

University of Florida Historic St. Augustine, Inc. (UFHSA) Board of Directors Meeting

**UFHSA Board of Directors Meeting
December 6, 2024**

**Time Convened: 9:59a.m.
Time Adjourned: 1:24 p.m.**

**The Governor's House Cultural Center and Museum
48 King Street, St. Augustine, FL 32084**

Board Members Present via in-person and virtual meeting: Allen Lastinger (Board Chair), Roy Hunt (Vice Chair), Michael Francis, John Fraser, William Robinson, Herschel Shepard, Don Slesnick, Tracy Upchurch, Doug Wiles, Jane Adams, Ken Smith, Fr. Tom Willis, John Regan, James Cusick (via zoom)

Board Members Absent: Charles Ellis

Staff/Others Present: Billy Triay, Linda Dixon, Laura Marion, Casey Wooster, Cindy Stavelly, Mike Croce, Reuben Franklin, Susan Phillips, Magen Wilson, Dolores Lastinger, Jessica Long, Roger Smith, Cleary Larkin, Linda Stevenson, Norman Patillo, Jeff Atwater, Doug Jones, Susan Parker, Ada Schmidt (via zoom).

Welcome

Chair Lastinger called the UFHSA meeting to order at 9:59 a.m.

Action Items:

1. Agenda and Minutes

- a. **Approval of Agenda** – *Don Slesnick made a motion to approve the December 6, 2024 agenda; Ken Smith seconded; Motion passed unanimously.*
- b. **Approval of Minutes** – *Bill Robinson made a motion to approve the minutes of March 15, 2024 and September 30, 2024; Ken Smith seconded; Motion passed unanimously.*

2. Financial Reports

- a. **Colonial Quarter and Update – Mike Croce and Cindy Stalvey**
Mike Croce gave a report on the Colonial Quarter highlighting Q3 and YTD revenue overview.

He also reported that the museum programs have been steady, but schools are attending in smaller groups. There is an expectation that the group size will increase in 2025-2026 with the increase in the economy. The museum has added more hands-on activities for the school tours program. There has been an increase in participation for this year's History Festival; blacksmith demonstrations, cannon firings, a Drake's Raid re-enactment, colonial games, live music and other events. Colonial quarter is excited to host the brand-new Nights of Lights Holiday Market this year.

Goals moving forward for the Colonial Quarter include:

- Partnering with UF on internships

- Increase 2025 camp attendance
- Implement emission-reducing policies and technology to move toward carbon neutrality
- Capital expenditure project to continue to improve facilities and maintain high level offerings
- Continuing to attract high quality employees to the team
- Assist the City with a recycling program

b. FY 24 End-of-Year, and FY 25 Budget Reports – Linda Dixon

Linda Dixon provided a review of the UFHSA budget reports for year-end FY24 and first quarter of FY25 including State recurring funds for plant operations and maintenance on the state-owned buildings and SAHS leased properties, and DSO Funding. The new fiscal year started July 1st, 2024. She mentions that the budget ended up with a small carry over balance in the state funds and better than anticipated balance in the DSO funds. DSO revenues were strong, and spending tracked generally as planned.

The FY25 first quarter spending is going as planned and a lot of funds carried over are committed to ongoing projects.

John Fraser made a motion to accept the FY24 and FY25 Q1 budget reports; the motion was seconded by Herschel Shepard and passed unanimously.

3. Approve Commercial Lease Increase on all new and renewal commercial leases – Linda Dixon

Linda Dixon reported that the 2% annual increase for commercial leases had been paused during COVID in 2020. It was reinstated in 2022, but the 2% annual increases were not realized for two years. Moving forward she proposed an initial 5% increase for renewals and new leases, and then continue the original 2% annual increase each year.

Tracy Upchurch made a motion to approve the lease annual increase; the motion was seconded by John Regan and passed unanimously.

4. PISA Update (moved in agenda order) NO ACTION – Cleary Larkin

Cleary Larkin reported that the PISA program is focused on Historic Preservation. Continuing resilient landscapes on the state properties focusing first on the De Mesa Sanchez House to prevent flooding and water damage. In Spring 2025 Linda Stevenson is teaching a documentation course and a workshop. Additional program updates were shared.

5. Membership Updates

Board Chair Allen Lastinger provided a brief intro of the 3 incoming new board members - Jeff Atwater, Doug Jones and Susan Parker, who were in attendance. Reappointments for the Spring UFBOT meeting include Charles Ellis, John Fraser and Fr. Tom Willis. Allen recommends Tracy Upchurch as the new Board Chair, and Doug Wiles as the new Board Vice Chair. He also recommended new committee chairs – Doug Wiles to replace Don Slesnick as the Development Committee Chair, and Jim Cusick to replace Roy Hunt as the Education/ Interpretation /Historic Preservation Committee Chair. He suggested the new board President can confirm other committee appointments.

Michael Francis made a motion to approve the membership updates; the motion was seconded by Herschel Shepard and passed unanimously.

