



MINUTES

Historical Commission & Main Street Advisory Special Board Meeting
July 25, 2026

State of Texas

County of Brazoria

City of Freeport

BE IT REMEMBERED, that the Historical Commission and Main Street Advisory of Freeport, Texas met on **Saturday, July 25, 2026 at 9:00 AM** at the Freeport Nat Hickey Education Center located at 311 East Park Ave., Freeport Texas for the purpose of considering the following agenda items:

The following attendees were present:

Board Members: Edith Fischer
 Leslie Anguiano
 Susan Landers
 Toni Mladan
 David McGinty
 Betty Lopez
 Flora Green
 James Wood

Staff: Maria Lopez - Main Street Coordinator

Visitors: Albert Piña
 Larry McDonald-City Councilman

CALL TO ORDER:

Call to Order

Chair Edith Fischer called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM on Saturday, July 25, 2026, at the Nat Hickey Education Center.

Invocation/Pledge

The invocation was led by Chair Edith Fischer, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

VISION STATEMENT

MISSION STATEMENT

Chairperson Fischer read aloud both the Vision Statement and Mission Statement, emphasizing that the board should keep them in mind throughout the meeting and the subsequent workshop.

Public Comments - (This is an opportunity for citizens and visitors to address the Freeport Historical Commission & Main Street Advisory Board on any agenda or non-agenda item. Individuals must register in advance and adhere to a (4) four-minute time limit.)

No members of the public registered to speak.

PRESENTATIONS/ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Staff Announcements

New Board Members

Chairperson Fischer welcomed new board member Toni Mladan, who introduced herself to the board. She shared that she is a disabled veteran who grew up in East Texas, spent considerable time in Abilene, and relocated to the Freeport area approximately seven months prior. She expressed enthusiasm for contributing to the community's growth. Board members welcomed her and noted that Abilene also has a downtown area with some Main Street elements.

Main Street Update: Operations, reporting, budget, education, and advocacy

Main Street Coordinator Maria Lopez provided the following updates:

City Council Attendance: Coordinator Lopez reported that she attended a recent City Council meeting to raise awareness of the Main Street program.

Budget & End of Fiscal Year: With the fiscal year ending September 30th, the remaining events budget will be directed toward Kidfest. Coordinator Lopez noted that she submitted a budget request for the upcoming fiscal year (beginning October 1st) that includes an increase in beautification funding and a new façade grant program. The façade grant program, if approved by Council, would assist downtown property owners with building improvements. The budget is expected to be approved by Council in August or September.

Christmas Tree: A Christmas tree designated for Downtown Freeport has been purchased and will arrive in August. It will be stored temporarily in the former fire station building behind McDonald's, which Public Works will help clear. A permanent storage shed has also been included in the budget request, with the goal of the tree lasting up to ten years.

2. Chair Comments/Announcements

Chairperson Fischer stated she was looking forward to the upcoming workshop and the work ahead.

BUSINESS-REGULAR SESSION:

Consideration and possible action to approve the June 18, 2026, meeting minutes.

Board members reviewed the draft minutes, noting that one visitor's name, Rosa McDonald, should be added. Coordinator Lopez requested that the name be written down for her records. A motion to approve June 18, 2026, meeting minutes, as amended to include the visitor, Rosa McDonald, was made by Vice Chairperson James Wood and seconded by Board Member Betty Lopez, with all present voting "Aye"; the motion passed unanimously.

Consideration and possible action to approve DowntownTX.org Freeport summary.

Vice Chairperson Wood presented the proposed summary text for the Downtown Freeport listing on DowntownTX.org, explaining that the site cannot go live without content in the "Why Freeport" section. He emphasized that the text was intentionally written to attract business-savvy individuals who could recognize the return-on-investment opportunity that currently available, affordable downtown spaces represent. Board

Member Leslie Anguiano asked whether resources existed for individuals with entrepreneurial interests but without a business background. Vice Chairperson Wood and Chairperson Fischer confirmed that once the page is live, it will include links to additional resources, including various business development programs. Chairperson Fischer commended Vice Chairperson Wood for the quality and thoroughness of the document, noting that condensing the pertinent information into an accessible format was no small task. A motion to approve the DowntownTX.org Freeport summary for publication was made by Chairperson Fischer and seconded by Board Member Toni Mladan, with all present voting "Aye"; the motion passed unanimously.

Consideration and possible action to appoint board members to subcommittees.

The board discussed the four existing subcommittees: Promotion, Design, Economic Vitality, and Organization. It was noted that Economic Vitality currently has no members. Board Member Anguiano expressed prior interest in serving on that subcommittee.

