

**FHDC Advisory Board Meeting**  
**April 11, 2022**  
**4:00 pm**  
**Blue Earth Room – Flint Hills Discovery Center**  
315 S. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street  
Manhattan, KS 66502

Present were the following members of the FHDC Advisory Board: Ms. Vicki Patton, Mr. J.T. Lavery, Ms. Mary Beth Reese, and Mr. Brad Logan. Ms. Rose Bacon, and Ms. Susan Rensing participated virtually. Also present were, FHDC Director, Ms. Susan Adams, Assistant Director, Mr. Stephen Bridenstine, Guest Services/Membership Manager, Ms. Mary Hildreth, and FHDC Foundation Director, Ms. Lesley White.

### **Welcome**

At 4:07 p.m., Ms. Patton called the meeting to order. Mr. Logan, new FHDC Advisory board member was welcomed.

### **Minutes**

January 2022 minutes were approved as written.

### **2022 Advisory Board Officer Selection**

- **Chair:** Ms. Bacon nominated Ms. Patton as chair. There were no other nominations. The board approved Ms. Patton as chair 6/0.
- **Vice-chair:** Ms. Bacon nominated Mr. Hund as vice-chair. There were no other nominations. The board approved Mr. Hund a vice-chair 6/0.

### **Old Business**

- **2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Kidscape:** The FHDC Advisory board toured the 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor KIDSCAPE construction project. They were informed the ribbon cutting for the completion of the project will be at 9:00 a.m., Friday, May 27, 2022. The Donor reception will be on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor and FHDC Advisory Board and FHDC Foundation board will be invited. Mr. Bridenstine shared the ribbon cutting will be through the Chamber of Commerce and we are expecting a large crowd. Ms. Adams thanked all that contributed.
- **Art & Light Museum Update:** Ms. Adams shared a schematic of the proposed museum for all board members to see. She shared it would be a wonderful resource for the FHDC and we are anticipating one to two years before they open. Ms. Adams also shared the new proposed location is across from the mall.

### **FHDC Report**

#### ***Director Comments:***

Well, we have made it through the first quarter of 2022 and things are going well. The team has been staying busy with jumping back into planning for upcoming events, exhibits, membership promotions, locating gift store merchandise and of course hiring staff to support all the needs. The Kidscape Design Team has finalized the design for the children's area and have now jumped into construction. The 2<sup>nd</sup> floor area closed to the public on Monday, February 28<sup>th</sup> and we have made the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor Flint Hills room into a play area for all ages. It may be a small space, but it has been well received by guests. Busy preparing for the FHDC's 10<sup>th</sup> year anniversary on Thursday, April 14, having a Flint Hills Festival on Saturday, May 7<sup>th</sup>, and opening the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor children's area-KIDSCAPE on Friday, May 27. The center has a lot of things going on this spring and summer and we are thrilled to be gearing back up to the many things we were doing before 2020 occurred.

#### ***Staff Update:***

Deanna Likes is our new Marketing Coordinator and seems to be getting up to speed quickly. We just completed interviews for the Curator of Education position and are finalizing hiring. The part-time Volunteer Coordinator position is currently open and will be posted after the Curator of Education has time to review.

#### ***Outreach/Special Events:***

Preparing to celebrate the 10-year anniversary of the FHDC. On April 14, an 11:00am presentation is scheduled with cake, music, giveaways, and a balloon drop. Throwback admission prices will be offered from April 14 - 17; \$7/adult and \$3/youth = \$10. A 10% discount will be given on new and renewed memberships purchased between April 14 - 17. 10% discount at Gift Store. Busy finalizing plans for this year's Flint Hills Festival on Saturday, May 7<sup>th</sup>. Along with preparing for programming events to compliment the summer exhibit, *Big League Fun*.

