

**FHDC Advisory Board Meeting**  
**April 12, 2021**  
**4:00 pm**  
**City Commission Room – City Hall**  
 1101 Poyntz Ave.  
 Manhattan, KS 66502

Present were the following members of the FHDC Advisory Board: Mr. John Pecoraro, Ms. Vicki Patton, Ms. Susan Rensing, Mr. J.T. Lavery, and Ms. Mary Beth Reese. Also present were, FHDC Director, Ms. Susan Adams and FHDC Foundation Director, Ms. Lesley White.

**Welcome**

At 4:02 p.m., Ms. Patton called the meeting to order.

**Minutes**

Mr. Pecoraro moved to approve the January 2021 minutes and Mr. Lavery seconded. Ms. Patton suggested we correct the (s) in Hands on Harley in two locations. On vote, the motion carried 5-0.

**Old Business**

Ms. Adams announced that Request for Proposals (RFP) for Kidscape project was posted today. It will be posted in the Manhattan Mercury tomorrow and she stated that there are numerous Design/Build companies who have reached out with interest in bidding. Ms. Adams would like to meet with Mr. Lavery and Ms. Rensing to hear their ideas about the project.

Ms. Adams shared that the Greater Manhattan Community Foundation (GMCF) had concerns regarding the City of Manhattan need to develop a City Art Policy before releasing funds for our request to support the purchase of the Bison sculpture. The Arts & Humanity Advisory Board (AHAB) is developing a policy which will require City Commission approval. Once approved the FHDC & Foundation will go back to GMCF for additional funds to acquire the Bison sculpture.

**Director’s Report**

Four months into 2021 our team has adjusted to the changes brought about by the pandemic. The city has released the hiring freeze, so it was a busy February and March getting open positions posted for hiring. That has assisted our team in feeling confident that we might return to some normalcy. We are being allowed and asked to open programs back up, but we know that staff must be in place for that to happen. As you will see by the information listed below, the center continues 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. 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 the support! So, thank you!

**Attendance**

	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	August	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
<b>2019</b>	3202	3420	5161	2584	6353	4314	5159	4264	4232	2914	3376	2483	<b>47462</b>
<b>2020</b>	3393	3404	1938	0	0	388	1772	1682	1558	1695	1394	1281	<b>18505</b>
<b>2021</b>	1659	2219	3337										

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

## Staff Update

Currently the FHDC has the following staff positions open: Full-time position, Asst. Director, Part-time positions, Volunteer Coordinator, Guest Service/Front Desk, Education, and Rental seasonal staff (6.)

Have interviewed and are in the hiring phase for the Marketing Coordinator's position who will start May 3. The Education Supervisor position has closed, and interviews are on-going. Have hired (4) seasonal educators to assist with summer camp.

## Outreach/Special Events

Began a new program called "Night at the Museum." Guests can reserve the center for (2) hours in the evening for a private get together for (20) guests for \$200. It is being managed by our administrative team to keep staff expenses down.

## Exhibits

- January 16 - May 2, 2021 - *Run! Jump! Fly! Adventures in Action*
- May 15 - September 12, 2021 - *Hands on Harley-Davidson*  
<https://www.bbcmkids.org/hands-on-harley-davidson/>
- September 25 - January 2, 2022 - *Dinosaur Discoveries*  
<https://www.amnh.org/global-business-development/traveling-exhibitions/dinosaur-discoveries-ancient-fossils-new-ideas>
- January 15 - May 8, 2022 - *Measurement Rules*  
<https://pittsburghkids.org/pages/measurement>
- May 21 - September 11, 2022 - *Big League Fun*  
<https://www.bbcmkids.org/big-league-fun/>
- [September 2022-January 2023-exhibit space open](#)

## Education Department

- Offered Virtual Kansas Day Opportunities on January 28<sup>th</sup> & 29<sup>th</sup>
- Opened on Monday, March 15<sup>th</sup> for the week of Spring Break to begin hosting our *Meet the Makers* event. We had (6) artists participate and interact with the many guests that came in from March 15<sup>th</sup> - 19<sup>th</sup>.
- Began a new Virtual Technology program called, *Ask an Expert*. It is funded through the Beach Family Foundation to support virtual programming.
  - February brought an interview with Joe Carpenter and Barb Downey *Cattle Ranching 101*.
  - March brought an interview with Derrick Doty *Traditional Music in the Flint Hills*.
- Partnering with the Manhattan Library, the FHDC hosted its own Story Walk Downtown. This is a partnership with downtown businesses to engage families in traveling through the downtown area to locate (14) posters/pages from the book, "A to Z with Energy". After connecting with all the pages, families return to the center to receive the book free. This was funded by K-link grant.
- Scheduled (31) free Virtual Programs to schools in the Flint Hills. This was funded by the Beach Family Foundation
- Flint Hills Murals workshop offered two school age youth experiences
- (8) weeks of summer camp opened for registration and almost sold out
- Family Fossil Hike scheduled for Saturday, April 10<sup>th</sup>- 60 participants