The discussion broadened into the structure and governance of the subcommittees. Coordinator Lopez explained that subcommittees meet between board meetings to advance focused work and report back, and that their size is intentionally limited to avoid constituting a quorum. Board Member Betty Lopez raised the question of how subcommittee chair terms are structured, which led to a discussion about the board bylaws. Coordinator Lopez noted that she intended to bring the bylaws to the August meeting for board review, as there are currently conflicting dates regarding officer terms. The board agreed that once those ambiguities are resolved, clearer term structures for subcommittee chairs could also be codified.

Board Split Discussion: A broader discussion arose regarding the long-recommended separation of the Main Street Advisory Board from the Historical Commission into two distinct boards. Vice Chairperson Wood noted that former Main Street Manager Wade had done significant preparatory work on this, and that the split may be required under the city's governing documents. Coordinator Lopez confirmed she had already raised the matter with the City Manager and prepared a document outlining the rationale, including the option of restructuring rather than splitting if a full split is not pursued.

Chairperson Fischer noted that the Texas Historical Commission recommends the split and that formalizing a standalone Historical Commission would open the door to additional grant opportunities, including the Certified Local Government (CLG) program. The board also discussed the need for a designated Historic Preservation Officer to administer Certificates of Appropriateness (COAs) for building modifications—a role that would likely be added to Coordinator Lopez's title or assigned to another staff member.

The board further discussed the desirability of Main Street establishing its own 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, as several businesses and industry contacts are reluctant to donate to what is currently recorded as a contribution to the City of Freeport. Board Member Mladan specifically cited connections with major local industry that might be willing to contribute for tax purposes if a proper nonprofit structure were in place. Coordinator Lopez noted that Finance assisted with guidance on the usage of fundraised funds that can be utilized by Main Street.

The board agreed to table subcommittee appointments until after the workshop and to place the board split and 501(c)(3) formation on the August agenda for further discussion. Coordinator Lopez agreed to send board members her prepared document on the matter and to reach out to former board member Irene, who had previously researched the nonprofit formation process through the Economic Vitality subcommittee. This item was tabled. Appointments to subcommittees were deferred to allow board members to learn more about the subcommittee functions during the day's workshop.

Consideration and possible action to reschedule the August regular board meeting.

Coordinator Lopez informed the board that she would be out on the originally scheduled August 20th meeting date and requested that the meeting be rescheduled. After discussion of available dates, the board agreed on August 27th at 6:00 PM. A motion to reschedule the August regular board meeting from August 20th to August 27th at 6:00 PM was made by Vice Chairperson James Wood and seconded by Board Member Betty Lopez, with all present voting "Aye"; the motion passed unanimously.

COMMITTEE UPDATES:

Promotion: Bringing people downtown and building a positive image.

Chairperson Fischer reported that she and Coordinator Lopez have begun planning for Kidfest, scheduled for September 12th from 3:00 to 7:00 PM. The primary needs at this stage are volunteers and community organizations for outreach. Coordinator Lopez noted that she had brought a Kidfest flyer and asked board members to share it within their networks.

Organization: Partnerships, volunteers, and long-term program sustainability.

Vice Chairperson Wood reported that the committee's primary accomplishment this period was the completion of the DowntownTX.org summary, approved earlier in the meeting. No other significant updates were available, as subcommittee activity has been limited pending clarification of the overall subcommittee structure.

Design: Improving the appearance and functionality of the downtown district.

Board Member Betty Lopez reported that the Design Committee did not meet during the prior month. Coordinator Lopez noted that funds remained from the T-shirt fundraiser and suggested coordinating with the committee on a creative downtown project using those proceeds.

NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING/UPCOMING EVENTS:

Next board meeting—

Kidfest—September 12, 2026, 3:00 PM–7:00 PM

Día de los Muertos—November 2, 2026, 6:00 PM

Christmas on Main—December 5, 2026, TBD

Regarding Día de los Muertos, Coordinator Lopez described plans for a community procession with mariachi and altar displays at the museum. The event would be cultural in nature rather than a vendor market, though unique vendors specifically suited to the occasion may be considered. Discussion among board members and a community business owner present highlighted the importance of keeping the event traditional and using it as an opportunity for community connection and business outreach, including inviting downtown and nearby businesses to set up altars as a way of welcoming them into the downtown community. Board Member Anguiano proposed an "altar walk" concept, encouraging existing businesses to place altars in their windows to draw foot traffic, similar to a future art walk concept the board has discussed. Coordinator Lopez invited interested businesses to contact her to coordinate participation.

Adjournment:

A motion to adjourn was made by James Wood and seconded by Board Member Flora Green, with all present voting "Aye"; the motion passed unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned at 9:45 AM.

The meeting was adjourned, and the board proceeded to the scheduled workshop.



Maria Lopez, Main Street Coordinator
City of Freeport, Texas