

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

**UFHSA Board of Directors Meeting  
March 15, 2024**

**Time Convened: 9:59 a.m. Time  
Adjourned: 12:39 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), Charles Ellis, Michael Francis, John Fraser, William Robinson, Herschel Shepard, Doug Wiles, Fr. Thomas Willis, James Cusick, John Regan, Ken Smith

**Board Members Absent:** Buff Gordon, Don Slesnick, Tracy Upchurch

**Staff/Others Present:** Ed Poppell, Billy Triay, Linda Dixon, Matt Ellis, Casey Wooster, Jessica Long, Mike Croce, Roger Smith, Magen Wilson, David Birchim, Laura Marion, Cindy Staveley, Ada Schmidt

**Welcome**

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

**Action Items: -**

1. **Approval of Minutes** – March 2024. *Roy Hunt made a motion to approve the minutes, Herschel Shepard seconded; Motion passed unanimously.*

2. **Financial Reports**

**A. Colonial Quarter Update – Mike Long** – no action

Mike reported that it has been a good year; admission is up 12% in the museum. There is a new booth at the visitor center and an increase in participation at the history festival. The Florida Media Marketing visit (the state's official tourism and marketing arm) was a success. The marketing ensures people know how family friendly the Colonial Quarter is. Food and Beverage is doing great with vertical income. Continue to focus on quality product and hospitality. Food sales have increased 20% from last year. An update on the sustainability model was provided. Working with Green Places to promote sustainable strategies (oyster recycling program is in full effect, composting vegetables).

Colonial Oak – hosting many events including a fundraising event for the Sheriff's Department to help relocate the homeless. This event raised about \$5,000 dollars. New Employee Assistance Program has been implemented for all Colonial Quarter employees as part of the insurance program.

Capital expenditure projects in place for a new building for dry storage, updates to the bathroom in Bull and Crown as well as in the kitchen. There are staffing challenges with turnover on the serving staff. Kitchen staff is difficult to find.

## **B. FY 2023 Audit Report - Ed Poppell**

Ed Poppell introduced the FY23 Audit Report. He mentioned that for the first time in DSO history we have a comment on our audit. Over the year, \$2,058 was not collected, so the auditors noted it. This was due to a change in vendor lease payments from 2020 that have now been brought back to normal. Since the payments go into a lockbox, the missing amount was not noticed. A new quality control policy has been implemented.

*John Regan motioned to accept the 2023 Audit Report; the motion was seconded by Herschel Sheppard and passed unanimously.*

## **C. FY 2024 Budget Report - Linda Dixon**

There are three pots of money – the first two are State Plant Operations and Maintenance PO&M money, the last one is DSO funds – generated from property leases, events, and other revenue sources.

State Properties – everything is tracking according to the budget except for overages in the utility category by the end of the year. FPNL rate increases and the change in internet providers to fiber optic has caused these overages.

Historic Saint Augustine Society Properties – this is tracking as projected.

DSO Revenue – is very strong and tracking to end the year above our projected revenue.

*John Fraser motioned to accept the 2024 Budget Report; the motion was seconded by Doug Wiles and passed unanimously.*

## **D. Adopt FY2025 Budget - Linda Dixon**

Linda discussed the expenses and revenue changes for FY2025. State Funds remain static and are not going as far as they used to. Since 2010 we have received the same amounts of money but with construction costs increasing along with labor, power, internet, building permit fees, etc, this budget is not going as far as it used to. Thankfully, the DSO revenue budget can absorb some of these increased costs. You will see shifts in the 2025 budget. One of those shifts is the internet expense moving to the DSO budget.

Projecting a 13% increase in the DSO revenue. Administrative spending is still at 27%. Donor funding has been removed and will be reported separately from Development Director.

Capital Investments – adjustments and changes were highlighted to include projects we are working on like, Resilient landscaping, the documentary film, and planned building projects.

Long Term Spending Plan – rainy day funds for storm, governors house roof, reinvestment in the documentary film, PISA Lab, Coquina Warehouse renovation and repurposing, possibly bringing back the first colony exhibit.

Discussion ensued on the other revenue line in the budget – is the city continuing to contribute \$15,000 per year? Linda has inquired about this and is waiting to hear back. The other revenue line includes interest that has increased from the past.

