



# MINUTES

## Historic District Commission Meeting

8:30 AM - Thursday, January 15, 2026

Board Chambers, 133 Convention Boulevard

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### Call to Order

Chairman Schwebel called the meeting to order at 8:31 a.m.

### Roll Call

Roll Call of the Historic District Commission Members:

**Present:** Commissioner Clyde Covington, Chair Garrett Schwebel, Vice Chair Cynthia Rogers, Commissioner Melinda Shunk, Commissioner Chris Sheppard, and Commissioner Angie Fuller-Freeman

**Not Present:** Commissioner Nicole Good

### Consider Previous Minutes

#### ***Adoption of Minutes***

Moved by Clyde Covington, seconded by Chris Sheppard, to approve the November 20, 2025 minutes as presented.

Carried by the following votes:

**Ayes:** Commissioner Clyde Covington, Chair Garrett Schwebel, Vice Chair Cynthia Rogers, Commissioner Melinda Shunk, Commissioner Chris Sheppard, and Commissioner Angie Fuller-Freeman

### Approval of Agenda

Moved by Chris Sheppard, seconded by Angie Fuller-Freeman, to approve the meeting's agenda as presented.

Carried by the following votes:

**Ayes:** Commissioner Clyde Covington, Chair Garrett Schwebel, Vice Chair Cynthia Rogers, Commissioner Melinda Shunk, Commissioner Chris Sheppard, and Commissioner Angie Fuller-Freeman

### New Business

Chairman Schwebel called for the first item of new business.

- HDC-25-192- 410 Central Ave.-Bathhouse Row Apparel- After-The-Fact Certificate of appropriateness application to install business identification window signs.***

**Staff:** Lauren Adkins

**Findings:**

A complete application was submitted in accordance with Hot Springs Code section H.S.C. § 16-7-11. This request seeks After-the-Fact Certificate of Appropriateness application consideration for Category 5 improvements on the structure located at 410 Central Avenue. The structure is listed as contributing to the National Register of Historic Places Historic District.

The applicant's proposal to install four signs does not demonstrate consistency with the adopted design guidelines. When combined with the awning sign installed in October 2025, the total amount of signs exceeds the regulation of one major and two minor signs.

**Recommendation:**

The recommendation for this Certificate of Appropriateness application is to approve installation of only two signs, in addition to the existing sign on the awning, with the following condition.

1. The unapproved signs must be removed by February 19, 2026.

**Speakers**

Ike Cook, Bathhouse Row Apparel, 410 Central Avenue

Mr. Cook stated that he would prefer to remove the oval signs in the center of each display window.

Moved by Angie Fuller-Freeman, seconded by Chris Sheppard, to accept the staff recommendations.

Carried by the following votes:

Ayes: Commissioner Clyde Covington, Chair Garrett Schwebel, Vice Chair Cynthia Rogers, Commissioner Melinda Shunk, Commissioner Chris Sheppard, and Commissioner Angie Fuller-Freeman

2. ***HDC-25-197 - Union Missionary Baptist Church - 219 Gulpha Street - Application for Certificate of Appropriateness to replace the roof and windows on the original building and 1950s addition.***

Chairman Schwebel announced that this item has been deferred until February.

3. ***MISC-25-203 - Set survey priorities for the next two years.***

**Staff:** Lauren Adkins

**Findings:**

In 2025, the Hot Springs Board of Directors and Historic District Commission adopted the Heritage and Historic Preservation Plan to serve as a blueprint for preservation action over

the next 10 years, and work has begun to implement the plan.

**Recommendation:**

Recommendation is to approve the following survey priorities through December 31, 2027.

1. East Side Elementary School. The School has recently been sold and has been considered as a tax credit project for affordable housing. Those plans stalled because the building is not listed on the National Register. The school was designed by notable local architect Irven D. McDaniel and played a noteworthy role in the civil rights movement within Hot Springs. Schools in the area remained segregated until 1963, when the local branch of the NAACP actively sought the desegregation of public facilities, including schools. In response, the Hot Springs School Board announced a limited voluntary desegregation plan that same year, and East Side School, previously an all-White institution, became one of the first to integrate, receiving two Black students.
2. Vacant buildings where listing on the National Register could encourage rehabilitation into affordable housing. Work would include identification of individual buildings or districts which could meet this description.
3. Resurvey of one existing National Register historic district. Staff recommends starting with the Quapaw-Prospect Historic District. It is the largest historic district in Hot Springs and has recently faced development pressures that could lead to a loss of historic fabric.
4. New survey of the Hobson Avenue commercial district and surrounding residential neighborhoods, to include Jonestown. A commercial business owner recently invited representatives from the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program to tour the district, and received an enthusiastic endorsement to nominate this neighborhood to the National Register. Jonestown and South Hot Springs were some of Hot Springs' first suburbs and was created by Jennie Ann Ward Jones, who donated the land for Jones School in 1876. She also served as one of the first teachers. The current building is the fourth school building on the site and is listed on the National Register. The commercial district includes a nickelodeon theater and a fine collection of buildings built in the 1910s through the 1930s.

**Speakers**

There were no speakers.

A motion amended the original motion by substituting the Park Avenue neighborhood for the Quapaw-Prospect Historic District. The survey priorities would be: East Side Elementary School, Vacant buildings where listing on the National Register could encourage rehabilitation into affordable housing, and new surveys of the Hobson/Jonestown and the Park Avenue neighborhoods.

Moved by Garrett Schwebel, seconded by Cynthia Rogers, to amend the motion accepting

the staff recommendations by substituting Park Avenue for the Quapaw-Prospect Historic District.

Carried by the following votes:

Ayes: Commissioner Clyde Covington, Chair Garrett Schwebel, Vice Chair Cynthia Rogers, Commissioner Melinda Shunk, Commissioner Chris Sheppard, and Commissioner Angie Fuller-Freeman

Moved by Clyde Covington, seconded by Chris Sheppard, to approve the amended motion, with a substitution to the staff recommendations.

Carried by the following votes:

Ayes: Commissioner Clyde Covington, Chair Garrett Schwebel, Vice Chair Cynthia Rogers, Commissioner Melinda Shunk, Commissioner Chris Sheppard, and Commissioner Angie Fuller-Freeman

### **Directors Report**

Lauren Adkins provided the following report, on behalf of Kathy Sellman.

1) During November and December, I contacted the 35 sign companies registered with the Department to remind them about not starting work until the Commission has approved an application, and sent them a copy of the design guidelines.

2) Since the last Commission meeting, the Staff reviewed and approved six Certificate of Compliance applications.

3) The City's organizational membership in the National Trust for Historic preservation includes 2 subscriptions to the magazine which were given to Commissioners Rogers and Fuller-Freeman.

### **Adjournment**

Moved by Angie Fuller-Freeman, seconded by Cynthia Rogers, to adjourn the January 15, 2026, Historic District Commission meeting at 9:40 a.m.

Carried by the following votes:

Ayes: Commissioner Clyde Covington, Chair Garrett Schwebel, Vice Chair Cynthia Rogers, Commissioner Melinda Shunk, Commissioner Chris Sheppard, and Commissioner Angie Fuller-Freeman

Attest

