

University of Florida Historic St. Augustine, Inc. (UFHSA)
A direct support organization to UF as provided, Chapter 267.1736 Laws of Florida

UFHSA Board of Directors Meeting

May 7, 2021

Time Convened: 10:00 a.m.

Time Adjourned: 1:51 p.m.

Governor's House, 48 King Street, St. Augustine, FL

Board Members Present via in-person and virtual meeting: Chair Allen Lastinger, Kathy Deagan, Michael Francis, John Fraser, Buff Gordon, Rick Gonzalez, Roy Hunt, William Robinson, Herschel Shepard, Don Slesnick, Doug Wiles, and Tom Willis

Board Members Absent: Joe Joyner and Charles Ellis

Staff /Others Present: Ed Poppell, Mark Kaplan, Linda Dixon, Deb Kinney, Billy Triay, John Regan, Marty Hylton, Tracy Upchurch, Meredith Bridenstein, Melissa Whistle, Sujen Kim, Casey Wooten, Cindy Stavely, John Nemmers, Jennifer Michaux, Matt Hodge, and Magen Wilson

Welcome

Chair Lastinger welcomed everyone in attendance and called the UFHSA meeting to order at 10:09 a.m.

The Board considered the following Action Items:

Action Items:

Approval of Minutes November 13, 2020

Motion to approve the minutes from the November 13, 2021 meeting was made by Board Member John Fraser, and was seconded by Board Member Herschel Shepard. The board approved the minutes unanimously.

1. Financial Reports

• **Colonial Quarter financials and update**

Cindy Stavely gave an update on the on Colonial Quarter. She indicated that they continue to recover with school tours slowly coming back. They are hopeful school tours will return to normal by Spring 2022. They will work to hire school tour guides for the fall and spring. She also indicated that the music park is opening for some reserved events. They are looking forward to getting back to normal.

• **Budget Review for FY 2021**

Linda Dixon discussed the budget review for FY2021. As previously indicated, UFHSA funds are allocated through three pots of money; there are two that include state funds.

These funds were previously reduced by 2%. Expenditures are on target with the budget. Revenue remained satisfactory during COVID in part due to funds we continued to receive from FEMA hurricane expense reimbursements. She pointed out that the Kirby Smith Building roof replacement was a major expense in FY2021. The third fund is the DSO fund (non-state money that comes from tenant leases, CQ, and weddings). Ms. Dixon commented that the anticipated reduction due to COVID seemed to be on target, as well. She indicated that there have been revenue from the documentary film, FEMA reimbursements, and a City of St. Augustine donation to the PISA program.

Ed Poppell added that they have been very conservative with major projects during COVID but there are some expensive major projects in the future which include the First Colony Exhibit change-out and Coquina Warehouse renovation to provide student and faculty short-term housing. Both projects might be considered as development opportunities.

Chair Lastinger asked for a motion to approve the Budget Review for FY2021 for adoption. Kathy Deagan moved, Don Slesnick seconded, and the board approved unanimously.

- **Budget Approval for 2021-22**

Linda Dixon reviewed the FY 2021-2022 proposed budget and stated that in the coming year they anticipate continued growth in revenue but not quite to the level of 2019. She indicated that they are caught up on roofing projects and will begin the routine maintenance schedule. She discussed looking into sound proofing the Governor's House Sala meeting room. Ms. Dixon also indicate that the Coquina Warehouse project will begin its first phase by erecting exterior stairs to access the upstairs.

Ed Poppell added that they will not increase rents in the coming year, as businesses return to normal, but will work to return to market rate rents in the coming years.

Chair Lastinger asked for a motion to approve the Budget Approval for FY 2021-22 for adoption. Bill Robinson moved, Slesnick seconded, and the board approved unanimously.

2. Education Committee

Roy Hunt, Chair of the Education Committee discussed that they are in the final stages of installing a portion of the Panama Canal exhibit from the George Smathers libraries in the Governor's House. He also introduced the extensive Florida art collection gifted to the Harn Museum of Art and turned the meeting over to Ed Poppell.

3. Vickers Art Collection/Budget/First Colony

Ed Poppell expanded on the Vickers Art collection indicating that in cooperation with the Harn Museum they will have the opportunity to exhibit a portion of the collection in St. Augustine this coming December. He and others noted that this is a tremendous opportunity because the collection is one of the world's most extensive Florida-themed art collections.

Discussion Items:

1. Presentation by Mayor Tracy Upchurch

Mayor Tracy Upchurch discussed the City Commissions decision to relocate the monument, COVID response, and a slow return to normal. He indicated that the city maintains ownership of their monument and the possible opportunity to partner with the Preservation Institute to perform some repairs to the monument. He discussed upcoming projects as they continue to balance the City's historical culture and the food and beverage scene in St. Augustine, including the upcoming 200th anniversary celebration, focus on sea-level rise, and mobility issues. He thanked the board for their partnership.

City Manager John Regan introduced the city's new Police Chief, Jennifer Michaux, and other staff members. He discussed the future he sees for the city's evolution including refinancing or grant programs and taking the partnership with UF to the next level. He then discussed the upcoming challenges to the city including solid waste, climate change, and sea-level rise. Mr. Reagan mentioned building a second parking garage and the possibility of a commuter rail in the future. He also discussed the possibility of public private partnerships including building workforce housing.

