

FHDC Advisory Board Meeting

January 11, 2021

4:00 pm

Present were the following members of the FHDC Advisory Board: Mr. John Pecoraro, Ms. Vicki Patton, Ms. Susan Rensing, Ms. Mary Beth Reese, and Mr. John Hund. Also present were, FHDC Director, Ms. Susan Adams, FHDC Foundation Director, Ms. Lesley White, Mr. J.T. Laverty, FHDC Advisory Board member and Mr. Bruce Snead, FHDC Foundation President joined later in the meeting.

Welcome

At 4:01 p.m., Ms. Patton called the meeting to order.

Minutes

Ms. Reese moved to approve the October 2019 minutes and Mr. Pecoraro seconded. On vote, the motion carried 4-0-1 with Ms. Rensing abstaining.

Mr. Hund moved to approve the January 2020 minutes and Ms. Reese seconded. On vote, the motion carried 4-0-1 with Ms. Rensing abstaining.

Officer Selection 2021

Mr. John Hund nominated Ms. Vicki Patton for FHDC Advisory Board Chair and Ms. Reese seconded. On vote, the motion carried 4-0-1 with Ms. Patton abstaining.

Mr. Hund nominated Mr. Pecoraro for FHDC Advisory Board Vice Chair and Ms. Rensing seconded. On vote, the motion carried 5-0.

Old Business

No old business was presented.

Director's Report

Needless to say, 2020 was an interesting year! As you will see by the information listed below the centers continued to evolve through development of virtual programs to smaller rentals to less staff support to focusing on keeping the doors open for all who are interested in visiting. If nothing less, we have learned a lot in 2020 and have had to adapt to meet the changes. Anticipation for the New Year and what positive changes will come from what we have learned as well as the future of the vaccine being administered, gives us hope that we will recover and continue moving forward. Thank you to the board as well as the community, region and state for their continued support of the Flint Hills Discovery Center. We couldn't be a success without it! So thank you!

Attendance

	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	August	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
2019	3202	3420	5161	2584	6353	4314	5159	4264	4232	2914	3376	2483	47462
2020	3393	3404	1938	0	0	388	1772	1682	1558	1695	1394	1281	18505

- FHDC was closed from March 14, 2020 – June 19, 2020
- Admission is **39%** of 2019 Admission

Staff Update

Currently, the FHDC has (5) staff positions open are currently working with the city to post positions in 2021. (2) Full time positions; Education Supervisor, and Marketing Coordinator. (3) Part Time Positions; Volunteer Coordinator, Guest Services/Gift Store Attendant, and Weekend Custodian.

Outreach/Special Events

- Hosted Veteran's Appreciation Day with free access to all military and their families. Funded by the FHDC Foundation.
- Offered guests the chance to exchange a quarter for the Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve quarter that was released in November 2020. Well received and all of the coins purchased have been exchanged.

Mr. Laverty joined in the meeting.

Exhibits

Ms. Adams explained we hosted Animation Land in fall 2020 instead of the scheduled Roots of Wisdom due to the safety of the high touch components in the Roots of Wisdom exhibit.

January 16 - May 2, 2021

Run! Jump! Fly! Adventures in Action

May 15 - September 12, 2021

Hands on Harley-Davidson

September 25 - January 2, 2022

Dinosaur Discoveries

January 15 - May 8, 2022

Measurement Rules

May 21 - September 11, 2022

Big League Fun

This exhibit was scheduled for the summer of 2020 but due to closing of the building it has been moved to summer 2022.

Education Department

- NEW programs to adapt to COVID-19 protocols: (5) Lunch Box Learning virtual programs done Facebook Live during shutdown, Wild Wednesdays a hands-on programs in October, summer Junior Internship Camp, Make-It Workshop, on-demand Virtual Program series, Virtual Santa Saturday, and Take-Home Holiday Kits.
- Secured \$15,000 in grant funding from the Beach Family Foundation to purchase new distance learning technology and fund a series of K-12 virtual programs to premiere in 2021.
- Secured \$10,000 in grant funding from Humanities Kansas to rehire three seasonal educators to supervise (5) weeks of summer camp
- Staffing challenges throughout 2020 – down one full-time Education Supervisor for the entire year, down part-time Volunteer Coordinator since August, all seasonal educators let go in March 2020 only temporarily rehired in summer with grant funds.
- Expanded Walk and Talk series in fall to accommodate increased interest in outdoor distanced programming (e.g. three sold out Family Fossil Hike sessions)
- Purchased an interactive AR sand table with private donations premiered spring break week
- Launched new Hops N' Profs lecture series featuring K-State faculty and beer partnership
- Curator of Education Stephen Bridenstine professional development goals: completed the Flint Hills Regional Leadership Program, completed Graduate Certificate in Public Administration at K-State, presented at regional National Association for Interpretation conference

Rentals

Rentals continued once the building re-opened in June with quite a few restrictions to the size of the rental but mainly the number of people allowed at events. For 2020, there were (45) rentals with (1,426) people in attendance. In comparison to 2019 with (162) rentals with (9,865) people in attendance. An average of 28% for 2020 compared to 2019 with number of rentals. The number of attendees was 15%. Rentals are continuing in 2021 with the same restrictions guided by the City of Manhattan re-opening plans & Riley County Health Department.