*John Fraser motioned to accept the 2025 Budget; the motion was seconded by Thomas Willis and passed unanimously.*

3. **Doc Film Update, Future Marketing – Ed Poppell**

The exclusive arrangement with PBS in Dec. 2017 had a 7-year marketing right and in December 2024, that exclusivity ends. Ed Poppell has been working with PBS to see if they will extend the exclusive marketing rights to the Doc Film. They have asked if we have any outstanding rights and clearances with unions or other specialty services that we need to renew. Ed assured PBS that we do not. Ed feels positive that PBS will want some or all marketing exclusivity and optimistic they will decide in the next few months.

*Approval to move forward if PBS agrees to continue exclusive arrangement – Doug Wiles motioned to accept the PBS exclusive marketing agreement; the motion was seconded by Tom Willis and passed unanimously.*

4. **FP&L Solar Proposal Update – Ed Poppell**

Ed Poppell provided an update on the potential partnership with FPL. It would be a subscription with FP&L that will slightly increase our bill to support alternative energy generation but generate a return on investment over time. Originally it was a 7 – 10-year payback and after following up with them, FP&L has updated the partnership subscription payback to 22 years. This is not an attractive option and Ed would like approval to reject the offer.

*Tom Willis motioned to reject the FP&L offer; the motion was seconded by Herschel Shepard and passed unanimously.*

5. **2024 Board Member Vacancies – Ed Poppell**

To be approved at December Board of Trustees Meeting  
Reappointments

- Charles Ellis
- John Fraser
- Fr. Tom Willis

New Board Members to replace retiring board members (Don Slesnick, Roy Hunt, Allen Lastinger)

- Jane Adams
- Susan Parker
- Doug Jones

*- Herschel Shepard motioned to accept the reappointment and new member nominations; the motion was seconded by Doug Wiles and passed unanimously.*

**Committee Reports**

1. Education Committee – No new development at this time.

2. Development Committee Update – Jessica Long

Jessica reported that there were twenty-six donors and \$1,029 was raised on Giving Day, February 15, 2024.

The committee outlined a fundraising goal for this year of \$20,000, and the amount raised so far is just over \$24,000 YTD from July 1- March 15. Jessica provided a brief update on the Coquina Housing project and mentioned that the committee continues to work with PISA on events and community outreach.

## **Discussion Items**

### **1. Report from the City – David Birchim**

Dave Birchim, the City Manager, reported that the City is considering a parking garage with approximately 750 spaces at the Broudy Liquor store property on the west corner of King St. and US 1. It is currently in the design stage and the lease agreement is in the city's legal team review process.

The city's real estate development continues to be robust and the shipyard property behind Target continues to develop. New hotels are under construction, permitting or design on US 1 North and throughout the community. The city has found a site for the new island fire station. The site plan is underway and will be rolled out to the community shortly. City Manager Birchim mentioned that the city's parking code is being updated and has gone through first reading. The hope is that it will stimulate economic development through parking. The city is updating the noise ordinance, this has come about due to the downtown nightlife ordinance hearings.

The 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of sister cities is scheduled this year in September and will include events to celebrate.

A park improvements plan to Eddie Vickers Park and Dr. Robert B. Hayling Freedom Park have been approved and funded through the Lincolnville Community Redevelopment area. A new Community Redevelopment Area is being created on the west side of town.

Legislative session in Tallahassee tentatively awarded five million dollars to the city for the septic to sewer conversion program in west St. Augustine. Several bills passed one of which is the vacation rental bill. This state bill eliminates the city from managing the impact of vacation rentals through a city ordinance.

The St. Augustine public works and utility departments have been consolidated. This will improve customer service and internal communications.

The city is currently hiring a new Finance Director. The city's budget includes a \$15,000 budget for PISA. A consultant has been hired to update the city's Human Resources policy to improve minority recruitment and retention.

The Dining with Dignity program is moving to a permanent location at the drop-in day center.

King St. bridge replacement project – DOT plans to replace the bridge has had a delay in starting and will take twice as long to complete than initially planned. DOT will present at the next commission meeting.

Question asked: How did parking tourism do over the holiday?

Answer: Parking revenues continue to go in a positive direction. Revenue from municipal marina is robust.

### **2. History Festival 2024 – Roger Smith**

The festival is on track to be more successful than the last two years. To show appreciation to venues at historic sites, there is a BBQ at Colonial Quarter for venue staff and employees. This event was well received by the community.

