

Friends of the Museums of Florida History, Inc.
MEETING MINUTES
10:00 a.m., Friday, September 11, 2020
By Conference Call Only

Participants

Directors: Ms. Laura Rogers, Chair; Mr. Lester Abberger; Mr. John Boudet; Ms. Monesia Brown; Mr. Andrew Collins; Ms. Kathy Guilday; Ms. Lena Juarez; Dr. Dennis Moore; Mr. Jon Moyle

Staff: Ms. Lisa Barton; Mr. Carlos Rey; Dr. Thomas Robinson; Ms. Kaitlin Silcox

Guests: Mr. Scott Hilton, Wells Fargo Advisors

I. Call to Order

Ms. Rogers, Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m.

II. Introduction of Board, Staff, and Guests

Ms. Rogers welcomed all board members, staff members, and guests attending the meeting. Since the meeting was held by conference call, Ms. Rogers asked board members and then staff and guests to speak up and introduce themselves.

III. Adoption of Agenda

Ms. Rogers made a motion to adopt the agenda.

MOTION TO PROCEED WITH AGENDA: Ms. Juarez

SECOND: Ms. Brown

MOTION PASSED WITH NO OBJECTION

IV. Chair's Comments

Ms. Rogers stated that since was the anniversary of the September 11 terrorist attacks, we should remember everyone who lost their lives and the people who helped on the day of and in the aftermath. Ms. Rogers stated that she hoped everyone on the call, and their families and friends, have been safe during this time.

V. Consent Items

Ms. Rogers inquired if there were questions about the minutes on the consent agenda. There were no questions so Ms. Rogers 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 June 11, 2020 quarterly board meeting

MOTION TO APPROVE THE JUNE 11, 2020 MINUTES: Mr. Moyle

SECOND: Mr. Collins

MOTION PASSED WITH NO OBJECTION

B. Financial Report through August 2020

Ms. Rogers asked Dr. Robinson to discuss any highlights from the financial report. Dr. Robinson stated that the FMFH is actually up, in terms of total gross revenue, from this time last year. Dr. Robinson stated that this was mainly due to still receiving membership income while not having many bills going out. Dr. Robinson stated most financial activity has been related to the endowments, which Mr. Hilton would speak to later.

MOTION TO APPROVE FINANCIAL REPORT: Mr. Moyle

SECOND: Mr. Collins

MOTION PASSED WITH NO OBJECTION

VI. Business Items

A. Florida in the Sunshine Laws

Ms. Rogers introduced Mr. Rey to discuss Florida's Sunshine Laws. Mr. Rey stated that the main goal of the Sunshine Laws, as it relates to this board, is to ensure that meetings are made public. Mr. Rey added that there are three main components to the Sunshine Laws as it relates to the board. First, again, meetings must be made public. Second, such meetings must be noticed in advance. Third, minutes must be recorded and be open to public inspection.

Mr. Rey said that the laws make it so that if two board members get together, it is considered a meeting and must be open to the public, if the board members discuss board business. Board business cannot be discussed through email communications either for the same reason. Mr. Rey stated that the board members should contact staff with any questions or ideas they have because that does not violate Sunshine Laws. However, administrative staff cannot be used as a liaison to pass messages related to board matters between board members. That being said, Mr. Rey stated that board members can get together and there is no problem with that, so long as they do not discuss board business.

Mr. Rey stated that notice of a meeting must be posted at least seven days prior to the meeting taking place. As part of the notice, you must include the date, time, and general subject matter of the meeting as part of the notice. Mr. Rey added that an agenda must be ready at least seven days prior to the meeting as well in the event that a member of the public requests to receive a copy of the agenda.

In terms of minutes, Mr. Rey stated that the minutes do not have to be verbatim, but provide detailed notes of what was discussed at the meeting. Minutes can be recorded, but a recording does not take the place of written minutes because written minutes are what would be provided to the public.

Mr. Rey opened the floor to questions. Mr. Moyle asked about reasonable notice. Mr. Rey stated that reasonable notice meant that a meeting had to be noticed at least seven days prior to the meeting taking place. Ms. Rogers asked what the process for noticing a meeting entailed. Mr. Rey said that administrative staff submit a notice to the Florida Administrative Register to notice the meeting and that notice is then published in a print and online edition of the Register.

B. Financials

1. Endowments Update

Ms. Rogers called on Mr. Hilton to discuss the endowments. Mr. Hilton stated much has changed since the June board meeting. The markets have largely rebounded since the last meeting, although the economy is still slow to recover. Mr. Hilton stated that is because economic factors such as interest rates and unemployment tend to not bounce back very quickly while the market is not based on those types of factors.

In looking at the specific accounts, the Cultural Endowment fund is up 2.2% year to date, as of the end of August. During August, a distribution of \$9,550 was taken out of the Cultural Endowment Fund. Despite this distribution, Mr. Hilton stated that the Cultural Endowment Fund is still in a strong position. The John Knott Endowment was down 2.74% year to date at the end of June, but by the end of August the account was up 0.6% year to date so that account had bounced back nicely. A distribution of \$2,600 was taken out of that account in August. The Charles Knott Endowment was down 4.8% year to date at the end of June, but by the end of August that account was up 3.2% year to date. Mr. Hilton stated a distribution of \$2,665 was taken from that account in August.

Looking forward, Mr. Hilton stated there may be rebalancing to do at the end of the year. Mr. Hilton said there were two things to look out for in the fall. First, if a number of cases of coronavirus come back and there are

widespread shutdowns, that could hurt the market. Second, experts expect volatility in the markets due to the November election. If a contested election occurs, that tends to be bad for the market due to uncertainty.

