Young, America250 Representative, and Pat Hardy, State Board of Education were 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.

Chair Koch requested that AI note-taking through Zoom be deactivated during Texas America250 Commission meetings.

In the interest of time, she asked members of the advisory panel to introduce themselves in the meeting chat.

Chair Koch then called roll, and a quorum was established.

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 July 10, 2025, as presented. Jelain Chubb so moved and Rodney Franklin offered a second.

The motion carried and the minutes of the previous meetings were adopted.

III. Consideration of the Following Agenda Items:

Item 1. Presentation on the Made By US Youth250 Bureau — Paola Alonso Guerrero, Bureau Member, Youth250

Presiding Chair Koch introduced Paola Alonso Guerrero, Youth250 Bureau member, to present on Made By Us programs related to the Semiquincentennial.

Ms. Alonso provided an overview of the Youth250 Bureau, a national initiative designed to place young people at the center of America's 250th commemoration.

Ms. Alonso explained that the **Youth250 Bureau** is composed of 100 members aged 18–30, representing many perspectives and experiences. Members are trained to provide approximately 10,000 hours of consulting to historic institutions free of charge, assisting by reviewing materials, serving as focus groups, speaking at events, providing ideas, and collaborating with content creators.

The **Youth250 initiative** is organized around three key objectives:

1. **Youth Contribution**
2. **Youth Influence**
3. **Youth Visibility**

To advance these goals, three major initiatives have been launched:

1. **Youth250 Bureau** – A Gen Z “help desk” composed of 100 young adults, America’s first-ever national youth advisory board, providing hours of free consulting to “youthify” institutions and programs.
2. **Youth250 Content Corps** – A volunteer network of youth creators producing short-form video, written dispatches, and stories across platforms.
3. **Wish for U.S. Walls** – An art initiative that invites young people to share their visions for America’s next chapter. These wishes were collected and displayed in summer 2025 at 30 museums nationwide.

Ms. Alonso noted that a [Youth250 Toolkit](#) is available as a resource for organizations.

Item 2. Report from Task Group Conveners on TXAM250 Goals

- 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 noted that, with multiple projects underway between TXAM250 and the Texas State Library and Archives Commission (TSLAC), it may be beneficial to appoint another facilitator to the Civic Knowledge Task Group.

- b) **Encourage Texans to unite in commemorating the Semiquincentennial. —**

County Representative Steven McFarland reported that the task group is developing the America250 Community Student Leadership Award, a one-time award for high school seniors. Students will submit essays highlighting their County’s role in Texas and American history.

The task group is also creating a template to help local communities encourage student participation through essays, research, and volunteer opportunities connected to America250.

Chair Koch suggested partnering with a history institution for this award, and Ms. Alonso noted that Youth250 is available to assist with project review.

Mr. McFarland shared that this task group would need a new facilitator.

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 reported that during a recent visit to Spain, he met with partners to discuss a potential twin trail project connecting El Camino Real with Ruta de la Plata for heritage tourism recognition.

He also proposed creating story maps based on America250 themes, highlighting Spanish contributions to the American Revolution. These could be widely distributed, with potential partnerships with universities public history programs to support the project and encourage youth involvement.

Christine Jacobs (NPS) recommended working with the National Park Service's National Trails Program and attending the Trails Summit and Training in San Antonio this October.

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

Advisor Dr. Krystel Matthews (Texas Veterans Commission) reported that Task Group 4 is in the research and planning phase for a traveling exhibition. The Texas State Library and Archives Commission (TSLAC) offered to assist the task group and Chair Koch recommended connecting with Humanities Texas for insight.

Item 3. Report on America250 and Task Group 250 National Initiatives

a) **America250 Convening of States** — Jelain Chubb & Lynn Young

As Commissioner **Lynn Young** was unable to attend the August meeting, Chair Koch presented her report on the recent **America250 Convening of States**.

It was reported that *Our American Story* will be present at the **State Fair of Texas in Fall 2026** to record Texan stories. Commissioner Young also shared highlights from meeting the **America's Field Trip contest winners**, who selected visits to the **LBJ Presidential Library** and **The Alamo**. Both sites provided wonderful behind-the-scenes experiences for the participating families.

Commissioner **Jelain Chubb** reported on the extensive list of national initiatives presented at the convening, noting that these initiatives are still in their **infancy stage**. Highlights included:

- **Founder's Museum Lecture Series**
- **Great American State Fair**
- **High School Patriot Games**
- **Federal Building Decorating**
- **Corporate Partnerships**, e.g., Coca-Cola will design a signature soda can for each state
- **America's Field Trip** (continuing into 2026)

- **America Gives**, supporting veterans and military families — Texas may participate through *Operation Paperback* to provide books to deployed troops and military hospitals
 - **America Waves**, a U.S. flag traveling across every state before returning to Washington, D.C. in July 2026, and a project to create the **largest U.S. flag** (776 x 1,492 ft.)
 - **America's Performance**, six regional events culminating in **America's Talent Show** at the Kennedy Center
 - A proposed **time capsule** to be installed in the U.S. Capitol
- b) Additionally, the **White House** outlined their four **key goals** for the Semiquincentennial:
1. Inspire interest in American history
 2. Encourage national participation in the 250th commemoration
 3. Ignite the spirit of innovation
 4. Invite America's religious communities to pray for the country

IV. Public Comment

No public comment was submitted.

V. Adjournment

Next meeting is currently scheduled for September 11, 2025 at 11am.

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

The meeting was adjourned at 11:59 a.m.