

**MINUTES**  
**TEXAS AMERICA250 COMMISSION**  
**Bullock Texas State History Museum**  
**1800 N. Congress, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor Boardroom**  
**Austin, Texas 78701**  
**February 12, 2026**  
**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, Jelain Chubb, State Archivist & Director, Texas State Library and Archives, Pat Hardy, State Board of Education, Rodney Franklin, Director of Parks, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, Lynn Young, America250 Representative, and Tim Fennell, Director, Travel Texas, Economic Development and Tourism, Governor's Office.

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

Margaret Koch, Presiding Chair of the Texas America250 Commission, called the meeting to order at 11:00 a.m.

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

In the interest of time, Chair Koch invited members of the advisory panel to introduce themselves via the Zoom chat. The chat record was saved and filed for recordkeeping purposes.

Roll call was conducted, and a quorum was established.

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

The Commission reviewed the minutes from the following previous meetings:

- a. November 13, 2025
- b. January 8, 2026

Commissioner Jelain Chubb made a motion to approve the minutes as presented, Commissioner Lynn Young seconded, and the minutes were approved unanimously.

Following approval, the minutes are to be posted on the Texas America250 website.

### **III. Consideration of the Following Agenda Items:**

*Before proceeding to Agenda Item 1, Chair Koch noted that some Commissioners would need to leave the call early. To ensure that all necessary actions could be taken while a quorum was present, the Presiding Chair moved the Action Items ahead in the agenda.*

#### **Item 4. Discussion and Possible Action on Authorizing the Texas State Library and Archives Commission to Submit Items to the National America250 Time Capsule**

Chair Koch introduced discussion regarding the America250 Semiquincentennial Time Capsule, which will be buried on July 4, 2026, at Independence National Historical Park in Philadelphia and opened on July 4, 2275. Due to limited space and content submission guidelines, she proposed authorizing the Texas State Library and Archives Commission to determine appropriate Texas items for inclusion.

A motion was made by Chair Koch and seconded by Pat Hardy. The motion was approved unanimously.

Jelain Chubb, State Archivist and Director of the Texas State Library and Archives Commission, shared potential items for consideration, including the Texas Declaration of Independence and the original sketch of the Lone Star Flag, noting their similarities to foundational United States documents.

#### **Item 5. Discussion and Possible Action on Authorizing a 250-Year Monetary Award for Texas History Day Using Commission Funds**

Texas History Day, the state affiliate of National History Day, will lean into the 250th anniversary with this year's theme: "Revolution, Reaction, Reform in History." Approximately 1,000 students from regional competitions will advance to the state contest held in Austin in April, with top projects moving on to the national competition in Maryland.

The Commission discussed allocating up to \$1,250 in support of a special Texas America250 award, while remaining mindful of ongoing website hosting expenses and future funding needs.

Kimberly Peña, Director of Education Services at TSHA, presented options for distributing the funds. It was proposed that the Commission sponsor a 250-themed award with a \$250 cash prize in the Senior Division, aligned with the Nimitz Award, which would shift to the Junior Division. The award will be presented at Texas History Day in Austin on April 11, with Commission recognition included in publications and press materials. The remaining \$1,000 would fund a teacher travel scholarship to support attendance at the National Contest.

A motion was made by Jelain Chubb to designate the funds to TSHA, and Pat Hardy seconded. The motion to allocate \$1,250 to TSHA for distribution to Texas History Day winners for these purposes was approved unanimously. Chair Koch will appoint several Commissioners as judges to determine awardees based on TSHA recommendations.

### **Item 1. Texas State Library and Archives Commission Presentation on the Texas America250 Exhibit — Commissioner Jelain Chubb**

Commissioner Jelain Chubb was recognized to present on the Texas America250 exhibit. She introduced Peggy Price, Education Outreach Coordinator at TSLAC.

Commissioner Chubb highlighted the [exhibit](#) currently on display in the lobby of the Lorenzo de Zavala State Archives and Library Building, which features stories illustrating how Texas has contributed to the broader American story. She also noted other initiatives, including the recently launched reading challenge, where participants who reach 2,500 minutes of reading will receive a certificate signed by Governor Abbott. Remarkably, the first participant has already completed the challenge.

Ms. Price reported that the traveling Texas America250 exhibits will be displayed at various conferences this year, including the Alliance for Texas History, Real Places, and others. The traveling exhibits remain available, though TSLAC is approaching the limit of exhibits available for distribution.

