

Friends of the Museums of Florida History, Inc.

MEETING MINUTES

10:00 a.m., Thursday, June 13, 2019

Conference Room 307 (Third Floor)

R. A. Gray Building

500 South Bronough Street

Tallahassee, Florida 32399

Participants

Directors: Mr. Steve Birtman, Chair; Mr. Lester Abberger; Mr. John Boudet (on phone); Ms. Monesia Brown (on phone); Mr. Andrew Collins; Ms. Kathy Guilday (on phone); Mr. Bill Herrle (on phone); Mr. Jon Moyle (on phone); Ms. Laura Rogers

Staff: Ms. Lisa Barton; Dr. Jeana Brunson; Dr. Thomas Robinson; Ms. Kaitlin Silcox

I. Call to Order

Mr. Birtman, Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m.

II. Introduction of Board, Staff, and Guests

Mr. Birtman welcomed all board members, staff members, and guests attending the meeting on the phone and in person. Meeting participants introduced themselves. Mr. Birtman made a motion to adopt the agenda.

III. Adoption of Agenda

MOTION TO PROCEED WITH AGENDA: Mr. Abberger

SECOND: Mr. Herrle

MOTION PASSED WITH NO OBJECTION

IV. Chair's Comments

Mr. Birtman declined to make comments, saying he wanted to keep the meeting moving since there were so many action items on the agenda.

V. Consent Items

Mr. Birtman inquired if there were questions about the minutes on the consent agenda. There were none, so he asked for a motion to approve.

Note: Consent items up for vote were provided to the Board in advance via email.

A. Meeting Minutes from February 15, 2019 quarterly board meeting

MOTION TO APPROVE THE FEBRUARY 15, 2019 MINUTES: Ms. Rogers

SECOND: Mr. Boudet

MOTION PASSED WITH NO OBJECTION

B. Financial Report through May 2019

Mr. Birtman asked Dr. Robinson to give the Board an overview of the financial reports. Dr. Robinson pointed out that the History Shops' revenue was down for this year, but expenses were also way down. On the negative side, membership income was not as high this year. Luckily, though, the December end of year appeal made up for that gap. Dr. Robinson stated that those were the only areas he wanted to highlight.

Mr. Birtman asked if there were any follow-up questions regarding the financial reports. There were no questions so Mr. Birtman asked for a motion to approve the financial reports.

MOTION TO APPROVE FINANCIAL REPORT: Mr. Abberger

SECOND: Mr. Collins

MOTION PASSED WITH NO OBJECTION

C. Budget for Fiscal Year 2019-2020

Mr. Birtman stated the next item to go over was the budget for the upcoming fiscal year. He asked staff to discuss the budget. Ms. Barton discussed the overall scope of the budget, pointing out that cuts had to be made due to the lack of anticipated income from the café space. She stressed, though, that the lack of café income would not impact educational programming, but might cause more reliance on the Cultural Endowment Fund to pay for accounting and auditing expenses, which were usually partially covered by café income.

Ms. Barton asked Dr. Robinson if he had anything to add. Dr. Robinson stated that the only thing he would add is that the budget actually calls for less money to be taken out of the Knott endowment funds than Scott Hilton, the FMFH's advisor at Wells Fargo, suggested. Dr. Robinson stated that was because the Knott House came in under budget in many areas and so some of the endowment funds taken out in FY 18-19 would roll forward.

Ms. Barton and Dr. Robinson both stated that the History Shop cut expenses substantially by making the budget more in line with actual costs. For example, previous budgets set aside over \$90,000 for payroll, but the Shops never spent anything close to that. Dr. Robinson stated the savings will be used to upgrade the point of sale and e-commerce systems at all three History Shop locations. Mr. Collins and Ms. Guilday both stated that they thought adding a more mobile option would be smart and agreed with the proposed updates.

