

ST. JOHNS COUNTY

Cultural Resources Review Board

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Permit Center Conference Room 1
4040 Lewis Speedway

Monday, April 13th, 2026, 1:30:00 PM

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Susan Schjelderup, District 4, Chair
Dr. Leslee Keys, District 2, Vice-Chair
Blair Knighting, District 4
Paul LeBlanc, District 3
Nick Jonihakis, District 1
Christine Newman, District 5

STAFF PRESENT:

Megan Wright, Environmental Specialist
Ryan Mauch, Environmental Supervisor

- Meeting called to order at 1:30 pm
- Roll call for CRRB members
- Motion to approve CRRB meeting minutes for 2.9.2026 by Newman, second by Jonihakis, carries 6/0
- Reading of the Civility Clause statement
- Motion for approval of the 4/13/2026 agenda by Newman, second by Keys, carries 6/0
- Public Comments
 - Sallie O'Hara: The Venue, 301 N. Main Street, a historic event space along Hastings Main Street has officially been renovated. This space welcomes weddings and receptions, community and cultural events, corporate gatherings concerts and special occasions. Nicole Diehm from the St Augustine Historical Society will be speaking at the Hastings Nutrition shop, 312 N. Main Street, on April 21st at 10 am, with content centering around historic farming culture transforming into modern-day Hastings . The annual Hastings Cabbage, Potato, and Bacon Festival will be on April 25th and 26th, 2026. Live storytelling will take place at the St Johns County Southeast Branch Public Library, 670 US 1 South, on July 20th at 6 pm. The storytelling will include insights into Hastings' agricultural heritage, performed by David Fussell and Kathy Kniery.

BOARD ITEMS

1. Presentation by Vice Chair, Dr. Leslee Keys: America 250 Commemorations - Celebrations and Commemorations - Engaging Communities in History

The Board received a presentation from Dr. Leslee F. Keys on the role of celebrations and commemorations in engaging communities with history. The presentation reviewed major national anniversaries and world's fairs, including the upcoming United States Semiquincentennial, and highlighted how these events have supported historic preservation, civic investment, education, and community identity. Dr. Keys also discussed significant St. Augustine commemorations, preservation initiatives, historic landmarks, and local anniversaries connected to the city's development and cultural heritage. The presentation emphasized the value of using upcoming milestones to promote public participation, strengthen partnerships, and increase awareness of local history.

- Board Reports

Vice Chair, Dr. Keys

Old Jail/Detention Center – SJC Facilities, after receipt of bid packages, has recommended Thomas May Construction of Green Cove Springs, FL to rehabilitate the building. BOCC will address contract on the April 21 meeting. Pat Law in SJC Facilities is the Owners Rep for the project. Work is planned to be completed by December 2026. Suggest CRRB proceed with County Landmark designation to be addressed the December 2026 meeting.

Magic Beach Motel – Demolition took place Easter Week with heavy equipment bulldozing the facility, after an extension had been granted due to lack of progress after removal of the swimming pool. The “bunny” sign was salvaged. Rumors continue that the owner of Sarbez owner Ryan Kunsch has an interest in the sign.

The Cheese Wheel building at San Marco Avenue and SR16 was demolished during Easter Week.

Division of Historical Resources proposed to open a grant cycle April 1-June 1. From website: The Florida Department of State, Division of Historical Resources application cycles for Small Matching, Special Category, and Abandoned African-American Cemeteries grants, opening on April 1, 2026, has been postponed. Additional information will be forthcoming.

301 N. Main Street, Hastings – Stanton Ford Motor Company – Ad valorem tax exemption project reborn as “The Venue” is completed and opened.

- Staff Reports

Megan Wright

A proclamation recognizing Historic Preservation Month is set to be presented on May 13th, 2026 with a focus on America 250's anniversary.

The President's Fiscal Year 2027 Budget is proposes to cut the Historic Preservation Fund (HPF) and significantly reduces funding for other federal preservation efforts, including the National Register of Historic Places. Although the proposed budget would continue to fund the critical grant programs for maintaining Historically Black Colleges and Universities, it eliminates the rest of the HPF funding. The HPF plays a large role in funding historic preservation at the national, state and local level. It provides grant funding for State and Tribal Historic Preservation Offices. These grants help states to fund historic preservation programs, projects, training, conferences and publications and supports Certified Local Governments.

The Florida Department of State, Division of Historical Resources grant application cycle was set to open Wednesday, April 1, but has been postponed. These grants include the Small Matching, Special Category and Abandoned African American Cemeteries grants. Currently, no information about the delay is available. Continue to check for updates at the Division of Historical Resources website: dos.fl.gov/historical/grants.

- Meeting adjourned at 2:43 pm.