

THE BARNHILL CENTER ADVISORY BOARD

A regular meeting of the City of Brenham's The Barnhill Center Advisory Board was held on Tuesday, March 31, 2026, beginning at 3:00 p.m. in Nancy Carol Roberts Memorial Library, 100 Martin Luther King Junior Parkway, Brenham, Texas.

Board Members present:

Jane Barnhill
Jennifer Eckermann
Jon Hill
Hal Moorman
Tiffany Morisak
Traci Pyle
Margie Routt Young

Board Members absent:

Tom Bullock, Jr.
Tee Dippel

The Barnhill Center Team presents:

Megan Mainer, Assistant City Manager; Tourism and Marketing Specialist Nancy Joiner; and Manager of The Barnhill Center, Alex Dill

City of Brenham Staff present:

Carolyn Miller, City Manager
Mayor Atwood Kenjura
Councilmember & Mayor Pro Tem Clint Kolby
Councilmember Dr. Paul LaRoche, III, DDS

Community present:

Barry Brass
Sharon Brass

Media Present:

No media present

1. Call Meeting to Order

Jennifer Eckermann, board chair, called the meeting to order.

2. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

REGULAR SESSION

3. Discuss and Possibly Act Upon Approval of Minutes from January 12, 2026, The Barnhill Center Advisory Board Meeting

A motion was made by Board Member Jon Hill to approve the minutes for January 12, 2026, and seconded by Board Member Hal Moorman.

Chair Jennifer Eckermann called for a vote. The motion passed with the following votes:

Jane Barnhill	Yes
Tom Bullock, Jr.	Absent
Tee Dippel	Absent
Jennifer Eckermann	Yes
Jon Hill	Yes
Hal Moorman	Yes
Tiffany Morisak	Yes
Traci Pyle	Yes
Margie Routt Young	Yes

WORK SESSION

4. Review and Discuss City of Brenham Partnership with Brenham Main Street Historical Preservation, Inc. Restoration of the Historic Simon Theatre

Carolyn Miller, City Manager, gave an overview of the history of The Barnhill Center, a two-decade-long partnership between the City of Brenham and the Brenham Main Street Historical Preservation, Inc., non-profit entity, in their endeavor to preserve, restore, and revitalize the historic Simon Theater. The building was purchased in 2003, and the City of Brenham paid \$175,000 to help with the purchase of the Simon Theater, which started our 23-year partnership. The Visitor Center was relocated from the Chamber of Commerce to the Simon Theater in 2010, where the first floor was completed in that year. The responsibility for tourism and promotions transitioned to the City of Brenham in 2018, and Jennifer Eckermann was promoted from Main Street Manager to Director of Tourism and Marketing. Also in 2018, the city approved a lease agreement and in 2019 a Memorandum of Understanding to pay \$1,694 monthly or \$18,000 annually. Under these two agreements, the City of Brenham paid \$278,931 to BMSHP over seven years (2017 through mid-2024). Three addendums to the MOU were approved to authorize the reimbursement of interest-only payments made by BMSHP on the existing loans of the Barnhill Center. They are as follows.

- July 2021-reimbursement up to \$35,0000
- February 2022 – reimbursement up to \$18,000
- July 2022 – reimbursement up to \$18,000
- The City of Brenham reimbursed BMSHP \$86,354.

City Council approved the acquisition of The Barnhill Center in 2023 and paid the remaining balance of the loan of \$475,410, which was paid in March 2024, utilizing Hotel Occupancy Tax reserves.

After the purchase, the City and BMSHP entered into an agreement on an alcohol concession. The Barnhill Center utilized BMSHP’s license and permit issued by the

Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission (TABC). The city receives all income from alcohol concessions. In the agreement, the city pays \$750 per month and reimburses the BMSHP for all TABC permits and beer/wine license fees. Since mid-2024 to present, the city has paid \$20,853 to BMSHP, which is offset by concession revenue. This agreement will continue until the City contracts with one or more properly licensed vendors to provide alcohol concessions for events at the Barnhill Center, or unless the City obtains the necessary licenses and permits from TABC. Once this happens, then action will be taken to cancel BMSHP's licenses and permits issued by TABC for the alcohol concession.

