

MINUTES  
FLINT HILLS DISCOVERY CENTER ADVISORY BOARD  
FHDC Conference Room  
November 12, 2012  
4:00 P.M.

Present were the following members of the Flint Hills Discovery Center Advisory Board: Mr. Tom Warner, Mr. Ron Wilson, Ms. Kristin Brighton, Mr. John Hund, Ms. Sharon Brookshire and Mr. Mike Haddock. Also present were Mr. Bob Workman, Flint Hills Discovery Center Director and Mr. Jared Bixby, Flint Hills Discovery Center Curator of Education. Ms. Suzan Barnes was absent due to travel schedule.

MINUTES

Mr. Warner called for the approval of the September 10 minutes. It was moved by Mr. Haddock to approve the September minutes and Mr. Hund seconded. On vote, motion carried 6-0.

PROPOSED OFF-SITE EDUCATION PROGRAM FEES

Mr. Workman introduced Mr. Bixby, Curator of Education. Mr. Bixby informed the board that one area of educational programming yet to be served is taking FHDC programs into schools throughout the region. This is a service most organizations like the FHDC provide, and almost always at a fee. Mr. Bixby shared a report that reviews the fees charged for outreach programs in school across Kansas and the mid-west. Fees for programs range from \$25 to \$250. Additional fees also apply for travel outside the local areas of each museum or zoo.

Mr. Bixby walked the board through his justification for recommended fees to be charged for FHDC programs offered in schools. He proposes a \$75 fee for one class to participate, and if it is a larger “assembly program”, the fee is \$150. He recommends no travel charge for programs within a 30-mile radius of Manhattan, and a charge of \$1 per mile for programs at locations further than 30 miles. It was noted that these fees will be presented to the City Commission for review and comment at a meeting after the first of the year. It is very likely that the Advisory Board will be able to provide further comment on this topic at its meeting in January.

The board provided further comments and insights. Ms. Brighton suggested that staff consider adding a “daily rate” that can be charged for schools where significant travel time might be involved. Other board members agreed this was a very good idea and should be given full consideration. All agreed that the fees proposed seemed modest and appropriate given the comparative information. Mr. Warner noted the value of staff time lost in travel as well. The group also discussed the travel costs. It was agreed those costs should be limited, since no direct expenses for these costs exist within the operating budget. It was suggested that the \$1 per mile charge for distances greater than 30 miles start at the 31<sup>st</sup> mile. For example, a school 35 miles out would pay \$5 for travel, rather than \$35 (with the first 30 miles being free). There was consensus on this idea by the board members. Ms. Brighton recommended staff consider establishing specific counties as free travel areas, rather than based on a distance. Mr. Warner recommended that MapQuest be the source for determining the distance between locations.

The board thanked Mr. Bixby for his good work with the education programs here at the FHDC.

### FUTURE POSSIBLE TEMPORARY EXHIBITS

Mr. Workman presented three exhibit proposals for consideration by the Advisory Board. He reminded the directors of the schedule for the temporary exhibit gallery currently in place. The next open venue is in fall 2013.

The first exhibit is Football, the Exhibit. This is a highly interactive children's based exhibit created and circulated by the Discovery Museum in Little Rock, Arkansas. The project had been discussed about one year ago, and at that time, the presentation fee for three months was \$30,000. While there was general support for the exhibit, at that price all agreed it was too expensive. Mr. Workman reported that the organizing museum had recently offered the exhibit to the FHDC for a reduced fee of \$18,000 for three months January – March, 2014. Given the earlier interest, he asks that it be reconsidered. This exhibit explores the science and math behind the game of football. Football is composed of 9 different zones each addressing a different aspect of the game, from the physics of tackling to the balance needed for cheerleading. Each zone features a mixture of artifacts, text, videos and hands-on activities. Football provides the perfect opportunity to introduce visitors to the science, mathematics, engineering and technology content behind the game through interactive exhibits such as the Grip Test, Balance Board and Reaction Timer. Football allows visitors to become part of the game.

There was general agreement that this is a strong opportunity for the FHDC. Not only is football a major part of KSU and Manhattan, but it is a fundamental sport and community activity throughout the Flint Hills region. The board is in agreement this exhibit will appeal to a broad audience, including people who might not otherwise visit the FHDC. There was also general agreement that this winter time slot should work well.

The second exhibit to be reviewed is a proposal from Jay Nelson of Strecker-Nelson Gallery in Manhattan. Mr. Nelson proposes an overview exhibit of some of the best artists inspired by Flint Hills subject matter today. Entitled Through Artists' Eyes, Nelson proposes a selection of the works of 40 artists, with up to two works per artist. The exhibit will focus on how individual artists have perceived the Flint Hills as a source of artistic expression. The group reviewed a slide show of the works of all 40 artists. There was general enthusiasm for the concept of the exhibit, as well as the choice of artists. Ms. Brighton suggested that it might be worthwhile asking Mr. Nelson to consider including more sculpture in his selection. There was also the suggestion that the FHDC consider developing its own fundraising event around either the opening or sometime during the presentation.

The third exhibit proposal is from The Gallery at Pioneer Bluffs, in Matfield Green, Kansas. Owners Ton Haak and Ans Zoutenbier operate this successful art gallery located as a part of Pioneer Bluffs, the historic homestead of the Rogler family – early pioneers in the Flint Hills. This gallery is more international in its focus, and routinely exhibits the works of artists working not only in the Flint Hills, but the Netherlands, Belgium and Germany. They propose to curate an exhibition “of contemporary art inspired by the tallgrass prairie, or constructed of natural and human debris found in the Flint Hills, or with the prairie and/or its inhabitants as its subject. The works of art will be both representational and abstract. Advisory board members agreed that this project will make a meaningful counterpoint to the Strecker-Nelson exhibit. They endorsed developing the idea further, but encouraged scheduling the two projects at least one year apart.

### UPDATE ON ACTIVITY SINCE THE LAST MEETING

Mr. Workman distributed a Monthly Operations Report that profiled the revenue and expenses since the opening of the FHDC. The report also represented the visitor statistics and volunteer hours. He indicated that the FHDC has not reached its earned revenue goal for the fiscal year (December 31) and will end the year well ahead of budget projections. As of October 31, 46,417 people have paid admission to the FHDC, and another 7,198 people have attended events on site. Mr. Warner complimented staff for the very strong volunteer involvement. He noted that the value of the volunteer hours to date exceeded \$100,000 of service.

#### NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Warner reminded the board that there will be two open seats to fill at the January meeting. Mr. Haddock and Ms. Brookshire both have terms that expire at the end of January.

#### ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:15 p.m. The next meeting will be January 14, 2013, at the Flint Hills Discovery Center.