Membership

2019 – (3603) Memberships Sold

2020 – (2248) Memberships Sold

- In 2020, we sold **62%** of memberships compared to 2019
- With our re-open, the FHDC presented the option for our members to donate the time back to the FHDC or extend their memberships. We had significant membership support and we recognized these members on social media and with signage at the FHDC.
- The FHDC premiered a *Winter Membership Option* to purchase a Family Membership for \$20. The membership was valid from Dec 1, 2020 – February 28, 2021. The memberships were for sale from November 13, 2020 – November 30, 2020. We sold *Winter Memberships* to (303) people in two weeks period. Membership sales in November 2020 exceeded membership sales of November 2019.
- The FHDC had a Gift Membership drive the month of December. We sold memberships to (228) people.

Volunteer Program

Upon reopening in late June, numerous volunteers were interested in returning to their assignments. To return they were required to participate in the FHDC Covid-19 safety training that the staff received. Their support during these challenging times has been amazing. They have all been willing to step up to greet guests as well as help the staff continue daily cleaning guidelines to keep the building safe. Volunteer hours have been half what they normally would be, along with no special events the support numbers have decreased the total volunteer hours for the year.

Volunteer Hours:

2019 - (3423) hours

2020 - (1511) hours

Ms. Patton along with the entire board applauded the FHDC team and their efforts during this challenging year.

FHDC Foundation Report:

2020 has been full of changes and uncertainties, but through these unusual times, the Foundation made great strides.

In March, Marie Martin, whom was an essential and pivotal role in the Foundation retired. With this came change, as it took 7 months to find a replacement. The commitment from the President and the Board, during this time was astonishing. Everyone took on roles and responsibilities that go above their calling. With that, the Foundation was able to continue its success. I, Lesley White, then joined the Foundation in mid- October.

The community continued forward with the annual Grow Green event, held on April 22nd, the Foundation was able to raise in total \$9,145.00

In April, the Foundation was able to celebrate 8 years of PROGRESS, even though their annual event, Friends of the Flint Hills was postponed due to COVID 19. It was later rescheduled as a virtual event on October 24. FOTFH, showcased the Maps Project, recognizing the tremendous efforts from Emily Connell and Annie Wilson. They placed maps of the Flint Hills in schools throughout the region. Although a virtual event, which Dave Kendall from Prairie Hallow Productions produced, did not fulfil the same type of commitment, it was a beautiful celebration and tribute to these incredible women. During the event there was a financial campaign to support the purchase of a 15 passenger van for the center.

The best news for the Foundation as well at the Flint Hills Discovery Center, was that Kidscape was presented via PowerPoint with an RFP. City Commissioners approved this on the consent agenda. This will begin the journey to start bids for project development. The push for funding the campaign will pick back up with great emphasis in 2021.

Tax Credits were awarded to the Flint Hills Discovery Center in July equaling \$192,500. The minimum contribution is \$250. If you are interested or would like more information regarding the Tax Credits, please reach out to the Foundation.

Although 2020, has had several setbacks and just a strange overall in general, the Foundation has pushed ahead and made great strides during these unusual times.

Mr. Snead, President of FHDC Foundation joined the meeting.

New Business

Ms. Adams presented the Bison sculpture which is being proposed to be placed in front of the building. This would complement the current artwork that the City of Manhattan Park & Recreation Department has recently placed along the 3rd Street corridor. The proposed sculpture is a Bison that is 6 feet tall, 8 feet long and weighs (850) pounds. The FHDC Foundation has submitted 2 grant proposals to support the cost of the sculpture on behalf of the FHDC. Mr. Hund made a motion to approve the sculpture and Mr. Pecoraro seconded. On vote, the motion carried 6-0.

Ms. Adams presented the Request For Proposal (RFP) that was presented on December 15, 2020 to the City Commission for approval. This RFP would allow the FHDC to hire a Design/Build exhibit company to re-design and construct the 2nd floor Kidscape. Due to lack of funds while building the center, the 2nd floor mezzanine was not completed. The FHDC has been filling the additional space with traveling exhibits, which drive up costs for the center. The FHDC Foundation has this as part of their Vista Campaign and will be funding the cost of the entire project. The City Commission approved the RFP.

Ms. Patton asked if Ms. Adams could send the dates for the next FHDC Advisory Board meeting.

Before completion of the meeting each board member went around and introduced themselves since we had some new members on the board.

Adjournment

At 5:10 p.m. Ms. Patton adjourned the meeting.