

Minutes approved 9.19.25

Historical Preservation Committee Meeting

Chairman Kaden Nelms

Second Floor Conference Room – McKenzie Building

Tuesday, August 19, 2025 – 11:00 a.m.



Committee Members Present:

Chairman Kaden Nelms, Russ Crawford, Circuit
Clerk Linc Hobson, County Clerk John
Ackerman

DISCUSSION: TAZEWELL COUNTY HISTORY

Chairman Nelms recommended talking to department heads and asking them to provide the committee with all of the historical pieces that they have. He stated that the committee will then prepare a database and decide the best place for each piece.

County Clerk John Ackerman stated that the department heads would not know what they have or what they are looking for. Mr. Ackerman stated that he would recommend waiting until the Courthouse is in the process of being re-done and remove the items at that time. He stated that we need to ensure the items are properly stored in a secure storage facility according to the condition of the material.

County Clerk Ackerman stated that there is a personal letter that was signed twice by Abraham Lincoln in the display case in his office.

County Clerk Ackerman stated that there are a few items that cannot be removed during construction. He stated that the Tazewell Hotel monument is built into the wall and cannot be removed. He also stated that there are three portraits on the wall that he believes were the originals when it was a museum, that would need to be painted around.

Circuit Clerk Linc Hobson stated that the approximately 20 years ago the State of Illinois removed all Lincoln items from his office and they are now in Springfield on display.

County Clerk Ackerman stated that Lincoln's property deed is stored in the Recorder's Office.

County Clerk Ackerman recommended taking a tour of the facility after the meeting to show the items being discussed.

County Clerk Ackerman stated that two dead trees have recently been taken down on the west side of the courthouse. He stated that he would recommend installing two triangular historical tourism boards at that location. He stated that this would provide 6 story boards to share the following historic information:

1. Abraham Lincoln at the Tazewell County Courthouse
2. Tazewell County Government History
3. Tazewell County Veterans Memorial
4. Third Tazewell County Courthouse
5. Current Fourth Tazewell County Courthouse
6. History Tazewell County Activities (famous attorneys, Tazewell House Monument, Arcade Building Arch)

County Clerk Ackerman stated that the cost was \$488 for frames and \$2,000 for completed story boards for a total project cost of \$4,976.

Circuit Clerk Hobson stated that he is leery of adding anything, and it is his opinion that the Courthouse lawn is full.

Member Russ Crawford stated that his only concern would be keeping the area selective, prioritized, and clean.

County Clerk Ackerman discussed a Medal of Honor monument on the courthouse lawn near the Veterans' Memorial that would highlight the three Medal of Honor recipients. He stated that this is an item that the voters approved.

County Clerk Ackerman stated that we need to find a place for the arch from the Arcade Building. He also stated that we do not have a Vietnam Veteran's Memorial anywhere and would propose that it be placed on the courthouse lawn.

DISCUSSION: AMERICA 250

County Clerk Ackerman stated that they put together an "I Voted" sticker drive and the board will vote in September for the sticker that will be used in the primary election in 2026.

County Clerk Ackerman discussed the idea of a drone show the weekend before the 4th of July 2026. He stated that the cost would be around \$30,000.

DISCUSSION: COUNTY BICENTENNIAL

County Clerk Ackerman stated that some things have already been put into place and some are on the way.

County Clerk Ackerman stated that we already have an Illinois State Historical Marker in Tremont for the second courthouse. He stated that the cost is \$6,000 each including the pole. He is recommending the following three historical markers:

1. Hopedale in recognition of location of 1st County Government meeting
2. Mackinaw in recognition of 1st Tazewell County Courthouse
3. Pekin in recognition of 3rd Tazewell County Courthouse

County Clerk Ackerman recommended rotating the County Board meetings, with one held in April in Hopedale, May in Mackinaw, June in Pekin, and returning to the Justice Center in July.

County Clerk Ackerman stated that the Sheriff has a book ready to go on the Sheriffs of Tazewell County, and he and Christie Webb will have a book ready to go on the Clerks of Tazewell County. He questioned whether we want a County history book. He stated there are two of them, one in 1875 and one in 1903. He stated that an author has offered to take the book from 1903, update it, and republish it.

County Clerk Ackerman stated that he has reached out to Pepsi about printing Pepsi cans with the logo we choose for the County Bicentennial. He stated that Mackinaw Valley Vineyard is going to do a bicentennial wine because it is also Mackinaw's bicentennial as well. He stated that he has coordinated with Morton Community Bank for a series of four bicentennial coins that they would sell for the four courthouses that Tazewell County has had. He stated that two months ago, he and Christie Webb started placing wreaths once a month at their predecessor's gravesites.

Chairman Nelms discussed the next meeting date. County Clerk Ackerman recommended having the next meeting in two weeks. The members advised that they would check their calendars and plan a meeting as soon as possible.

Chairman Nelms recessed the meeting at 12:27 p.m.

(transcribed by S. Gullette)