

MINUTES
FLINT HILLS DISCOVERY CENTER ADVISORY BOARD
FHDC CONFERENCE ROOM
SEPTEMBER 9, 2013
3:00 PM

Present were the following members of the Flint Hills Discovery Center Advisory Board: Mr. John Hund, Mr. Thomas D. Warner, Mr. Mike Haddock, Mr. Ron Wilson, and Ms. Kristin Brighton. Also present were Fred W. Goss, FHDC Director; Jerri Hager, Development Officer; and Danielle DeVries, Office Assistant.

MINUTES

At 3:06 p.m., Mr. Warner called for the approval of the June 17 minutes as presented. It was moved by Mr. Hund to approve the June minutes and Mr. Haddock seconded. On vote, motion carried 5-0.

FHDC HOURS OF OPERATION FOR 2014

Mr. Goss introduced a possible new FHDC hours structure to better meet the needs of the community and visitors. Beginning the summer of 2014, the Memorial Day through Labor Day hours would be as follows: Monday- Wednesday, Friday and Saturday: open at 9:00 a.m. and close at 6:00 p.m.; Thursday: open at 9:00 a.m. and close at 8:00 p.m.; Sunday: open at noon and close at 6:00 p.m. Labor Day through Memorial day hours would remain as they are. To encourage higher attendance on Thursday evenings, the FHDC would host an activity every Thursday. For example, a local music group, food samples or lecture could be part of a "Think Thursday" campaign in the Downtown Manhattan area. A sponsor would be sought for this program series. Positive outcomes of this hour structure would allow for increased rental revenue during the summer months, as the entire facility or a portion thereof would be available after 6:00 p.m.

Mr. Warner stated that the change in hours would be a great opportunity to increase the number of rentals.

Ms. Brighton raised a question as to whether increased marketing for evenings during the summer months would have helped to increase attendance during the 5-8 p.m. hours in the past. She also stated that it may be a good approach to focus marketing efforts on increasing awareness and attendance on one night of the week.

Mr. Warner suggested a program idea- an overnight activity at the Discovery Center for members and their children.

Mr. Hund raised a question regarding the scope of "Think Thursday"- would it include one area of Manhattan or the entire city? Mr. Goss explained that the focus would be on Downtown, but all of Manhattan could be incorporated. It was suggested that Friday nights may bring more visitors than Thursdays. Ms. Brighton stated that moving the late night to Friday would decrease the opportunity for rental revenues.

Mr. Haddock moved to approve the 2014 FHDC hours proposal. Mr. Wilson seconded. On vote, motion carried 5-0.

FHDC GROUP ADMISSION FEES

Mr. Goss explained the current fee structure for groups of 20 or more visiting the Discovery Center as being \$6.00 per person. Although this has been in place for quite some time, he would like it to be written as policy so there is no confusion. Additionally, he proposed having a special rate of \$6.00 for prearranged visits by college students.

Ms. Brighton raised a question about what qualifies as a “prearranged visit”. Fred stated that prearranged visits would be defined as an email or call from the students’ professor or instructor indicating the students’ names, and day of visit. Students would then be required to show their student ID to confirm their identity to receive the discount.

Mr. Warner stated that many student groups would benefit from a partnership between K-State and the FHDC.

Ms. Brighton raised the question- does the college student rate need to be decreased? One dollar decrease may not make a difference for college students on its own. It would be important to have some sort of K-State campaign to get instructors involved in encouraging students to go- similar to the campus-wide reading program.

Mr. Warner stated that K-State courses could incorporate what the FHDC has on display into their curriculum to make the center more relevant to students.

Ms. Brighton suggested having a K-State week to introduce new students on campus to the Discovery Center and the special rates.

Mr. Warner suggested the collegiate admission rate be changed to \$6.00 rather than keeping it at \$7.00 and doing all the paperwork to keep track of which students received which price. This new rate could be advertised across the campus to encourage higher attendance.

Mr. Hund asked what the current military rates are. Mr. Goss stated that military admission is set at \$7.00. Mr. Hund asked if that rate applies only to active duty military members, or if reserve, retired, or family members are also included. Mr. Goss stated that the policy had not been discussed in detail and would be in the future to ensure consistency.

Mr. Wilson moved to make the group admission rate for 20 or more guests \$6.00 per person, and to change the collegiate rate to \$6.00. Mr. Hund seconded. On vote, motion carried 5-0.

SUMMER 2014 TRAVELING EXHIBITION

Mr. Goss stated that the *Save the Last Dance* would not be the best choice for the summer months, but rather the first quarter of 2015, as it would lead into the prairie chicken booming season. The exhibits team will be meeting in the next week to decide on an exhibition for summer 2014.

Ms. Brighton raised a question regarding the attendance at Conservation Quest, and whether that exhibition increased overall attendance. Mr. Goss stated that beginning when the new exhibit, *Through Artists’ Eyes*, opens on September 21 guests will be able to fill out a short survey stating what they have

enjoyed at the Discovery Center in the past and what they would like to see in the future. Statistics would be taken from this information to make future decisions.

NEW BUSINESS

The board discussed the possibility of starting a business association on the block around Blue Earth Plaza, as well as a branded name for the area around the FHDC.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:47 p.m. The next meeting will be Monday, November 18 at 3:00 p.m.