This year the two new categories added are historic gardens and historic cemeteries. New venues include the Alligator Farm, the First Congregation of the Sons of Israel and, likely, Grace United Methodist. City of

Saint Augustine is bringing in a special speaker. The Castillo is kicking off their 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary during the festival. The Fountain of Youth is quadrupling the number of programs from last year. The festival continues to grow for this year.

Allen Lastinger requested approval for him to evaluate the potential of a Winter History Festival  
*William Robinson motioned to approve the evaluation for History Festival; John Regan seconded. Motion passed unanimously.*

### **3. PISA Update – Linda Dixon for Cleary Larkin**

Linda briefly updated the board on the Resilient Landscape project. The project is working to develop strategies to minimize impacts on UFHSA historic structures as well as within the community. The project is currently in phase 1. They are also continuing to work on historic structure reports.

### **4. Oral History Project – Ed Poppell**

Anna Hamilton at University of Florida is leading the project of documenting UFHSA's formation and early years of operation.

### **5. Construction Update**

Linda Dixon reported on ongoing building maintenance projects to include roof replacement on Salcedo Kitchen, back stair replacement at the Cerveau House. She also reported that the acoustic panels in the Governor's House are complete. Other projects include the library's updated HVAC system and the Historic Society's updated alarm system. The Ribera house has received wood rot replacement and repainting. Other current projects include a landscape refresh at Ribera Park, replacing the public bathrooms lights and plumbing fixtures, and painting the Oldest House exterior.

### **6. Library Staff Report - Laura Marion and Casey Wooster**

Laura reported that with the help of OPS employee Daniela Ortiz, the digital slide collection has been completed and they are now creating the metadata for the 16,000 digital slides. Pro bono projects with the community are still in progress, including a project with the National Guard to digitize their newsletter "4 Guardsmen."

New material for the library includes Allen's post card collection, and it will be up on UFEC in the next 3-6 weeks. Also part of the postcard collection are the "Gilded Age" post cards from the St. Augustine Historic Society.

The library is still working on deaccessioning artifacts. Forty-eight additional items have been deaccessioned to the Florida School of the Arts at St. Johns River State College. A total of 340 items have been transferred to date. They are still looking for homes for the last sixty items.

This spring the library has assisted twelve researchers since December. They have taught two classes from Flagler College and hosted two public talks. Two more talks are scheduled for the next week in March with Dolce Roman from the Harn to talk about the Vickers collection. The public talk in April is Women's History Panel featuring women archeologists, including Kathy Deagan.

Upcoming events at the library include partnering with Flagler College's Lifelong Learning Program to offer a tour and talk about the territorial period maps that are on display and a new exhibit coming up for the History Festival featuring photographs from

their staff collections.

## **7. St. Augustine Historical Society – Magen Wilson**

Megan Wilson provided an update that Dr. Tom Graham's book "Valliant Soldiers" has been published and is available for sale. The Historic Society will be hosting the Drakes Raid Encampment for the History Festival and Dr. Christine Miller is holding a talk on Colonial Medicinal Practices.

Coming up for the Historical Society is a fundraising event for book conservation. New programs for the fall include a lecture series; "Territorial Fights to Civil Rights" and an exhibit; "Political Cartoons from 100 Years Ago". There will be a new exhibit in June featuring Thomas Jackson and Lenny Foster's photography of Lincolnvile in the last one hundred years.

Magen shared the current Status of the Llambias house. They are working with FEMA and city for funds to repair damage from late storms in 2022. The plumbing and electric need repair but the structure is sound. They are looking for grant funding for repairs. The cost estimate is about \$40,000 a piece.

## **8. Other Business-**

Allen Lastiger congratulated Roy Hunt on being awarded the 2023 Avilés Award.

**9. Fall Meeting Date:** To schedule for Friday in late November or early December.

### **Action Items (Part 2)**

#### **1. Officer Appointments – Allen Lastinger**

Ed Poppell updated the board that he is retiring at the end of March from the UF Historic St. Augustine Board. Allen said a few words to recognize Ed for his contributions to the board. Allen recommended Linda Dixon for Secretary and Suzanne Gabel as Treasurer.

*John Fraser motioned to approve officer appointments; the motion was seconded by Doug Wiles, and passed unanimously*

**Meeting Adjourned at 12:39 pm**

**ADOPTED 12/6/2024**