Mr. Birtman asked if there were any specific questions regarding the budget that Ms. Barton or Dr. Robinson may not have covered. Mr. Collins asked about the proposal to expand the budget of Florida History Day. Mr. Collins asked if the money that was earmarked for FHD contestants who go on to National History Day would pay for hotel rooms. Ms. Barton stated that the money would not be used for hotel rooms, but would instead be utilized to help students pay for the NHD registration fees. Dr. Brunson added that the FMFH used to help students pay for NHD registration fees so there is precedent for the money being used that way. Mr. Birtman asked if other states did that and Ms. Barton said that, to her knowledge, several states do pay for all or some of the NHD registration fees.

Mr. Birtman stated that he did not have an issue with assisting to pay for NHD fees, but he thought that in the future it might be worth thinking about using the money to pay for students who come to Tallahassee rather than using the money on students who are leaving Florida. Mr. Abberger and Ms. Guilday agreed with Mr. Birtman.

Mr. Collins asked about the effect the higher level membership program might have on the budget. Dr. Robinson stated that the budget does include approximately \$3,000 from the new membership program. Dr. Robinson argued that the idea is to expand the amount of unrestricted money coming in to the museum so it should be a goal to use the new membership program to fill in gaps that might occur from year to year in areas such as the donation box or parking revenue.

Mr. Birtman then asked other members of the Board if they have any questions. No other members had questions so Mr. Birtman stated he had a few questions of his own. He asked about a status update regarding the café. Ms. Barton stated that she and Dr. Robinson have met with several potential vendors, but no one had submitted a formal proposal to that point.

Mr. Birtman stated that before the Board lost a quorum, he wanted to table his questions and asked for a motion to approve the FY 19-20 budget.

MOTION TO APPROVE FY 19-20 BUDGET: Mr. Abberger

SECOND: Mr. Herrle

MOTION PASSED WITH NO OBJECTION

Before moving forward, Mr. Birtman stated that he thought it might be time to explore looking for a new vendor for the annual audit. Mr. Collins argued that perhaps doing something as simple as changing the auditing team might suffice.

D. Letter of Agreement between Florida Department of State and FMFH

Mr. Birtman asked Dr. Robinson to go over the Letter of Agreement for the Board. Dr. Robinson said that this is an annual agreement and only a few things have been updated. Dr. Robinson stated that on page two of the Letter of Agreement, "Florida Heritage Day" has been changed to "Florida heritage activities". Otherwise, Dr. Robinson said the document is the same as previous years, just with the dates updated.

Mr. Birtman asked if there were any questions. There were none so he asked for a motion to approve the Letter of Agreement.

MOTION TO APPROVE LETTER OF AGREEMENT: Mr. Herrle
SECOND: Mr. Abberger
MOTION PASSED WITH NO OBJECTION

E. SB 1194-Citizen Support Organization and Direct Support Organization Renewal

Mr. Birtman again asked Dr. Robinson to introduce this document. Dr. Robinson stated that this is an obligation as required by the Florida State Senate. Dr. Robinson stated that the document is similar to the Letter of Agreement with the Department of State with one difference being that the SB 1194 renewal requires a three-year plan. Dr. Robinson stated that the three-year plan was updated to include goals for the coming year, such as acquiring a new point of sale system for the FHS, as previously discussed in the meeting. Long-range goals include expanding TREX and creating a business membership program.

Mr. Birtman asked if there were any questions about the renewal. There were none so he asked for a motion to approve the SB 1194 renewal.

MOTION TO APPROVE SB 1194 RENEWAL: Mr. Collins
SECOND: Ms. Rogers
MOTION PASSED WITH NO OBJECTION

VI. Business Items

A. Financials

1. Endowments Progress Report

Mr. Birtman let the Board members know that Scott Hilton, the FMFH's Wells Fargo advisor, was not able to attend the meeting. As such, Dr. Robinson was asked to provide an update on the endowments. Dr. Robinson indicated that Mr. Hilton sent an email to be read to the Board members. The email stated that both Knott endowments and the Cultural Endowment Fund were all up for the quarter and year. The James Knott Endowment was up 11.21% for the quarter and 12.6% for the year. The Charles Knott Endowment was up 6.26% for the quarter and 8% for the year. The Cultural Endowment was up 0.9% for the quarter and 1.5% for the year.