### **Exhibits:**

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 - **How People Make Things** <https://thediscoverynetwork.org/exhibit/how-people-make-things/>

January 21, 2023 - May 7, 2023 - **Dinosaurs: Fossils Exposed** <https://thediscoverynetwork.org/exhibit/dinosaurs-fossils-exposed/>

May 20, 2023 - September 4, 2023 - **Mission Aerospace** [https://www.minotaurmazes.com/wp-content/uploads/pdfs/Mission-Aerospace/brochure\\_24.pdf](https://www.minotaurmazes.com/wp-content/uploads/pdfs/Mission-Aerospace/brochure_24.pdf)

### **Development/Marketing:**

- Secured \$2,000 sponsorship from Bayer Construction for exhibit, *How People Make Things*.
- Secured \$2,500 sponsorship from Via Christi Hospital for exhibit, *Big League Fun*.
- Secured sponsorship/partnership with Flight Crew Coffee for Membership – “Week of Gratitude”. They offered a 10% discount if FHDC membership card shown.
- Continuing with themed daily social media posts like “Flint Hills Business Spotlight” to highlight unique businesses in the region, “What we do Wednesday” to show FHDC behind-the-scenes work, and “Throwback Thursday” to highlight important moments in our 10-year history
- Updated and printed new FHDC Maps and Guides in include the renovated Prairie Playscape exhibit
- Secured a marketing partnership with KMAN radio to highlight *Big League Fun* exhibit during K-State and Royals baseball broadcasts
- New partnership with Ft. Riley to distribute FHDC rack cards to incoming soldiers and families

### **Education Department:**

- Spring Break – held six days of Adventure Camp and completed our 8<sup>th</sup> year of the *Meet the Makers* live artist series
- Leveraged \$1,500 in remaining Virtual Program grant funds to offer a Spring Field Trip Program Scholarship to around 500 students for a free education program this spring.
- Continuing the Outdoor Classroom program series with grant-funded school programs and the Nature Explorers parent-toddler program this spring.
- Offering an April Story Walk Downtown in partnership with Downtown Manhattan Inc. and Manhattan Public Library. Featuring the picture book *Flower Garden* by Eve Bunting
- Facilitated the creation of the temporary children's play area on the third floor during renovations
- Greater Prairie Chicken program update – our long-time booming ground, or lek, was not active this year so unable to run programs.

### **Rentals:**

Rentals are still increasing but still at a much slower pace than before 2020. There were 17 events between the months of January through March. We have support staff in place to assist with events which eases our full-time employee from needing to be present at every rental.

### **Volunteer Program:**

Our volunteer support is still present in the building and increasing daily. Jonathan Mertz continues to serve as interim. As the Curator of Education position is filled, that person will be asked to post the position and fill before this fall. Our volunteers will be recognized at this year's Friend of the Flint Hills recognition on April 9. Thanking them for their many hours of service and a special recognition for the volunteers that have been with the center for 10 years. 15 volunteers that will be recognized for their commitment. Jan-March volunteer hours total: over 250

**Guest Services/Membership:**

The Guest Services department will be losing two staff members this spring. Both are KSU students, and they will be relocating for internships to fulfill college graduation requirements.

**Admission 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>47,462</b>
<b>2020</b>	3393	3404	1938	0	0	388	1772	1682	1558	1695	1394	1281	<b>18,505</b>
<b>2021</b>	1659	2219	3337	2106	3657	4287	5691	3370	2432	3379	3544	3663	<b>39,344</b>
<b>2022</b>	1878	2630	3536										<b>8,044</b>

**2022 Year to Date (January and February Revenue: (2020 is excluded))**

	Admissions	Gift Shop	Education	Rentals	Memberships
2019	\$ 19,887	\$ 6,557	\$ 10,505	\$ 20,975	\$ 12,435
2021	\$ 11,935	\$ 4,849	\$ 730	\$ 937	\$ 7,147
2022	\$ 13,810	\$ 8,000	\$ 9,644	\$ 5,813	\$ 7,401

**Membership:**

- Membership Week of Gratitude February 8 – 14: offered crafts, bring a buddy for free of equal or lesser value, coffee discounts at Flight Crew Coffee, as well as 20% off in the gift store for the whole month of February.
- Spring Members Drive: April 14 – May 31: FHDC 10-Year Anniversary will kick off our Spring Membership Drive leading up to Big League Fun, our summer exhibit, and the completion of our 2<sup>nd</sup> floor KIDSCAPE. New or renew memberships will receive 10% off, April 14 – 17<sup>th</sup> to celebrate the centers 10-year anniversary. Memberships can be pre-purchased and will not start until current membership expires. All members that renew during the drive will be entered into a gift basket drawing valued at \$150.
- Big League Fun Members Opening will be Friday, May 20 from 5:30 pm – 7:00 pm