In her final statement, the journey from 2003 to 2026 has been a public-private partnership between the City of Brenham and BMSHP. The community has shown enormous support for the historic Simon Theater and looks forward to continuing this successful partnership.

5. Review and Discuss RFP-26-003 Alcohol and Concession Services for The Barnhill Center

Megan Mainer, Assistant City Manager, presented this item. In the January 12, 2026, board meeting, staff gave an update regarding the City of Brenham seeking proposals from qualified proposers to provide concession and alcohol services for events at the Barnhill Center at Historic Simon Theater to alleviate staff time spent on purchasing materials, management of service offers, and to reduce annual operational expenses. In FY25, staff estimated a loss of about \$4,051,28 for concessions and alcohol in-house, and this does not include staff time. Staff moved forward with a contractor for these services and a monthly fee to be charged to the winning vendor for exclusive rights to sell approved concessions and alcohol items during the City of Brenham's scheduled events. Serving as the preferred in-house concessions and alcohol provider for all non-City of Brenham events. The process started in January of 2026, and the city has received two proposals, one from Cocktails4U and Texas Toast. In March, staff began service agreement negotiations with Cocktails4U to include a monthly fee to promote an increase in revenue while eliminating expenses related to these services. Once the service agreement negotiations have been finalized, staff will seek approval from the City Council.

6. Administrative Report to Include The Barnhill Center Programming, The Barnhill Center Rentals, Tourism Staffing Update, The Barnhill Center Budget Preparation

Megan Mainer, Assistant City Manager, presented this item. The Oak Ridge Boys were to perform on January 24, 2026, but the performance was canceled due to inclement weather. It is now scheduled for November 20, 2026. Most patrons rolled their tickets over to the new date, with refunds going back to those who didn't. Ticket sales for ORBs will go on sale on April 1, 2026. Toast and Darci Lynne concerts both sold out, and those were in February and March, respectively. The Barnhill Center rentals include eleven rentals since January, with a total revenue of \$36,500. They all range from groups, tours, seminars, awards presentations, prom, photo shoots, development meetings, luncheons, retirement and wedding parties, school performances, semi-formal, and business meetings.

Initially, recruitment for a Director of Tourism was started in December, but it did not result in an adequately qualified candidate pool. We shifted recruitment to the Visit

Brenham Destination Manager position. Staff are managing a wide range of responsibilities, including visitor center operations, event coordination, partner engagement, and day-to-day tourism activities. Adding the Visit Brenham Destination Manager will provide immediate operations support and allow staff to remain focused on their primary roles without overextension. Part-time staff continue to complete the rolls at the Visitor Center. The Visitor Center will have an Intern, Adison Williams, who will start on June 8, 2026.

The Barnhill Center is preparing for budget and various projects, including projects such as the roof waterproofing and safety ladder, urn replacement, coping, theatre acoustics, and projector and screen. Also submitted was a request for the Director of Tourism for FY27. For FY25, a budget deficit of \$84,668 was added to the ending (cumulative) negative fund balance for Fund 249, which is \$251,535. Fund 249 is supported by HOT funds; general fund revenue will not support the negative fund balance of the Tourism Department. The negative fund balance will be smoothed out over the next several years by a cost recovery model for cultural arts programs and events, new program revenue (concerts, ads, The Barnhill Center memberships, concert underwriting), and HOT funds.

Budget priorities in FY27 will include:

- Adhere to FY27 budget requests for Fund249
- Year-end breakeven for Fund 249
- Implement cost recovery tracking for all programs and events
- Change existing programs or implement new programs to generate additional revenue to aid in the year-end breakeven for Fund 249

7. Adjourn

Jennifer Eckermann
Board Chair

April 13, 2026
Date

ATTEST:

Nancy Joiner
Tourism & Marketing Specialist

April 13, 2026
Date