Mobile Historic Development Commission
Meeting Minutes
August 3, 2026
Richards-DAR House Museum
256 N Joachim Street
5:30 P.M.

Call to Order
The meeting commenced at 5:32 p.m.

Present:
Jaime Betbeze, Virginia Edington, Ann Forbes, Alison Henry, Tim Maness, Joan Hoffman, Ivy Thompson, Jessica Fairly, Peter Drey, and Stephen McNair

Absent:
Jean Dodge, Virginia Behlen, and John Ruzic

City Staff:
Kimberly Branch-Thomas and Annie Sawyer Allen

Approval of Minutes:
Minutes from the May 4, 2026, meeting were approved. 1st Stephen McNair. 2nd Virginia Eddington. All were in favor.

Treasurer's Report:
Mr. Betbeze, on behalf of Treasurer Virginia Eddington, reported that there was no significant change in the accounts. The main account is at the standard $100 and all money for banner and shields had been transferred to the Friends. The easement account sits around $29000, with a portion of the money still sitting in a CD at Regions. Report to be sent for audit.

Old Business

1. **Church Street Graveyard Conservation**
   Alison Henry started off the conversation discussing the issues that exist at CSG. Some of those issues are: lack of security, vagrants, lighting, trash, human waste. Alison is working with the city and the Church Street Graveyard Organization to get better lighting, fencing, and portions of the existing exteriors walls stabilized. Annie Allen reported that Historic Development office is working with city engineering to get funds for wall repairs. There are several possible grants that they are looking into. The city is working on establishing a plan to aid in the conservation of CSG.

New Business

2. **Mystic Stripers Historic Marker**
   Alison Henry has been working with Wayne Dean to get a new marker installed for the Mystic Stripers. Wayne Dean has provided all the required history and has asked that the MHDC be a sponsor for the marker, like what was done for the Pelican Girls marker. There will be no cost to the MHDC and most work will be completed by Wayne Dean. This was opened for discussion, and everyone was in favor.

3. **MHDC Appointment Recommendations**
   Annie Allen reported that the city has received recommendations for the mayor to review for replacements of MHDC Commissioners that are cycling off the commission, effective August 2026. The mayor will present his list to the city council for approval sometime within the next two city council meetings. There were at least three people cycling off that asked not to be considered for re-appointment.

4. **Presiding President**
   Mrs. Henry has been the president over the MHDC for the past year and was originally asked to sit as president of the commission for a year. She announced that since she had fulfilled that year term, she will be stepping down as president and the Jaime Betbeze would be stepping up to fill that position until elections were held. Annie Allen thanked Alison for her time as president and thanked all the commissioners for their time serving. Jaime seconded Annie's comment and thanked Alison for being president. He announced that according to the by-laws, there would need to be a nominations committee to replace him as vice president, as well as replace the secretary and treasurer. Mr. Betbeze asked for volunteers for the nominations committee. Annie Allen stated that the list of new commissioners would be coming out soon and questioned if the nominations committee should wait until it is released. Being that the September meeting would have to be conducted without an executive committee, the decision was made to continue with the nominations committee. The volunteers for the nominations committee were Virginia Eddington and Ivy Thompson. As the sitting president, Jaime Betbeze requested that Stephen McNair be the representative of the president. Ann Forbes made a motion to accept Virginia and Ivy; everyone was in favor.

5. **Banner and Shield Applications**
   Alison Henry stressed the need for volunteers to step up to help with the banner and shield program. Being that everything is online, it is an easier process. During this conversation, Jessica Fairley questioned banner and shields for the Africatown National Register District. Ms. Fairley asked about the possibility of creating a banner and shield specifically for Africatown, since most homes would not meet the qualifications for a banner and shield from the MHDC. Africatown has a project management team in place, and it was requested that some of the commissioners come and speak with this team. Jaime Betbeze, Alison Henry, and Tim Maness all agreed to meet with the Africatown team and asked Jessica to arrange a time and place.

There being no additional business, the meeting was concluded at 6:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Tim Maness, Secretary