

MINUTES
FLINT HILLS DISCOVERY CENTER ADVISORY BOARD
HARMON ROOM – CITY HALL
September 12, 2011
4:00 P.M.

Present were the following members of the Flint Hills Discovery Center Advisory Board: Mr. Ron Wilson, Ms. Sharon Brookshire, Mr. Mike Haddock, Mr. Thomas Warner, and Ms. Suzan Barnes. Ms. Kristin Brighton and Mr. Dave Kendall were absent. Also present at this meeting were Mr. Bob Workman, Flint Hills Discovery Center Director; Ms. Melissa Kirkwood, Development Officer; Mr. Jared Bixby, Curator of Education; Ms. Pamela Jager, Senior Accountant. Visitors included: Mayor Jim Sherow and Ms. Marina Pecar Krstic.

MINUTES

Mr. Warner called for the approval of the June minutes. It was moved by Mr. Wilson, seconded by Mr. Haddock, that the June minutes be approved. On vote, motion carried 5-0.

An invitation to hold the November meeting at the Flint Hills Discovery Center (FHDC) was suggested by Mr. Workman and agreed upon by the group.

CONSTRUCTION AND EXHIBITS FABRICATION UPDATE

Mr. Workman stated that the final glass has been ordered for the cylinder and is expected to be completed in September. The quality of the stonework is remarkable, and has carried over to the inside of the building. The parking lot to the building has been poured and a portion of Colorado Street is being poured. Temporary hand railing is being installed. The permanent railing systems are being fabricated and will be installed before the building completion. Mechanical systems are in place and the installation of elevator systems will begin soon. A target completion date is set for November 1, with commissioning happening in December. The overall project is currently trending \$250,000 under the GMP.

Mr. Workman recently made a trip to Split Rock Studios to conduct a sample review of fabrications of the permanent exhibits with members from Hilferty and McCownGordon. Rough installation will begin in October of prefabricated material, scenic treatment of the Underground Forest, and other exhibits. Artists from Split Rock Studios will come to the FHDC to begin work, and will also go out to view cross cuts of the Flint Hills to see and experience the formations.

The artwork of Ms. Claudia McGhee, a children's book illustrator, was shared. A contract has been established with Ms. McGhee to produce the art in the first floor above the exhibits. The shared artwork showed her complete attention to detail of wildlife, and its timelessness. Ms. McGhee has also been commissioned to produce a few other wildlife elements. FHDC will have license rights to utilize this artwork in the future. It was stated that this artwork will give a complete ambiance to the entire area.

Boston Productions is continuing to work on the dome projection element. The film for this feature will be 60 minutes in length. The large mural being created by Randall Bennett, Tall Grass Museum Services, is continuing production. The six-section mural will continue up the staircase, and will include the covering of the freight elevator.

FACILITIES USAGE POLICIES AND FEE STRUCTURE

The current fee structure of the Facilities Use Agreement was shared with the Board and discussed. Estimated revenue from facility rentals during the first year of operation is budgeted at \$37,500. The

proposal of fees was presented in a package format with packages ranging from the entire building and up to 500 guests for \$2,700, to rental of meeting rooms for \$50 per hour. Discussion was held regarding the pricing structure of the larger packages for events or weddings. A price comparison of area rental facilities was presented. After review, the Board asked if the current pricing could be raised by at least 15%. Ms. Jager, who has helped with the pricing structure, stated that she would be able to help with the pricing adjustments and provide the information at the October meeting. The Board felt that the fee structure needed to support the cost of at least \$5 per person in attendance of any event being held at the FHDC. Ms. Brookshire and Mayor Sherow will present conference pricing at the next meeting. It was moved by Mr. Warner, seconded by Ms. Barnes, to table the decision on the Facility Use Agreement until the October meeting, so the Board could give more input on the pricing of the facility. On vote, motion carried 5-0.

EDUCATION

Mr. Jared Bixby was introduced as the Curator of Education for the FHDC. Mr. Bixby is currently the Curator of Education for Sunset Zoo and will assume responsibilities for both facilities. He has over 11 years of education experience within a zoo and museum setting and is very familiar with environmental education, the development of programming, and establishing programs for a large range of visitors. Mr. Workman stated that he feels honored to be gaining Mr. Bixby's knowledge and experience. The blending of his experience at Sunset Zoo will enhance the FHDC's programming as well as ensure complimenting of each other's efforts within the Department of Parks and Recreation. Within the department, Mr. Bixby will have two full-time staff to focus on educational programs. One educator will focus on environmental education and the other on material culture. The staffing structure of education will be a combination of paid staff and docents. Discussion was held.

BUILDING DEDICATION

The Cornerstone Dedication Ceremony will take place on Friday, October 7, at 11:00 a.m. at the FHDC. The Board is invited to attend the ceremony as it will be a memorable event for the facility. Members of the state and local Masonic Lodge will be placing a cornerstone on the FHDC. Additionally, comments will be made at the ceremony by State Secretary of Wildlife, Parks, and Tourism, Robin Jennison. Before and after the event, VIP tours will be given to small groups and the Board is welcome to attend those tours.

OPENING EVENTS IN APRIL 2012

Discussion was held on the events centered on the grand opening of the FHDC. The targeted week of the opening is April 7-15. During this timeframe, a series of opening events need to occur with the culmination being a gala and a grand opening ceremony to the public. Mr. Workman suggested that the coordination of these events be by Board Members as the events will be focused on the community. A planning committee needs to be established. Ms. Brookshire and Mr. Haddock volunteered to help with the events. A discussion point will be slated for the October meeting about this topic.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Workman announced that Ms. Susan Adams, Director of Volunteer Services for Mercy Regional Medical Center, has accepted the position of Volunteer Coordinator/Administrative Assistant. He stated that he was pleased to have someone of her experience and knowledge of the community. Ms. Adams will begin her duties on October 10.

The October meeting will be hosted at the Lazy T Ranch, 2013 Zeandale Road, home and business of Board Member Mr. Ron Wilson. For directions to the ranch, please visit www.lazytranchadventures.com.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned. The next meeting will be on October 10, 2011.