

**Friends of the Museums of Florida History, Inc.**  
MEETING MINUTES  
10:30 a.m., Friday, March 27, 2020  
**By Conference Call Only**

**Participants**

**Directors:** Mr. Steve Birtman, Chair; Mr. John Boudet; Mr. Andrew Collins; Ms. Kathy Guilday; Ms. Lena Juarez; Mr. Jon Moyle; Ms. Laura Rogers

**Staff:** Ms. Lisa Barton; Dr. Timothy Parsons; Dr. Thomas Robinson; Ms. Kaitlin Silcox

**Guests:** Ms. Jessica Coates and Mr. Brian Manuel, Carr Riggs and Ingram; Mr. Scott Hilton, Wells Fargo Advisors

I. Call to Order

Mr. Birtman, Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:31 a.m.

II. Introduction of Board, Staff, and Guests

Mr. Birtman welcomed all board members, staff members, and guests attending the meeting. Since the meeting was held by conference call, Mr. Birtman asked Dr. Robinson to call roll to see who was on the line. Mr. Birtman also asked if any guests would speak up and introduce themselves.

III. Adoption of Agenda

Mr. Birtman made a motion to adopt the agenda.

MOTION TO PROCEED WITH AGENDA: Ms. Rogers

SECOND: Ms. Juarez

MOTION PASSED WITH NO OBJECTION

IV. Chair's Comments

Mr. Birtman declined to make comments, saying he wanted to keep the meeting moving since it might be clunky to do the meeting solely by conference call.

V. Consent Items

Mr. Birtman inquired if there were questions about the minutes on the consent agenda. There were no questions so Mr. Birtman asked for a motion to accept the minutes.

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

A. Meeting Minutes from September 19, 2019 quarterly board meeting

MOTION TO APPROVE THE JUNE 13, 2019 MINUTES: Mr. Moyle

SECOND: Ms. Juarez

MOTION PASSED WITH NO OBJECTION

B. Financial Report through February 2020

Mr. Birtman asked Dr. Robinson to discuss any highlights from the financial report. Dr. Robinson stated that the FMFH exceeding expectations, as of the end of February, for revenue from unrestricted contributions, donation box income, and membership income. Dr. Robinson stated that will be impacted by the museum closures due to the pandemic, but the potential positive was that the museum budget would not take a hit for this fiscal year.

Ms. Juarez asked why the museum staff thought revenues were up. Dr. Robinson stated that there were several potential reasons. The return of a large number of school groups, many of whom did not visit in 2018 due to Hurricane Michael, had a positive impact on the History Shop's revenues and might have affected the donation box too. Visitation numbers overall were slightly up as well, which has an impact on the donation box. Dr. Robinson added that the Director's Society has brought in more income than expected and the end of year appeal brought in double

the income of the previous year's appeal. Dr. Robinson thinks reaching out to members more frequently had a positive impact on unrestricted donations.

Mr. Birtman asked how the café has been doing so far. Dr. Robinson said that the café has paid rent twice so far and has been seeing a steady stream of customers and although the building is closed to the public, they are still getting business from DOS employees.

MOTION TO APPROVE FINANCIAL REPORT: Ms. Rogers

SECOND: Mr. Collins

MOTION PASSED WITH NO OBJECTION

## VI. Business Items

### A. Financials

#### 1. FMFH FY 2018-2019 Audit

Mr. Birtman introduced Mr. Manuel to discuss the FY 2018-2019 audit. Mr. Manuel said the 2018-2019 fiscal year was very similar to the previous fiscal year so much of the audit was similar to the previous year's version.

Mr. Manuel began an overview of the audit. Mr. Manuel compared the FY 2017-2018 and 2018-2019 audits, pointing out that the net assets and net total revenue are almost identical from year to year. Expenses were also similar between the two audits as well.

Mr. Manuel highlighted the "Statement of Functional Expenses" on page five of the audit. Mr. Manuel pointed out that this is a new statement that has been created due to new accounting standards. Mr. Manuel stated that this new statement breaks down program activities into narrower categories so you can really see where money is being spent.

