

Friends of the Museums of Florida History, Inc.
MEETING MINUTES
10:00 a.m., Monday, April 11, 2022
Gallery for Innovation and the Arts, R.A. Gray Building

Participants

Directors: Ms. Laura Rogers, Chair; Mr. Lester Abberger; Mr. Steve Birtman; Mr. John Boudet; Mr. Andrew Collins; Ms. Kathy Guilday; Mr. Bill Herrle; Ms. Lena Juarez; Dr. Dennis Moore

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

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

I. Call to Order

Ms. Rogers, Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:06 a.m.

II. Introduction of Board, Staff, and Guests

Ms. Rogers welcomed all board members, staff members, and guests attending the meeting. Ms. Rogers asked that everyone at the meeting in person introduce themselves.

III. Adoption of Agenda

Ms. Rogers requested a motion to adopt the agenda.

MOTION TO PROCEED WITH AGENDA: Ms. Juarez

SECOND: Dr. Moore

MOTION PASSED WITH NO OBJECTION

IV. Chair's Comments

Ms. Rogers stated that she appreciated staff getting the board meeting documents to the board members in a timely manner, especially the audit. She added that she wished to hold any other comments until later in the meeting.

V. Consent Items

Ms. Rogers inquired if there were questions about any items on the consent agenda. There were no questions so Ms. Rogers asked for a motion to accept the minutes and the financial report at the same time.

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

A. Meeting Minutes from February 7, 2022 quarterly board meeting

B. Financial Report through February 2022

MOTION TO APPROVE THE CONSENT ITEMS: Dr. Moore

SECOND: Ms. Juarez

MOTION PASSED WITH NO OBJECTION

VI. Business Items

A. Financials

1. FMFH FY 2020-21 Audit

Ms. Rogers introduced Ms. Coates to go over the audit report. Ms. Coates stated that she would provide a broad overview of the audit and started with the Independent Auditors' Report on page one. Ms. Coates said that this is often referred to as a "clean opinion" and is the highest level of assurance that the auditors can provide. Ms. Coates then moved on to page four of the report, which is the Statement of Financial Position. Ms. Coates stated that the assets had gone up by over \$60,000 from the previous fiscal year, mainly due to the value of the endowments rising. Ms. Coates

then went over the Statement of Activities, which was on page five of the audit. This portion of the audit shows the revenue and expenses over the course of the fiscal year. Ms. Coates pointed out that the revenue largely remained similar to the prior fiscal year while expenses were dramatically decreased and this was due to the Museum being closed for several months during the year. This led to an increase in net assets of over \$50,000, primarily driven by a strong return on investments.

Ms. Coates then skipped ahead to page nineteen of the report, which is the Supplementary Information section. Ms. Coates stated that this section provided an overview of the support and revenue as well as the total expenses for the fiscal year. Ms. Coates then went back to pages eight through eighteen of the report, which explain the significant accounting policies and provide details of the amounts summarized in the financial statements. Ms. Coates opened the floor to questions about the financial statement portion of the audit. There were no questions so Ms. Coates continued with the overview of the audit.

Ms. Coates discussed pages twenty-one through thirty-three of the report, which is the Required Communications portion of the report. Ms. Coates wanted to highlight the internal controls section of this part of the report. Ms. Coates reminded board members that on the previous years' audit, there was a recommendation regarding internal controls and the state in-kind contribution formula. Ms. Coates stated that this recommendation was met and the item would not show up on any audits moving forward. Ms. Coates wrapped up by stating that the staff was very easy to work with and they responded to her requests in a timely manner.

Ms. Coates again opened the floor to questions. Mr. Collins stated that he did not have a question, but he did want to thank Ms. Coates for her work. Mr. Collins added that he thought the report looked good and everyone should be commended for that. There were no other questions or comments so Ms. Rogers asked for a motion to approve the audit.

MOTION TO APPROVE THE FY 2020-21 AUDIT: Mr. Collins
SECOND: Ms. Guilday
MOTION PASSED WITH NO OBJECTION

2. Endowments Progress Report

Ms. Rogers introduced Mr. Hilton to discuss the endowments. Mr. Hilton started with a broad overview of the economic outlook and looked back at the first part of 2022. Mr. Hilton stated that GDP growth was very good for the year as a whole in 2021, but that slowed substantially at the beginning of 2022 due to concerns related to a new variant of Covid-19. Mr. Hilton added that the Federal Reserve discussed raising interest rates in 2022, rather than 2023 as previously discussed, and this caused some uncertainty around the market. The current invasion of Ukraine by Russia only added to the market's volatility.

Mr. Hilton then discussed each individual endowment. The Charles Knott Endowment ended March with a balance of \$223,110, which was down 5.9% for the first quarter of 2022. That account is invested heavily in bonds, which has tempered returns so far this year. The James Knott Endowment was down 8.6% for the first quarter of 2022. The account ended March with a balance of \$160,226. The account is down primarily due to volatility in the stock market, which is where most of the funds are invested. The Cultural Endowment ended the quarter down 0.8%. Interest rates are expected to go up in 2022, which should help the Cultural Endowment. Overall, Mr. Hilton stated that he thought the endowments were well positioned regardless of what happens and he remains optimistic about the long-term prospects. Although the start to the year has been disappointing, Mr. Hilton said that he felt things would rebound by the end of the year.

