

MINUTES
FLINT HILLS DISCOVERY CENTER ADVISORY BOARD
FHDC CONFERENCE ROOM
MARCH 11, 2013
4:00 P.M.

Present were the following members of the Flint Hills Discovery Center Advisory Board: Mr. Ron Wilson, Mr. John Hund, Mr. Mike Haddock, Ms. Larie Schoap, Ms. Suzan Barnes and Ms. Kristin Brighton. Also present were Ms. Susan Adams, FHDC Interim Administrator; Mr. Jared Bixby, FHDC Curator of Education and Ms. Pamela Kulokas, FHDC Outreach Coordinator.

MINUTES

Ms. Barnes called for the approval of the January 14 minutes. It was moved by Mr. Haddock to approve the January minutes and Mr. Wilson seconded. On vote, motion carried 6-0.

PROPOSED OFF-SITE EDUCATION PROGRAM FEES

Mr. Bixby updated the board on the topic of taking FHDC programs into schools throughout the region. Mr. Bixby presented additional research on traveling activity carts. He informed the board that the Education Department is looking at rolling out all outreach programs in the near future, to include traveling activity carts/trunks, lesson plans and other resources. If three or more programs are purchased by a school, the FHDC proposes to waive the travel fee.

The first activity cart will focus on bison, Mr. Bixby said. FHDC staff has collected a variety of artifacts already to support history and science lessons. The cart would be driven and delivered with the only charge being for delivery – no charge for pick up. Duration at a school would be approximately four weeks or less. The bison cart is expected to launch in fall 2013.

Mr. Bixby also said that a fire cart is in development. Ultimately if the demand is there, the FHDC will use the fire cart for traveling.

Advertisement of these programs will be supported by an outreach programming partnership with Sunset Zoo through their lab. This partnership would allow the FHDC to advertise programs nationally and internationally to schools that have technological capabilities for interactive distance learning.

Mr. Bixby also presented research on traditional 50-60 minute learning programs through the lab at Sunset Zoo. He suggested a fee of \$125 because there will be some cost for tech maintenance/upgrades. The zoo will also charge. Expected launch is Sept. 1, 2013.

Ms. Barnes and Mr. Bixby discussed how often activity carts could be moved within the school district. Mr. Wilson said idea of bison cart was an excellent idea and a good choice.

Ms. Brighton expressed concern over the proposed fees for transportation (only charging for drop off one way) and asked if there would be a limit for distance. She asked if it would be possible for a school to pick up a cart and cited the potential for financial losses as her reasoning. Mr. Bixby responded that the whole cart will be used in the design process and must be transported with the FHDC van and trailer. Sign and graphics will be attached to the cart. Mr. Bixby also stated that a fee isn't going to offset the cost of gasoline and maintenance.

Ms. Barnes asked how often the FHDC be sending out the carts. Mr. Bixby said this program is intended to stay within the Flint Hills and serve the region. The board provided further comments and insights on the intended audience of the FHDC.

Mr. Hund made a motion to accept the proposed fees as written for education outreach programs. Mr. Haddock seconded. Mr. Wilson voted in favor of the motion. Ms. Brighton and Ms. Schoap opposed. Ms. Barnes abstained from voting. On vote, the motion carried 3:2.

DISCUSS HOURS OF OPERATION

Ms. Adams presented data on evening attendance for consideration for 2014. The CVB has already published the FHDC's summer hours for this year. The majority of their publishing will be done by August 2013 for 2014. Ms. Adams stated that the summer evening hours will have to stand as-is; there are too many things out in print to change hours in 2013. A proposal will be made to the Manhattan City Commission in June if the Advisory Board wants to recommend changes at the next meeting.

Ms. Adams said that in her opinion, having one late night a week makes sense. Attendance has proven to be quite a bit lower than daytime hours. The board discussed utilizing the down time for training and/or special programs. Mr. Hund noted that there is a clear pattern over the months that it doesn't look worthwhile to stay open until 8 p.m. The board agreed to revisit the issue in June.

2013 ATTENDANCE/REVENUE REPORT

Ms. Adams presented the 2013 Attendance/ Revenue Report. Current membership numbers are more than double what was expected during the first year of operations. Rentals are lower this time of year, Ms. Adams noted, but there are quite a few weddings on the books for spring – requiring a lot of work for the whole building to be set-up.

DIRECTOR SEARCH UPDATE

Ms. Barnes gave an overview of the interview process and said she was hopeful that a director would be chosen quickly. She stated that they were great candidates.

NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Adams shared updates by department and plans for Discovery Day, April 13, 2013. She invited all Advisory Board members to participate/volunteer at the anniversary event.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:04 p.m. The next meeting will be 4 p.m. Monday June 17, 2013 at the Flint Hills Discovery Center.