**Membership Sales Comparison:**

	2019	2020	2021	2022
January	358	350	220	177
February	300	298	212	243
March	418	213	358	299
April	207	12	189	
May	294	1	257	
June	309	86	337	
July	305	168	253	
August	363	171	138	
September	256	148	170	
October	247	206	255	
November	189	366	254	
December	357	229	330	
<b>Total</b>	<b>3603</b>	<b>2248</b>	<b>2973</b>	<b>730</b>

### **FHDC Foundation**

April 9<sup>th</sup>, the Flint Hills Discovery Center Foundation will be honoring Bruce Snead, as the recipient of the 2022 Friend of the Flint Hills. Each year the Foundation nominates an individual, couple, non-government organization or public institution that has devoted significant time, effort, and resources in the conservation of the Flint Hills as our Friend of the Flint Hills. The celebration will focus on his contributions as Foundation President for the past 10 years along with the 10-year anniversary of the Flint Hills Discovery Center. The night will be filled with great food, music, and a walk down memory lane with all the FHDC has accomplished! Please mark your calendars and we hope you attend. Tickets can be purchased online at <http://auctria.events/2022FOTFH>.

We are honored and elated to say that the Foundation received an additional \$57,500 in Kansas Tax Credits. In July of 2020, the Foundation was awarded just over \$192,000, for the KIDSCAPE project. In January of 2021, the Foundation was able to use in full the allotted amount. Due to the hard work of the Foundation board and our wonderful donors, the Foundation was asked if they could benefit/use more. The Foundation has until April 15, 2022, to fulfill this commitment. These credits will work like the previous credits, 50/50, therefore, donors will receive a check from the State of Kansas for 50 percent of their donation.

The Foundation is so grateful to have such a tremendous team working on the design of KIDSCAPE. The Foundation has now made three payments to the city to date. Construction has begun with a tentative opening date of May 27, the Friday of Memorial Day weekend. The Foundation is funding the project through private donations and grants. The initial goal was \$1.3 million but an additional \$200,000 would allow us to incorporate an interactive technology board, along with an endowment to support that technology. We are so close to reaching our goal!

Lastly, the Flint Hills Discovery Center Foundation will be participating in the Greater Manhattan Community Foundation's Grow Green Day on Friday, April 22. Donations will be collected the day of the event online through the Greater Manhattan Community Foundations website, or checks can be mailed to their office, but must be postmarked on or before April 22<sup>nd</sup>. Funds raised support FHDC programming, camps, education items, and equipment.

## **New Business**

- **2022 Budget Update** – Ms. Adams shared that our 2022 FHDC budget is 1.14 million and this is not the budget we have been asked to spend in 2022. The city has requested we try to keep expenditures at \$846,000, which is what was spent in 2021. Ms. Adams said we are going to struggle as we have not updated the building in two years, and we have already incurred expensive repair costs this year. Money was also spent for our 10-Year Anniversary. Ms. Reese asked if all departments of the city have been asked to cut an equal percentage. Ms. Adams said yes but Parks and Recreation has been asked to make the largest reductions. Ms. Patton asked about state surpluses. Ms. Adams shared the city has this money and it is earmarked for where the City Commission and City Manager’s Office think it is best suited.
- **TASK Grant** - The Tourism Attraction Sub-grants for Kansas (TASK) program is a one-time opportunity for the enhancement of Kansas attraction assets. The TASK program is administered by the Kansas Tourism Division of the Kansas Department of Commerce. Our grant was for \$200,000 and the other half would be matched by the FHDC Foundation. The FHDC applied for this grant to fund an interactive, augmented reality prairie environment that was originally in the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor KIDSCAPE plans but removed due to lack of space. This projection experience with a virtual Flint Hills environment would be geared to all ages and cycle through day and night, as well as all four seasons. It is being proposed for the area on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor that currently houses the Voices exhibit. The Voices videos would be relocated to a new location on the first floor. They will announce the grant winner in early May. If we get the grant, the earliest this would open would be 2024. Mr. Bridenstine also shared that he would email the board a link to a Florida museum that has a virtual everglades experience. Mr. Logan asked if we had a company in mind. Mr. Bridenstine shared we use a competitive bidding process through the City of Manhattan.
- **April 14, 2022 - FHDC 10-Year Anniversary**
- **May 27, 2022, at 9:00 a.m. – KIDSCAPE Ribbon Cutting**

## **Adjournment**

At 4:49 p.m. Ms. Patton adjourned the meeting.