Mr. Hilton opened up the floor to questions. There were no questions so Ms. Rogers thanked Mr. Hilton for his presentation.

B. Staff Updates

Ms. Rogers called on the staff to provide any updates they have. Ms. Barton stated that the Museum was going to be very busy over the course of the next month or two. Ms. Barton said that Children's Day was coming up on April 16 and Florida History Day was only about three weeks away. Ms. Barton and Ms. Rogers reminded board members that FHD judges and volunteers were still needed and encouraged board members to sign up if they could. Ms. Barton added that planning for 20th of May at the Knott House was moving forward. Finally, Ms. Barton stated that the final evening event related to *Spirits of the Passage* was occurring on April 21.

Dr. Robinson stated that the only thing he wanted to add was that the June board meeting is a very important meeting and so plans were already underway to set the date for that meeting. Dr. Robinson said that staff were looking at the week of June 6 for the board meeting. Ms. Rogers thanked Dr. Robinson for planning the next board meeting far in advance and encouraged more board members to attend in person at the next meeting.

Ms. Guilday asked when the judging for Florida History Day would occur. Ms. Barton stated that judging for FHD would occur on Monday, May 2.

Dr. Parsons discussed the potential construction at the R.A. Gray Building. Dr. Parsons stated that the Department of Management Services selected a vendor and the preliminary construction schedule has work beginning in January 2023. In the interim, meetings will occur to determine how the construction could affect the Museum. Mr. Abberger asked what the scope of the work would be. Dr. Parsons stated that the scope would include a structural assessment and an extensive and comprehensive solution to waterproofing. Mr. Birtman asked what would be different this time compared to previous work on the building. Dr. Parsons stated that there is a different approach being taken to the problem this time and this is a new vendor as well. Mr. Abberger asked if there was anything in the plan to make the plaza more attractive. Dr. Parsons stated that, to his knowledge, architectural drawings have not yet been completed, but he would be happy to suggest a more aesthetically pleasing plaza. Ms. Rogers suggested that the staff should take the possibility of the Museum being closed into account when crafting the budget for the next fiscal year.

Ms. Rogers asked Ms. Silcox if she had any updates about the shops. Ms. Silcox stated that the shops have been doing brisk business all year and have made more money to this point than was made in FY 19-20. Ms. Silcox said that most purchases recently have been restocking and not new merchandise, although the Shop did recently buy Florida-themed stickers from a company based in Orlando. Mr. Birtman asked Ms. Silcox if the Shop would be selling t-shirts at FHD again. Ms. Silcox said that they would and Dr. Robinson added that the Shop would be selling coffee mugs as well. Ms. Juarez asked how online sales were doing now that the Museum is back open. Ms. Silcox said that online sales have mostly held steady since the Museum reopened, partially because many online purchases are for memberships and flags.

Mr. Birtman asked where things stand with the café space. Dr. Robinson stated that although a few prospects have come to see the café, nothing tangible has occurred with the space and prospects are starting to dry up. Dr. Robinson added that he will continue reaching out to potential vendors. Ms. Rogers stated that board members should pass along any prospects they might know of to Dr. Robinson. Mr. Birtman and Mr. Abberger both said that perhaps the space should be used for something other than a café, especially if it sits empty for another year or so.

Ms. Juarez asked Dr. Robinson for an update on the membership program. Ms. Juarez added that she was especially curious how the membership program did while the Museum was closed, especially in light of the presentation of the audit. Dr. Robinson stated that the membership program actually held very steady, with the vast majority of members renewing their memberships or sending in donations. Dr. Robinson stated that the one area that struggled was with new memberships, which are typically driven by people coming to events at the Museum or joining to receive a discount on a large purchase at the Shop. Mr. Abberger asked what the total number of members is currently and Dr. Robinson stated that there is somewhere between 165 and 175 members. Ms. Guilday asked that if the Museum was closed due to construction, was there a way to provide members with virtual experiences? Ms. Barton stated that the Museum staff would put together virtual programming for both members and the general public if the Museum closed and would be sure to promote those widely.

VII. Other Business

A. Upcoming events

Ms. Rogers asked if there were any upcoming events that were worth highlighting that were not discussed. Staff indicated that all upcoming events had been covered.

B. Wrap Up—Summary of Meeting Accomplishments

Ms. Rogers stated that the only thing she wanted to wrap up was to thank everyone for attending the meeting and to encourage everyone to come to upcoming events and programs.

Ms. Rogers opened the floor for questions or comments. There were none. Since there were no questions and no members of the public on the call, Ms. Rogers suggested ending the meeting.

VIII. Public Comment:

IX. Adjourn

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

MOTION TO ADJOURN THE MEETING: Mr. Birtman

SECOND: Ms. Guilday

MOTION PASSED WITH NO OBJECTION

The meeting adjourned at 11:01 a.m.

Presented by Ms. Laura Rogers, Chair

Dated: _____