

Flint Hills Discovery Center Advisory Board Minutes
November 9, 2015
4:00 pm

Present were the following members of the Flint Hills Discovery Center Advisory Board: Ms. Christine Benne, Ms. Rose Bacon, Ms. Larie Schoap, Mr. Mike Haddock, and Mr. Ron Wilson. Also present were Mr. Fred Goss, FHDC Director, Mr. Stephen Bridenstine, FHDC Public Program Coordinator, and Mr. Bruce Snead, FHDC Foundation President.

Welcome

At 4:04 p.m., Mr. Wilson called the meeting to order.

Minutes

At 4:05 p.m., Mr. Wilson called for approval the September minutes as presented. Mr. Haddock moved and Ms. Bacon seconded for approval of the September minutes. On vote, motion carried 5-0.

FHDC Director's Report

Ms. Jerri Hager, Development Officer's last day in the position will be November 20, 2015. The slot will remain unfilled until sometime in 2016. Ms. Brianna Schmitz, the new Guest Services Manager and Volunteer Coordinator starts on, November 10, 2015. Brianna holds a B.A in Art History and English from the University of California-Davis and a M.A. in Museum Studies from John F. Kennedy University in Pleasant Hill, CA. She has served most recently as the executive assistant at the Western Railway Museum in Suisun City, CA where she hired, trained, scheduled and supervised volunteer and paid staff for the organization. Brianna's previous experience includes serving as the Lead Visitor Services Representative at the Crocker Art Museum in Sacramento, CA.

Fred reported that the FHDC Foundation provided financial support for the following events: Free admission for Veterans and immediate family to the FHDC on May 9th and the 2015 Veteran's Day. Two new events Breakfast with Santa and *Under the Sea! Family New Year's Eve Party*.

The FHDC gift store on November 8, 2015 participated with the Downtown Manhattan Inc.'s holiday open house and featured jewelry on sale as a guest incentive.

FHDC will host the traveling exhibition ***A View from Space*** exhibit in early 2016 and has an opportunity to access a **NASA** exhibit trailer which would tie the exhibit. FHDC staff is researching costs for a potential **NASA** trailer viewing for three days in April. Fred will provide an update at the January 2016 advisory board meeting.

Fred will reach out to Manhattan hoteliers to ensure they are aware of the admissions discount to FHDC when a hotel guest shows their key or email confirmation at the FHDC guest services desk. Fred is meeting with Mr. Jeff Wolfe, Director of Conferences at K-State, on November 17, 2015. The purpose is to discuss strategies to utilize the FHDC as a destination for conference attendees and their families.

FHDC Staff Report

Maize: Mysteries of an Ancient Grain exhibition proposed for early 2017. FHDC public program coordinator presented to the advisory board the enhancements to the exhibit. We would place the free exhibition within the historical context of the rise of the western Corn Belt and its impact on the Flint Hills as the last great swath of tallgrass prairie on North America. Former tallgrass regions of the United States such as Iowa, Illinois, Missouri, Minnesota and Indiana are now leading areas of corn and soy bean production. Ms. Traci Kantarski, Wheat Genetics specialist at Kansas State University, reviewed the exhibition labels and information and concluded that reported the information was accurate from a scientific stand point.

Stephen recommended adding an in-house/ supplemental exhibit with selective graphics and text. The supplemental theme would be the modern/contemporary agricultural system which seeks to utilize technology and current agricultural practices to provide for a growing world population. We can also show the benefits of using native grasses in agriculture to reduce soil erosion increase biodiversity, affect positive changes in wildlife habitat and aid in the support of pollinators.

Fred related that the Maize exhibition would be on our mezzanine level next to the Tallgrass gallery and the target audience is the scientific, agricultural and academic community. He also stated FHDC will not take a stand on the GMO debate.

Mr. Wilson has concerns about the word choice we use in the exhibit such as industrial agriculture as these farmers are feeding 10 billion people. He suggested to exhibit be as objective as possible and discuss how the Flint Hills contributes to feeding people in the 21st century. Ms. Bacon mentioned that the Flint Hills couldn't be farmed because of the topography though the region is also known for corn and soy bean production in select areas.

At 4:45 p.m., Ms. Benne moved to approve Mr. Bridenstine's supplemental exhibit content with some changes to the word choice and use of the term "industrial agriculture" and Ms. Bacon seconded. On vote, the motion carries 5-0.

Public Comment

Mr. Bruce Snead, FHDC Foundation President, thanked the Fred and the FHDC Advisory Board for having him to the meeting. He also thanked Ms. Bacon for working as a liaison to the FHDC advisory board. The Foundation currently has two projects. The National Park Service Tallgrass National Preserve documentary being filmed and produced by Mr. David Kendall. The film will tell the history of the establishment of the Tallgrass Preserve outside of Strong City, Kansas in Chase County and is currently set for a one hour run time and will debut at the FHDC in the fall of 2016.

The Flint Hills MAP Project is the second endeavor with the Foundation as the fiscal agent for the fundraisers. The goal of the project is to put a 48" by 48" hard copy map of the Flint Hills ecoregion within every elementary, middle and high school in the Flint Hills' twenty-two counties. FHDC staff will manage a blog on the new web site which will allow teachers in the Flint Hills and any person with an interest in the history, geology and culture of the Flint Hills to access on line resources to better appreciate the landscape. Educators will be able to access lesson plans for hard sciences and humanities classes to teach placed based classes and experiences to K-12 students.

Mr. Snead announced the **2016 Friend of the Flint Hills** award and banquet will be on April 16th at the Flint Hills Discovery Center. The individual has been contacted and has accepted the award and will be kept secret until the event. Mr. Snead is working with Feed and Mr. Roy Garrett, FHDC Exhibit and Facilities Manager, to acknowledge the **Friend of the Flint Hills** recipients on the first floor of the FHDC. Mr. Snead commented he would welcome names of anyone interested in becoming a board member of the FHDC Foundation as they would like to grow their team.

Mr. Mike Haddock, FHDC Advisory Board Member term ends in December 2015. Mr. Wilson thanked Mr. Haddock for serving on the FHDC Advisory Board.

Mr. Goss said we are looking for young professionals and parents with children ages (9-14) to serve on the Flint Hills Discovery Center Advisory Board.

2016 Board Meeting Dates at FHDC

- January 11, 2016
- March 14, 2016
- May 9, 2016
- July 11, 2016
- September 12, 2016
- November 14, 2016

Adjournment

At 5:07 p.m., Mr. Ron Wilson called to adjourn the meeting.