Mr. Manuel took a break at this point to field questions. There were no questions and several Board members stated they thought the audit was very clear and easy to read since it was written in plain language. Mr. Birtman asked if the audit was accessible to the public. Dr. Robinson stated that the audit and other Board meeting materials are posted to the MFH website and are available to the public. Mr. Collins added that he is glad that the audit is written in plain language and that allows for a level of transparency that he does not always see in audits.

Ms. Juarez asked why Viva Florida was still listed on the audit report. Ms. Barton stated that the Viva Florida bank account is restricted for Colonial Florida exhibits and that is why it keeps showing up on the audit and financial reports.

There were no more questions so Mr. Manuel finished going over the audit. Mr. Manuel went over the notes to the financial statements. On page nine of the audit, Mr. Manuel pointed out that there is a specific reference to the new statement guidelines. On page eleven of the audit, Mr. Manuel highlighted there is a discussion of the endowments and how they are calculated in case anyone had questions on the worth of the endowments. On page fifteen, Mr. Manuel stated that there is a new note that is required that discusses financial asset availability. This note is meant to show what unrestricted funds the organization could draw on quickly.

Mr. Manuel wrapped up by saying the audit was very clean and he thinks the staff is doing a good job being consistent with handling financial records and activities. The audit required no adjustments, which makes it easier for the auditors and should provide the Board with peace of mind.

Mr. Birtman asked Mr. Manuel and Ms. Coates if they thought the Board or staff needed to do anything different. Mr. Manuel stated that he could not think of anything, although he was sure the current climate might cause problems for raising unrestricted funds for the next two to three fiscal years and that might be seen in future audits.

With no more questions, Mr. Birtman requested a motion to approve the audit.

MOTION TO APPROVE FY 2018-2019 AUDIT: Mr. Collins  
SECOND: Ms. Guilday  
MOTION APPROVED WITH NO OBJECTION

2. Endowments Progress Report

Mr. Birtman asked Mr. Hilton to discuss the endowments. Mr. Hilton stated the last three weeks had been unprecedented. With that, there has been tremendous turmoil in the financial sector. Mr. Hilton said the bad news was that the volatility would probably stay with the financial markets for the foreseeable future. The potential good news is that the recovery phase could be fast.

Mr. Hilton discussed how the short-term turmoil has affected the FMFH endowments. The Charles Knott account was up 14.7% for the calendar year 2019, but as of the night before the meeting was down 10.5% and \$16,674. The James Knott account was up 22.16% for the calendar year 2019, but as of the night before the meeting was down 17.7% and \$34,753. The Cultural Endowment is largely fixed income and may not see as much fluctuation as the Knott endowments. Mr. Hilton stated that the Cultural Endowment was up 2.8% for the calendar year 2019 and as of the night before the meeting was up 0.8% year to date. Overall, the three accounts are down approximately \$43,000 total. Mr. Hilton recommended not making any drastic changes right now despite the losses.

Mr. Hilton then asked for questions. Mr. Moyle asked if Mr. Hilton was comfortable with where things were with the Cultural Endowment. Mr. Hilton said he is comfortable with where that account is and money markets are actually going up, which is where a chunk of how the Cultural Endowment is invested. Mr. Moyle asked what percentage, approximately, where the three accounts combined down. Mr. Hilton stated that the three accounts combined were down about 4.4% as of the night before the meeting.

Mr. Collins said that in the big scheme of things, being down 4% is not that bad. Mr. Collins asked if there were any opportunities in dynamic markets during this time. Mr. Hilton stated that he thought it was better to wait until there was more stability before changing any strategies.

Mr. Birtman stated that his only question was to ask if there was a date set where businesses would start to reopen, would that mean an uptick in the economy? Mr. Hilton stated that investment bankers and economists are expecting a quick bounce back from the economy, but interest rates may not bounce back for twelve to eighteen months.