In his email, Mr. Hilton stated that the equity markets may be affected by a potential trade war between the United States and China and a trade war between the U.S. and Mexico. Mr. Hilton, therefore, expects more modest returns for the second half of 2019 and the bond market might see a cut. Mr. Hilton closed his email by advising no changes to the current portfolio.

Ms. Brown asked Dr. Robinson if he could send the Board members Mr. Hilton's email. Dr. Robinson stated that he would send the email to all Board members after the meeting was over.

B. Debut of Director's Society Membership Program

Mr. Birtman shifted the discussion to the debut of the Director's Society, a new higher level membership program. Mr. Birtman pointed out that the Society was discussed during the budget portion of the meeting, but asked Dr. Robinson if he had anything to add. Dr. Robinson said the only thing he would add is that it could be helpful for Board members to pass along names of people that he should meet to try to get them to join the program.

Dr. Robinson pointed the Board members to a packet of information that he included in the meeting materials. Dr. Robinson explained this is a packet that would be used at face to face meetings with prospects. Mr. Collins asked how the program would be rolled out otherwise. Dr. Robinson stated that staff would like to introduce the program in every medium they can, including social media, the newsletter, and other avenues.

VII. Other Business

A. Updates on café and from Staff

Mr. Birtman said he thought the café had already been discussed and could move forward. Mr. Herrle interjected and said he had a question as to why it was so hard to get a new vendor. Dr. Robinson stated that the reason some vendors declined the space depended on each individual's situation. Some did not like the fact that there were restrictions on cooking equipment in the space. Some vendors were not in a position to open a second or third location. Some vendors expressed concern about the amount of hours they were expected to be open and thought it would cost too much to staff. Dr. Robinson stated that staff listened to this last concern and were flexible with the hours of operation.

Ms. Rogers asked if staff had reached out to Keiser University's cooking school or Lively Technical School. Staff indicated they had not, but they thought it was a great suggestion and would follow up with those entities.

Mr. Birtman thought staff should just keep working on it, but if it sits for another year, it might be time to explore other options for usage of the space.

B. Florida's History Shops Update

Ms. Silcox discussed recent events FHS attended. She stated that Florida History Day brought in over \$6,000 and was extremely successful. FHS staff also attended the Florida Book Awards and Word of South. Word of South was affected by bad weather and did not bring in a lot of money. Ms. Silcox indicated it might be worth exploring whether to continue attending Word of South because it has not been a money maker thus far.

C. Wrap Up

Mr. Birtman asked if there were any questions before he wrapped up. There were no questions so Mr. Birtman announced to the Board that member Sam Vickers resigned from the Board. Mr. Birtman wanted to make sure staff sent Mr. Vickers a thank you letter. Mr. Birtman also told the Board members that with Mr. Vickers' resignation, Board members should be thinking about anyone they know who might be interested in joining the Board.

Mr. Birtman asked the staff if there were any updates before he closed the meeting. Ms. Barton reminded the Board members that the next exhibit at the Museum of Florida History would be opening on July 13. The new exhibit, *Alligators: Dragons in Paradise*, is also a TREX exhibit and hopes were that the refurbished exhibit would go to museum sites throughout the state after it closes at MFH. Mr. Birtman suggested it might be worthwhile to reach out to University of Florida alumni chapters to drive visitation to the exhibit.

VIII. Public Comment:

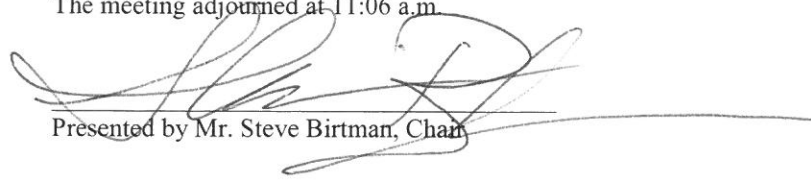
IX. Adjourn

Mr. Birtman asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

MOTION TO ADJOURN THE MEETING: Mr. Herrle

SECOND: Mr. Abberger
MOTION PASSED WITH NO OBJECTION

The meeting adjourned at 11:06 a.m.



Presented by Mr. Steve Birtman, Chair

Dated: _____