### **Item 2. Report on the Number of Counties Known to Be Participating in 250 Events**

Thirty-six Texas counties have confirmed participation in America250 events. Additional counties are expected to join, and the list of participating counties will be updated on the TXAM250 website map.

### **Item 3. Report on the Bexar250 Celebration Kickoff Event — Mari Tamez, MPA, Heritage Outreach Manager, Bexar Heritage Center**

Chair Koch called on Mari Tamez of Bexar County Heritage to provide a report on the [Bexar250](#) Celebration Kickoff Event. Ms. Tamez thanked Chair Koch, representatives of the Queen Sofia Spanish Institute, the Granaderos de Galvez, and approximately 15 other heritage groups for attending. The event drew around 300 participants and included a presentation on Bexar County history.

Ms. Tamez noted that the initiative highlights the county's contributions to American history, including support through livestock, soldiers, and donations (donativos). The Bexar Heritage Center currently features an exhibit of historical maps sourced from Spain and maintains an online portal for educators. Upcoming programs include a teacher workshop in June, a tri-county symposium focusing on the San Antonio River Valley and historic ranches, and July 4th fireworks. She also mentioned a summer reading program with America250 reading suggestions and local authors who have written about Spain's role in the American Revolution.

Ms. Tamez concluded by thanking the Commission for its support.

### **Item 6. Report on Countrywide Initiatives**

Commissioner Koch provided a report on national America250 initiatives, including:

- Five Texas congressmen have not yet joined the bipartisan America250 caucus. Commissioner Koch encouraged advisory panel members to contact their representatives to support participation.

- Six [Freedom Trucks](#)—mobile museum exhibits housed in 18-wheelers—are traveling nationwide to share the story of the United States’ path to independence. A form is available on the Freedom250 website to request locations in Texas for the trucks to visit.
- The Great American State Fair will be held on the National Mall from June 25 to July 10. Additional details will be shared as they become available.
- The Department of Transportation has launched a digital campaign promoting road trips and “[See America](#)” initiatives.
- [Our American Story](#) has created a platform to allow states to submit personal stories.
- Texas is among a small number of states leading in entries for the America’s Field Trip program.
- The Trust for the National Mall has launched the [National Mall Gateway](#), a new digital civic learning platform designed to transform how Americans explore and teach the history of the nation’s founding and the America250 commemoration.
- America250 has launched the “America Gives” initiative to encourage volunteerism nationwide.
- The Freedom Plane, carrying reproductions of founding documents, is traveling to bring historical materials to the public. The plane is scheduled to land in Houston as part of its tour and the documents will be on display at the Houston Museum of Natural Science from Friday, May 8 through Monday, May 25.
- Upcoming events include “Light Up the Night” on July 4, the “American Potluck” on July 5, and “Sharing the Spirit of America,” a simultaneous, nation-wide reading of the Declaration of Independence on July 8 at 5:00 p.m. Central Time. A reading is scheduled at the Bullock Texas State History Museum on July 8 to mark the anniversary of the original public reading.
- [The Platform Magazine](#) is seeking to highlight events and initiatives happening in Texas. Dr. Judy Staveley, originally from San Antonio and a member of several history and civic organizations, offered to connect the Commission with her network. The magazine has been publishing educational, inspiring, and positive stories for thirteen years.

#### **IV. Public Comment**

Fidel Santos invited the advisory panel to attend the America250 Speaker Series hosted by the Laredo Chapter of the Granaderos y Damas de Gálvez; Chair Koch will serve as a speaker in April.

Chair Koch invited advisory panel members to join the audience for the AustinPBS excerpt showing of the *American Revolution* series by Ken Burns, highlighting its significance to America250 on March 2. A panel conversation follows.

Pat Hardy reported that letters are being sent to school boards to encourage participation in the My America250 Flag program.

Monte Monroe announced that he will reach out to Emmett Smith to encourage participation in the My America250 Flag program in Arlington.

Rodney Franklin reported that he recently attended the annual Interpreters Conference. He shared that state parks are planning a Dutch oven cooking program as part of America's Potluck. He noted that America250 programs in the parks will be added to the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department website and that events are being planned statewide.

#### **V. Adjournment**

Next meeting is currently scheduled for March 12, 2026 at 11am.

With no old or unfinished business pending before the Commission, Lynn Young made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Pat Hardy seconded.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:08 p.m.