Mr. Hilton asked if there were any questions. Mr. Moyle asked about why the distributions were taken out of the accounts. Mr. Hilton deferred to Dr. Robinson on that question. Dr. Robinson explained that the Cultural Endowment funds are used for programming at the Knott House and accounting and auditing at both sites. The James Knott Endowment is used for Knott House programming and accounting. The Charles Knott Endowment is used for landscape and emergency maintenance. Dr. Robinson reminded board members that the disbursements that were taken out were less than Mr. Hilton felt comfortable with and staff was purposefully conservative.

Mr. Collins requested that perhaps at a future meeting a budget versus actual review could take place so that board members were more well versed in what is actually occurring versus what was laid out in the budget. Mr. Collins thought this would be good to do to try to forecast what the probability of money rolling forward from this fiscal year to next is. Dr. Robinson agreed and stated he would be happy to do an overview of the budget at the next board meeting.

Ms. Juarez asked if the museum was affected by the budget cut exercise that many state agencies are going through. Ms. Barton stated that any cuts would likely be absorbed by the Division of Historical Resources and would not affect the museum directly, although the state did hold some money back during the first quarter release. Expenses were kept low in anticipation of that.

Mr. Birtman had two questions for Mr. Hilton. Mr. Birtman asked if Mr. Hilton could provide a more local look at how likely it was if the federal government would step in and assist the Florida or Tallahassee economies. Mr. Birtman also asked if Mr. Hilton had any idea of how long the economy would take to bounce back. Mr. Hilton stated that the House and Senate have both passed bills to help relieve state and local governments, but neither seem likely to make it through the legislative process. Hopes are that both sides will go back to the negotiating table, but there is no assistance for state and local governments on the horizon. In terms of the economy bouncing back, Mr. Hilton said the manufacture of a vaccine would help, but no one knows when that would be readily available. Mr. Hilton said most prognoses he has seen are saying it could take 24 months or more for things to really bounce back.

C. Board Skills, Recruitment Discussion

Ms. Rogers stated that she and Dr. Robinson have been working on documents in order to build the board and perpetuate the health of the board. Ms. Rogers asked Dr. Robinson to discuss the documents that he has been working on.

Dr. Robinson stated that the impetus for these documents was due to discussions related to filling the vacancies on the board due to recent resignations and the untimely passing of Peter Harris. That prompted thinking about what types of board members we would like to add, what types of skills might be missing, and what other gaps might exist. A skills matrix was created to look at those elements. A second piece that was created is a self-evaluation questionnaire that asks board members to reflect on how well members think the board is functioning, any gaps that members see in the make-up of the board, and how well members understand the expectations of the board and the members.

Dr. Robinson stated that the idea was board members would have these documents distributed to them and then a meeting would occur a month or so later to discuss the documents and the overall direction of the board. Ms. Rogers added that a meeting in October using a video conferencing format would be ideal and she thought that this could really benefit the health of the board.

Mr. Abberger spoke up and said he thought doing an evaluation of the board is a great idea and thought it would be very useful. Mr. Collins agreed, stating that he has similar conversations about the board at his work. Ms. Juarez said that she has been in charge of board development for other organizations and thinks that is a great idea for the long-term success of the board.

D. Other Staff Updates

Ms. Rogers asked Dr. Robinson and Ms. Silcox if they had any updates. Dr. Robinson stated he had a couple of updates. Dr. Robinson informed board members that the museum has set up several exhibit update committees, which are tasked with discussing ways to update exhibits, including updating interpretation, the ways the spaces are used, and the like. Two committees are discussing updates that can be done in-house and with a smaller budget while a third committee will meet to discuss bringing the museum's interpretation to post-WWII. That is a much bigger task that could require a legislative appropriation and will likely take multiple years.

Dr. Robinson informed board members that word had been received from Visit Tallahassee that the FMFH should be receiving a \$4,300 grant for Florida History Day. Dr. Robinson added that the annual audit has started and will likely be completed by Thanksgiving.

Ms. Barton stated that the Knott House has been undergoing preservation work, beginning in the summer. Exterior repair work on the columns and decking, carpentry work to the outside of the building, and painting have all occurred. Work is scheduled to wrap up in the coming days. Mr. Abberger asked what the source of funding was for the updates. Ms. Barton stated that the funds came from the State Preservation Fund and not any CSO funds.

Ms. Silcox informed board members that the shop currently had a sale going on and there is a plan in place to try to implement sales every month or so. Ms. Silcox also told board members that she is willing to let people pick up orders if they do not want something shipped. Ms. Silcox added that Christmas ornaments will be released like normal, although she does not have any pictures as of yet. Ms. Rogers asked about the flag program and Ms. Silcox stated that the flag program has been the main source of income over the past few months. Ms. Rogers asked if Ms. Silcox could put together a short feature on the flag program to try to pitch the flag program in email or on social media. Ms. Silcox stated that she would do that.

Ms. Guilday asked if the restaurant in the Gray Building was still open. Dr. Robinson said that the café was still open to DOS staff who work in the building.

VII. Other Business

A. Upcoming events

Dr. Robinson reminded board members that *Beyond the Vote* is still scheduled to open, although the exhibit will likely open virtually since the building is closed.

B. Wrap Up—Summary of Meeting Accomplishments

Ms. Rogers opened the floor for questions or comments. There were none.

VIII. Public Comment:

IX. Adjourn

Ms. Rogers asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

MOTION TO ADJOURN THE MEETING: Ms. Brown
SECOND: Ms. Juarez
MOTION PASSED WITH NO OBJECTION

The meeting adjourned at 11:03 a.m.

Presented by Ms. Laura Rogers, Chair

Dated: _____