## Rentals

Rentals are continuing in 2021 with the same restrictions guided by the City of Manhattan re-opening plans & Riley County Health Department. We are waiting to from guidance from City of Manhattan and how we proceed as the mask mandate ends on May 16<sup>th</sup>.

### **Volunteer Program:**

Our volunteer support is still present in the building and increasing every day. Jonathan Mertz has been serving in that position and has been getting new volunteers in as well as our past volunteers are returning more every week.

Volunteer Hours:

January - 61

February - 93

March - 179

### **Membership:**

#### **Membership Sales Comparison**

	2019	2020	2021
January	358	350	220
February	300	298	212
March	418	213	358
April	207	12	
May	294	1	
June	309	86	
July	305	168	
August	363	171	
September	256	148	
October	247	206	
November	189	366	
December	357	229	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3603</b>	<b>2248</b>	

**Membership is currently at 59% of membership April 1, 2020**

#### **FHDC Foundation Report**

Ms. White congratulated Ms. Adams and Mr. Roy Garrett for all the hours they had put forth to complete the RFP for the Kidscape project (redesign of the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor children's area) and getting in posted.

The Friend of the Flint Hills recognition was held as a small, in-person recognition in Council Grove on March 26. The event was videotaped by Dave Kendall and then shared with additional video content for a virtual program delivered on April 10 through the FHDC Foundation webpage. The (45) minute presentation can be seen on the Foundation Facebook page.

On April 22, the Foundation will participate in the *Grow Green Match Day* hosted by the Greater Manhattan Community Foundation. and is held virtual this year. If you are interested in participating, log on to the Greater Manhattan Community website and search for FHDC Education Endowment. All donations will be matched at 50% and the money will go to the FHDC Education Endowment.

In April 2020, 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 tax credits are still available. Please email the foundation if you are interested in participating.

The foundation is planning an in-person celebration for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Bison, Beef, and Bourbon Event. It will be held on October 23, 2021.

Ms. Christine Benne and Mr. Ryan Sharp are two new board members that have joined the FHDC Foundation. Ms. Adams informed the board that Ms. Benne was a FHDC Advisory Board member and Mr. Sharp is in the KSU Parks Dept.

### **New Business**

FHDC Foundation raised enough funds through their 2020 Friend of the Flint Hills event to support the purchase of a (15) passenger van for the FHDC. Ms. Adams stated access to the city vans is prioritized and we are allowed use when available. The benefits of the center owning their own 15 passenger van opens many programming opportunities. It will have a vehicle wrap so it will be well seen when we travel around the area. She expressed her appreciation to the donors and the foundation.

Discussion was held regarding the Kidscape RFP and the potential for the number of companies that might bid on the project. Ms. Adams said that over 12 companies have reached out to her with interest in the project. Once the proposals are received on Friday, May 14<sup>th</sup> then the information will be directed to the Selection Committee which is composed of 7 members. City Commissioner, Linda Morse, Bruce Snead, FHDC Foundation President, Lesley White, FHDC Foundation Director, Parks & Recreation employee and FHDC team members. The committee will short list if needed from the proposals to a smaller number for interviews. From there, the committee will decide on the preferred company and that information will be sent to the City Commission for approval on June 15. Proposed schedule includes construction to begin in November 2021 with an opening scheduled for April 14, 2022. Ms. Rensing and Mr. JT Laverty showed interest in the design expectations for Kidscape so Ms. Adams and Mr. Stephen Bridenstine, Curator of Education will be meeting with the 2 Advisory Board members to answer any questions and receive feedback. Ms. Adams will send the Kidscape RFP to the board members for review.

Ms. Patton announced the next two meetings will be July 12, and October 11, 2021.

### **Adjournment**

At 4:36 p.m. Ms. Patton adjourned the meeting.