2. St. Augustine Historical Society update

Magen Wilson discussed St. Augustine Historical Society preservation projects. She also indicated that, like the Colonial Quarter, they have not had school tours through COVID. She noted that they have been able to be more creative and collaborative with other partners in St. Augustine. She announced the opening of the St. Augustine Surf Culture exhibit, which had been delayed because of COVID. She also announced the openings of Marineland's Marine Studios Exhibit and People and Places of St. Augustine. She indicated that they would have two journal issues this year. Ms. Wilson also mentioned that they are very appreciative of the positive impact of UFHSA.

3. PISA update

Marty Hylton discussed the multiyear collaboration with the National Park Service where they have digitally mapped, performed modeling of sea-level rise and prepared an impact study of St. Augustine. The project included resurveying of St. Augustine town plan and National Historical Landmarks; digitally documenting the city with terrestrial laser scanners, including mapping walls in St. Augustine; and sea-level rise models and flooding scenarios. They have also completed a historic coquina study including resilience to be able to conserve and adapt historic coquina buildings. Ed Poppell and members of the Board discussed what their role is in sharing the information about the sea-level rise models and flooding scenarios. They discussed helping facilitate workshops and referring inquiries to specific experts.

Mr. Hylton indicated because of Dr. Sujin Kim's work they have the data and information indicating long term affects of sea-level rise. Marty mentioned that the work in St. Augustine can be used as the national model of resilience. Marty then informed the group that, in part because of the success of the project, he has been recruited by the National Park Service as the first historical resilience architect and will be leaving over the summer. Chair Lastinger, members of the Board, and Ed Poppell thanked Marty for the work he has done in St. Augustine.

4. History Festival - Keeping History Relevant

Ed Poppell indicated a small ad hoc group has been meeting to discuss fulfilling part of their strategic plan to keep history relevant. He pointed out that they are now organizing community partners to form a steering committee to organize for a history festival. The group of community partners include museums, churches, businesses, and the St. Johns County Cultural Council. Partnership with the St. Johns County Cultural Council is beneficial because they have resources available to help promote and involve others with organizing the event. The concept includes UFHSA helping to facilitate where all St. Augustine works together to create an event to highlight history and celebrate and focus on history throughout St. Augustine. The projected first event would take place in May of 2022.

5. Board Members Reappointment

Ed Poppell announced the approval of the following reappointments to St. Augustine Board of Directors by the UF Board of Trustees at their March Meeting: Kathleen Deagan, Michael Francis, Rick Gonzalez, Bill Robinson, Herschel Shepard with terms from 2019 to 2023 and Roy Hunt, Don Slesnick, and Allan Lastinger with terms from 2020 to 2024.

6. Construction update

Linda Dixon gave a construction update of completed and future projects. She indicated that Ribera Park is complete, and they are now completing interpretive panels for the property. The Kirby Smith house re-roof is complete, which was a major project. Going forward they will be working on regular routine maintenance. Ms. Dixon also indicated they will move forward with installing outside stairs to the Coquina Warehouse for library staff to access the library storage.

7. Civic Curriculum and doc film - PBS contract for International Distribution/Budget

Ed Poppell discussed the PBS contract and that the film is currently being distributed internationally. Recently they had interest from Australia and are editing the film for distribution there. He also indicated that a new law was recently passed which includes a civics curriculum element of American history. Ed thinks that the film could be used in this curriculum and is working with Mark Kaplan, VP for UF's Government and Community Relations to discuss this with Florida's Department of Education.

8. Development Update

Don Slesnick indicated that Matt Hodge AVP and CDO UF Advancement had to leave the call prior to the report. Mr. Slesnick gave a development update indicating that they have had some conversation with UF Advancement and are looking into naming and sponsorships opportunities. He thanked Board members who are annual contributors and ask others to consider making a donation. UF Advancement is working to designate someone on the development staff to work with us. They are also working to build a list of university alumni, contributors and possible corporate sponsors in the Northeast FL area. Mr. Slesnick indicated that he would work with UF Advancement to present a development plan to the Board at the fall meeting. The plan will include targets and goals and, once in place we can move forward with plan.

9. VCB Update

President & Chief Executive Officer of St. Augustine, Ponte Vedra & The Beaches

Visitors & Convention Bureau Richard Goldman. He indicated that they had to pause last fall's travel intranational marketing campaign because of COVID. After some research, they modified and relaunched the campaign - Your getaway isn't far away. This campaign targeted those willing to travel during the pandemic. It focused on being local, outdoors and getting an international experience in St. Augustine. The goals were to help keep business open and people employed. The campaign included a media strategy with a website with multiple options based on individual interests. Goldman indicated that they continue to monitor travel and track results of the campaign. They believe the campaign has been successful resulting in increased travel and stay in the area.

10. Library Staff report

Laura Marion introduced Casey Wooster the Collections Coordinator to give the library staff report. Ms. Wooster indicated that throughout COVID they have been working on community partnerships. Through these partnerships they created Resilience - Black Heritage in St. Augustine. This summer they will host a two-part panel on the past, present, and future of Fort Mose. Additionally, as mentioned previously they will be opening the Panama Canal exhibit in the Governor's House.

11. Fall meeting date

Chair Lastinger indicated that the next meeting will be in November and to be on the lookout for a poll of potential dates.

New Business

There was no new business

Adjourn Board Meeting

There being no further discussion, Chair Lastinger adjourned at the meeting at 1:51 p.m.