Committee Reports

1. Education/Interpretation/Facilities/Historic Preservation Committee – Roy Hunt and Susan Parker

Roy Hunt and Susan Parker updated the board on two items. Funds raised to publish the Governor's House book are approximately \$10,000. The book focuses on stories of people from St. Augustine and the events that occurred here (History of St. Augustine and the nation). We are moving forward with the Governor's House NHL update. The packet has been provided and is being processed by the National Park Service in Atlanta.

2. Development Committee – Don Slesnick

The committee is focusing on marketing, fundraising, and donations and hoping to gain from the Gator Giving Day 2025. Our Development Officer, Jessica Long, is moving to the Lastinger Center in the College of Education. Norman Portillo was introduced as the new UFHSA Development Officer. Norman introduced himself to the board and shared his role with the committee. Jessica shared that fundraising goals identified by the committee for 2025 include the Coquina Warehouse renovation/reuse to house UF research students, architectural conservation lab support, and museum exhibits refresh.

Discussion Items:

1. City of St. Augustine Report – Reuben Franklin

Reuben Franklin, the Assistant City Manager, updated on city initiatives including mobility (public parking/transportation), CRA Historical Area initiatives, utilities undergrounding, Anastasia Boulevard roundabout, fire station relocation, and a \$500,000 downtown landscape master plan. 80 million dollars has been secured for resilience and transportation projects, over 10 million with FDOT and National Park Service for seawall replacement. He shared that the King St. Project construction will start in late 2028. The downtown parking garage in the historic area is now creating more revenue. The city has also started using funds in the re-envisioning of Cordova Street. The objective of the plan is mobility, parking, open space improvements and redevelopment. The city has recently added the Lincolnville neighborhood CRA, focusing on preservation projects. The city is asking that the board share any ideas they would like for Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) projects.

2. History Festival 2024 – Roger Smith

Roger Smith reported that the history festival went well this year. Four more venues were added and there is a lot of interest for more venues to participate next year. Clickers at entrances were used to track attendance, to help determine the attendance increase for this year. The BBQ has replaced the gala and was very successful. Additional events for next year include archeological dig at the African American Cemetery. There was excellent community participation and enthusiasm this year.

3. Governor's House Library Update - Laura Marion and Casey Wooster

The George A. Smathers Libraries Digital Collections website views has gone up in the last

9 months. Digitization projects and deaccession transfer work is ongoing. Two exhibits were displayed in the small gallery at Governor's House including the current *Sweet Beginnings: Unwrapping St. Augustine's Chocolate Legacy*. The First Day Issue exhibit was recently put on display at St. John's County Public Library Main Branch. Library staff continue to assist many research partners and students, and present their work at conferences.

4. St. Augustine Historical Society – Magen Wilson

Magen Wilson provided updates on SAHS activities including their library collections, supporting student research, and exhibits including the Political Cartoons from 100 years Ago and new exhibit Queen Sophia. Building preservation projects are focused on the library and routine maintenance. The Research library will open in January. It has been closed for remodeling. She reported that the Fernández-Llambias house has been updated on the National Registry and that the City of St. Augustine is donating \$25,000 for maintenance of Fernández-Llambias. The Historical Society is working on a new book from Tom Graham.

5. UFHSA Admin Report – Linda Dixon

- a) **Oral History Report** – Interviews were conducted last summer but were paused and will restart in the spring, focusing on the history of UFHSA.
- b) **Vickers Exhibit Update** – Harn Museum updated the exhibit in spring 2024 with new pieces installed. A new refresh for the Vickers exhibit at Governor's House is planned for early fall of 2025. The Harn Museum also expects to participate in the 2025 History Festival – more to come on this.
- c) **Documentary Film Update** – PBS has extended the contract for the documentary film until December 2031. There were no changes to the agreement.
- d) **Slip & Fall Claim** – A slip & fall claim at the beginning of September in the Colonial Oaks area (outside) has been made. More information to come as the claim processes. UF General Counsel is handling the claim.
- e) **New Banking, JPM** – The UF has changed banks, and the CFO office is working with UFHSA on this transition. This will provide a new web interface for our renters for invoicing and online payment.
- f) **IFAS Event** – Linda reported that IFAS Extension is hosting a public education event at the UFHSA's Ribera Park property on St. George Street at Fort Alley today until 3PM. She encouraged members to visit the event after the meeting.

6. Construction Update – Billy Triay

Billy Triay reported on ongoing building maintenance projects that have largely focused on routine paint/patch/repair with the regular upkeep required for these wood structures near the coast. He also reported on some minor repairs resulting from this year's hurricanes, primarily casement windows for a couple of properties. Some termite tenting is planned that will be followed by termite issue repairs.

7. Other Business/Director Comments

Allen Lastinger instructed new members to work with Tracy on committees they would like to serve on. Currently there is no funding from the legislature for the Coquina House renovation to support PISA students. The fund goal is over \$500,000 for the Coquina

Warehouse space for Student/Faculty living. Linda will update the board with a new estimate at the spring meeting.

Spring Meeting Update

Staff will poll the members to find the best time for the next meeting after 3/28/25 when the new members are anticipated to be appointed by the UF Board of Trustees.

Meeting Adjourned at 1:24 pm

Adopted April 4, 2025