

MINUTES
TEXAS AMERICA250 COMMISSION
Bullock Texas State History Museum
1800 N. Congress, 4th Floor Boardroom
Austin, Texas 78701
February 13, 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, , and Rodney Franklin, Director of Parks, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, Tim Fennel, Director, Travel Texas Economic Development and Tourism, Governor’s Office, Jelain Chubb, State Archivist & Director, Texas State Library and Archives Commission, and Lynn Young, America250 Representative. Pat Hardy, State Board of Education joined the call late.

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: Laura Casey, Ellen Cone Busch, Emily Hermans, Texas Historical Commission; Desmond Bertram-Pitts, Buffalo Soldiers National Museum; Kelsi Tyler, Humanities Texas; Ali James, State Preservation Board; Christine Jacobs, National Park Service; John Espinosa, Granaderos y Damas de Gálvez; Gary Pinkerton, Alliance for Texas History; David Preziosi, Texas Historical Foundation; Lisa Berg, Texas Historical Association; James Harkins, General Land Office; Nancy Foster, Museum of Western Art; Jeff Salmon, Frontier Texas; Ann Hobing, Lone Star Flight Museum; Tracy Pounders, Sons of the American Revolution; Nancy Davis, TXDAR America250 Committee, Rebekka Dobrasko, Texas Department of Transportation, Jeremy Davis, Museum of North Texas, and Bob ward, Camino Real de los Tejas.

Additional attendees included: Fidel Santos, Granaderos y Damas de Gálvez; Steven McFarland, Harrison County Texas America250; Susan Johnston, TXDAR Regent; Miguel Ángel Fernández de Mazarambroz, former Ambassador of Spain to Mexico; Celia Maldonado, Isabel Rivero, and Begonia Santos of the Queen Sofía Spanish Institute.

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 January 9, 2025, as presented. Lynn Young so moved and Jelain Chubb offered a second. The motion carried and the minutes of the previous meetings were adopted.

III. Presentation on the America & Spain 250 Initiative — Queen Sofia Spanish Institute, CEO Begonia Santos

Ms. Begonia Santos, Chief Executive Officer of the Queen Sofia Spanish Institute (QSSI), presented on the [America&Spain250](#) initiative. The QSSI launched the America&Spain250 initiative to commemorate 250 years of a shared history and highlighting Spain's contribution to the American Revolution. It includes developing programming in collaboration with partners and an academic advisory committee to increase visibility of Spain's role. Among many other events, America&Spain250 will hold a Symposium, "Spain and the Birth of American Democracy" at the Headquarters of the National Daughters of the American Revolution, Washington, D.C. in September 2025.

Lynn Young, America250 Representative offered to connect Ms. Santos with the America250 Commission for potential recognition of the Queen Sofia Spanish Institute.

IV. Presentation on the Daughters of the American Revolutions Initiatives – TXDAR Regent, Susan Johnston

Ms. Susan Johnston, TXDAR Regent shared Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) initiatives celebrating 250 years of America. DAR is currently promoting *The American Revolution Experience* Traveling Exhibit, which is now on tour and features panels highlighting key figures, places, and Texas' contributions to the American Revolution. Additionally, America250 patriot monuments are being placed around the state to honor Revolutionary War contributors. TXDAR is publishing a book titled "Texas Before the Lone Star," a collection of historical stories written by Texas Daughters, told through the eyes of children. Once published, one copy of the book will be placed in every public elementary school library in Texas, totaling 5,130 libraries. The Commission welcomed Nancy Davis, State Chair of the DAR America250 Committee, as an advisor to the TXAM250 Commission.

V. Discussion/Possible Action regarding establishment of Commission Sub-committees that correspond with Commission Goals.

Discussion regarding establishment of sub-committees tabled until next meeting.

VI. Consideration of the Following Agenda Items:

Item 1. Re-launch of Texas America250 website

The standalone website has officially launched with logo access and event submission forms available to users.

Item 2. Updates regarding National and State-wide Initiatives

2.1 Statewide

2.1.1 Possible Re-enactment Cattle Drive — Fidel Santos, Laredo Chapter Governor, Granaderos Y Damas de Gálvez

Fidel Santos proposed the idea that Granaderos y Damas de Gálvez approach rodeo associations to explore possibilities of cattle drive reenactments, specifically the drive out of Texas to Louisiana to feed Spanish soldiers fighting against the British in the American Revolution. The reenactment could take place during scheduled event transitions at rodeos. Emily Hermans suggested notifying the Texas Historical Commission (THC), which oversees the official state longhorn herd as a possible collaborator.

2.1.2 Two Lights for Tomorrow, Capitol Event

Commissioners Lynn Young and Jelain Chubb will work on Two Lights for Tomorrow event possibilities.

2.1.3 Texas State Fair Outreach

TXDAR and TXAM250 Commission will explore possibilities of having an America250 presence at the DAR Texas State Fair House this Fall.

2.1.4 Austin Visit of Rosie Rios, Chair of America250, April 24

The Chair met with the scheduling team for America250 Chair, Rosie Rios who will be in Austin for the Texas Historical Commission Real Places conference. A request is being considered for a photo opportunity with the Texas Commission.

2.2 Nationwide

2.2.1 Whitehouse Executive Order: Celebrating America's 250th Birthday, 1/29/2025

Task Force 250 was established to plan a celebration of the 250th Anniversary of Independence. Updates will be shared as they become available.

2.2.2 America250 Convening of States in Was. DC, July 28-30

Two representatives of the Texas Commission have been invited to a national convening of states in July, with America250 offering a stipend to cover costs.

2.2.3 America250 National Portal/Calendar for Events

America250.org has created an online portal where state commissions are able to add events to be included on the national calendar on the America250 website. Submissions are managed by the Presiding Chair and will be pulled from the events submitted to the TXAM250 website's calendar, providing greater visibility to local events.

2.2.4 Convening of States, Colonial Williamsburg, March 24–26

Margaret Koch, Presiding Chair, will present at "A Common Cause to All," a Convening of States at Colonial Williamsburg hosted by the VA250 Commission to participate in a panel discussing America250.

Item 3. Outreach to Legislative Offices

Delivery of the TXAM250 commemorative pins have been delayed, but the letters of introduction to the legislative offices are ready to be sent out. Volunteers have agreed to visit offices in person to deliver letters.

VII. Public Comment

John Espinosa, Granaderos y Damas de Gálvez, offered congratulations to the Commission on the successful launch of the website, the newsletter, and the meeting's guest presentations.

VII. Adjournment

Next meeting is currently scheduled for March 13, 2025 at 2 pm.

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 12:06 p.m.