B. *Spirits of the Passage* Update

Mr. Birtman called on Ms. Barton to provide an update on *Spirits of the Passage*. Ms. Barton reminded the Board that at the last Board meeting, staff had proposed raising \$40,000 to cover the rest of the rental fee and costs associated with educational programming. Ms. Barton stated that work was underway in terms of fundraising for the exhibition and Dr. Robinson submitted a grant request in February. A fundraising packet was also actively being worked on. Ms. Barton pointed out that the balance of the rental fee was due by January 2021 so that was the most pressing matter.

Ms. Juarez asked if there were any materials related to the exhibit that could be handed to potential funders or emailed. Ms. Barton stated that the sponsorship packet is expected to fill that role. Dr. Robinson added that the packet is in a drafting phase, but it will be put in a format to be sent digitally.

C. New Department of State Structure

Mr. Birtman asked Dr. Parsons to discuss the new Department of State structure. Dr. Parsons introduced himself to the Board in case anyone had not met him. Dr. Parsons stated that Secretary Lee put into practice a reorganization of the structure of the Department of State in January. As part of that, the museum properties, including MFH and KHM, were all reorganized and administratively put under the Division of Historical Resources, of which Dr. Parsons is the Director. Previously, MFH and KHM were under the Office of External

Affairs and the Division of Cultural Affairs. Dr. Parsons pointed out, though, that the museums were under the Division of Historical Resources in years past before they were moved to DCA.

Due to this change, Dr. Parsons stated that updates would have to be made to statutes and budget proposals that go in front of the Legislature. In a practical sense, though, this change does not affect the day to day operations of either museum site.

Dr. Parsons opened up the floor to questions. Ms. Juarez stated that the Department of State had a bill to change one of the names of the divisions. Ms. Juarez asked if that bill was related to the restructuring that Dr. Parsons discussed. Dr. Parsons said that the bill Ms. Juarez referenced was not related to restructuring and any legislative proposals to finalize the reorganization will not go before the Legislature until next year.

Mr. Moyle asked if some Department of State and DHR employees were still physically coming in to work. Dr. Parsons stated that some DOS employees were coming in to the Gray Building, some were teleworking, some were doing a combination of both, and some were taking leave and staying home. Dr. Parsons stated that he has encouraged DHR employees to telework if possible and he thought about 45 DHR employees were working from home at the time of the meeting.

#### D. Other Staff Updates

Mr. Birtman asked Dr. Robinson and Ms. Silcox if they had any updates. Ms. Silcox stated that the point of sale system that was discussed at the previous Board meeting has been purchased. Ms. Silcox added that all three History Shop locations are currently closed and they will begin using the new point of sale system as soon as they reopen.

Ms. Rogers asked Ms. Silcox if anyone from the FHS staff was around to ship items if people order online. Ms. Silcox stated that she is still working in the Gray Building because her position is not conducive to teleworking and if orders come in, she is on hand to ship them immediately. Ms. Silcox added that she is working on adding getting items added to the FHS website and promoting items on social media in order to try to spur online sales.

#### VII. Other Business

##### A. Upcoming events

Mr. Birtman stated that since the Gray Building was closed and events were on hold, he would skip over this portion of the agenda.

##### B. Wrap Up

Mr. Birtman asked if there were any questions before he wrapped up. Dr. Robinson stated he did not have a question, but wanted to go ahead and put out the idea of having the next Board meeting during the second week of June. Dr. Robinson reminded Board members that the June Board meeting is full of action items and it would be better to schedule the meeting sooner rather than later so a quorum could be achieved. Dr. Robinson stated he would send a follow-up email with day and time options that members could vote on.

Mr. Birtman asked if there were any other questions or comments. There were not, so Mr. Birtman asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

#### VIII. Public Comment:

#### IX. Adjourn

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

MOTION TO ADJOURN THE MEETING: Mr. Moyle  
SECOND: Ms. Guilday  
MOTION PASSED WITH NO OBJECTION

The meeting adjourned at 11:42 a.m.

Presented by Mr. Steve Birtman, Chair

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_