



TUCSON-PIMA COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION

**Task Force on Inclusivity Regarding the Naming of City- and
County-Owned Buildings and Properties**

Thursday, August 20, 2020, 1:00 p.m.

Virtual Meeting Via Zoom

Minutes

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Meeting called to order by Chair Otero at 1:04 p.m. A quorum was present.

Members Present:

Sandee Brooke
Josephine Hilliard
Jerrie Jean Lamb
Jennifer Levstik
Lydia Otero (Chair)
Rikki Riojas
Alyce Sadongei

Members Absent:

None

Guests Present:

Teresita Majewski (TPCHC Chair)
Jodie Brown, City of Tucson
Linda Mayro, Pima County
Ariel Fry, Ward 6

2. Update on Tucson Origins/Tucson's Birthplace

Alyce reported that she has discussed this issue with Ward 1 representatives. Ward 1 staff talked to Tohono O'odham Nation Chairman Norris prior to the beginning of the pandemic and reported that the nation is interested in pursuing the matter regarding a historic landmark designation. The Nation's Cultural Preservation Committee may request a presentation in the future (Alyce has already given one to them; she has been working on these issues for the past several years on a volunteer basis). In general, Ward 1 considers this a positive response. Alyce would like to see the Nation adopt a resolution

in support of the designation effort. She provided additional information on the history of her involvement and noted that she hopes that the City and the Nation can partner to see the project move forward. There is even the possibility that the Nation could take over the property.

Jodie Brown reminded us to not confuse issues regarding the built and cultural environment in the area with a local historic landmark designation. The nomination for the landmark has been drafted by her office, and Ward 1 has a copy. The designation is in the first step. Jodie suggests that Alyce ask Ward 1 if they or the Nation have comments on the nomination. The City Preservation office is in a holding pattern until they learn if there are comments forthcoming. Jodie explained the difference between a historic landmark designation and a National Register listing, and the former has more “teeth” than a National Register listing.

Linda noted that the County owns the Mission Garden property and agrees to have it included as part of the landmark designation as a zoned historic landmark. Mission Garden has been very supportive of the nomination.

Alyce will provide the spelling (with diacritical marks) of Tucson’s Birthplace in O’odham.

Lydia made the point that the Tohono O’odham Nation might be hesitant to take over the property if the land is designated, as that would dilute the self-determination of the tribe. Could the tribe’s vision be prioritized to allow the tribe to have agency over the land? Alyce noted that this came up as part of the consultations, and the tribe did want to preserve it for their young people.

3. Invited Guests and Insights Regarding the Process of Naming Properties

We asked Jodie Brown regarding COT’s “Administrative Directive 1.02-19: Commemorative Naming of City-Owned Physical Assets.” Although the document was signed on January 8, 2020, the document had already been in use for quite some time before it was revised to address some issues/comments from the Parks and Recreation Department. The process of naming of city-owned physical assets outlined in this document is generally followed by her office.

The task force agreed that the Commission needs to be involved in this process, and it is recommended that more information from the City Manager be requested regarding the document, and if the January 2020 directive did indeed replace a previous document. It also needs to inform the City Manager that the TPCHC would appreciate being more involved in the discussion regarding the naming of city-owned physical assets. Jodie said she would look up the previous administrative directives. There was a consensus of task force members that this should be brought up at the next commission meeting in the task force’s report.

Jodie Brown pointed out that sites have a functional and commemorative name and that they are not always the same. Different City entities manage different City-owned buildings and are responsible for the signage on that building. Rio Nuevo has its own

process for naming their properties, and she agreed to get more information about that process. We should also be aware that National Register Districts/independently listed National Register properties and City Historic Preservation Zones have names and go through different reviews and processes, as do State of Arizona properties. Jodie was not aware of any pending names at this time, but she will check.

Linda Mayro noted that the County has a different process and brought up two policies that she will send to the task force at a later date. The first, drafted in the mid-1990s, outlines the inclusion of public art in any large construction project. The second was drafted in 2016 and has more to do with the naming policy as it pertains to large contributors to a project such as the January 8th Memorial (right now this is restricted to this memorial). In the past, the county has named parks and sites after places or people who donated the property or funding to purchase the land (Abrams Public Health Center being a standout exception), or after a person associated with the property, and although Pima County does not have a formal naming policy, Linda is confident the current Board of Supervisors would be receptive to guidance. She noted that there are sub-elements of many parks that have been named for persons who were historically significant. More of these instances may be revealed as the inventory is completed.

4. Does the Task Force Need Further Information Regarding the Naming Process?

Linda and Jodie need at least 30 more days to complete the property inventories requested by the task force. We also await information from Jodie regarding Rio Nuevo's naming process. Jodie shared a cautionary tale about naming buildings about living people.

5. What Do We Plan To Do Once the Inventories Are Delivered?

The property inventories submitted by Jodie and Linda will influence the task force's next steps. This will be main topic of next month's meeting and needs to be added to the agenda for further discussion. Ariel Fry from Ward 6 brought up the Christopher Columbus Park. Jennifer mentioned some problematic National Register District names, and there have been conversations with the State Historic Preservation Office about this. Lydia reiterated that there are too many things named after white men. She feels that there need to be conversations with the entire Commission. Will the task force morph into a standing subcommittee?

6. Task Assignments

The task force will await the property inventory submissions.

7. Call to the Audience (Information Only)

No public comments were received prior to the meeting.

8. Schedule Upcoming Meeting(s)

The task force agreed to meet on Wednesday, September 23, 2020, at 1 p.m. via Zoom. Lydia asked if the Plans Review Subcommittee reviews names as part of its charge.

9. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 2:10 p.m.