

MINUTES
FLINT HILLS DISCOVERY CENTER ADVISORY BOARD
LAZY T RANCH
October 10, 2011
4:00 P.M.

Present were the following members of the Flint Hills Discovery Center Advisory Board: Mr. Ron Wilson, Ms. Sharon Brookshire, Ms. Suzan Barnes, Ms. Kristin Brighton, and Mr. Dave Kendall. Mr. Thomas Warner and Mr. Mike Haddock were absent. Also present at this meeting were Mr. Curt Loupe, Director of Parks and Recreation; Mr. Bob Workman, Flint Hills Discovery Center Director; Ms. Melissa Kirkwood, Development Officer; Ms. Buffy Woodward, Administrative Assistant. Visitors included: Ms. Christy Chase, Manhattan Chamber of Commerce

MINUTES

Ms. Barnes called for the approval of the September minutes. It was moved by Ms. Brookshire, seconded by Mr. Wilson, that the September minutes be approved. On vote, motion carried 5-0.

Mr. Workman stated that the Flint Hills Coalition applied for a regional/rural planning grant through HUD and the application has been approved. The grant is for \$2,000,000 to be utilized over the span of three years. The grant will be awarded in November and will commence in January 2012.

Mr. Workman also reminded the Board that the meeting on November 14 will be held at the Flint Hills Discovery Center (FHDC).

FACILITY USE AGREEMENT REVIEW

A table showing a 25% increase of current facility pricing was shared. In addition, a price comparison of eight additional rental facilities was presented. Mr. Loupe and Mr. Workman will take facility pricing recommendations to the City Commission on November 1. The fees will be set by resolution so they may be changed in the future.

Ms. Chase shared some information regarding possible facility use by conferences. A longer rental time for cocktail receptions would be ideal. She also gave facility rental information gathered from the Hutchinson Cosmosphere. Manhattan is at a different price point than cities such as Kansas City, Wichita, etc. She recommended that the Flint Hills Discovery Center come in at a price that conferences can afford, and then after a few years raise the price.

Ms. Brighton inquired about the possibility of having a separate package for just using the terrace. There could be two different rates, one for daytime usage and one for after hour usage. A tent for the terrace may also be rented for an additional fee.

After review, the Board noted that they preferred the current facility pricing as presented. The issue will be placed on hold until Mr. Workman sends the Board information on the terrace package and tent fees.

PLANNING OF OPENING ACTIVITIES

Mr. Workman stated that there will be a series of openings for the FHDC. The tentative date for the Gala is Saturday, April 14; the tentative date for the Grand Opening is Sunday, April 15. He would like the Board to think about what the public event will look like, how to make it a regional event, and how to make the Grand Opening a very special day. Ms. Barnes mentioned that the Flint Hills Coalition could be used for marketing to the regional communities.

STAFFING UPDATE

Mr. Workman gave a staffing update. Ms. Susan Adams, Volunteer Coordinator/Administrative Assistant begins her duties today. An offer has been extended to the Museum Store Developer, and second interviews are being conducted for the Exhibit Manager position. Today the position for Special Events/Membership Coordinator was opened for applications. A Public Relations/Marketing person will be hired soon.

FACILITY/CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

Mr. Workman stated that the sidewalk and pavers are in. The glass is almost done; exterior doors have been installed. Substantial completion will be October 31, 2011. Systems commissioning is underway. The overall project is currently trending \$250,000+ under the GMP. Dirt and sprinkler heads have been installed on the terrace. Office doors are hung and carpet has been laid. The scenic element has been installed but still needs to be painted. The form for the underground forest has been created with sprayed foam. The FHDC Cornerstone Dedication Ceremony was held on Friday, October 7. It went very well and was attended by at least 250 people. Blue Earth Plaza, the park next to the FHDC, is coming along extremely well.

NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Brighton mentioned that Ms. Donna Lawrence gave a preview of the immersive experience to the FHDC Steering Committee.

Mr. Workman mentioned that Boston Productions is here, and Mr. Hillferty will be here at the end of the week. He has also spoken with Ms. Karen Hibbard about the Flint Hills Visitor's Kiosk.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned. The next meeting will be on November 14, 2011.