

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

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UFHSA Board of Directors Meeting

10:00 A.M., May 15, 2013

Dunham House, St. Augustine Historical Society Administration Bldg., St. Augustine

Board Members Present: Chair Allen Lastinger, Rick Gonzalez, Roy Hunt, Kathy Deagan, Michael Gannon, Danny Ponce (via phone for the morning session), Tracy Upchurch, Arva Parks, Bill Proctor.

Board Members Absent: Larry Rivers, Jorge Hernandez, Suzanne Lewis, Don Slesnick

Staff Present: Ed Poppell, Linda Dixon, Jan Matthews, Billy Triay, Sue Cobb.

Mr. Lastinger, Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:08 a.m.

Minutes of the November 16, 2012, meeting, were distributed. Mr. Lastinger called for additions or corrections. Mr. Gonzalez moved, and Professor Hunt seconded approval of the minutes as written.

Mr. Lastinger introduced Ed Poppell, Linda Dixon, and Billy Triay to the board and visitors attending the meeting, as the UF representatives who were contacts for board liaison, facilities construction and renovations, or property management information.

The next action item was a financial report/budget update from Linda Dixon, from UF Facilities Planning and Construction. Ms. Dixon gave an overview of the budget tracking spreadsheet and the proposed 2013-2014 budget information that was provided to the board members prior to the meeting. In particular, she pointed out the \$100,000.00 reflected in the Revenues category for "Colonial Quarter Commissions" will be a yearly receipt from Colonial Quarter LLC (per their agreement with UFHSA), or 5% of the Colonial Quarter revenues, whichever is greater. Mr. Gonzalez inquired if any cultural grants had been pursued, and Ms. Dixon indicated that no other outside grants had been pursued at this time.

Mr. Lastinger inquired as to a general sense of financial status of the Colonial Quarter. Mr. Poppell responded that there is not much of a track record, as of this time. He noted that Mr. Pat Croce, of Colonial Quarter LLC, has been disappointed in admissions revenues, as of now. He is hopeful this picks up. Mr. Lastinger advised that Mr. Croce had invested more funds than he had anticipated in the project. Mr. Poppell stated that Mr. Croce had anticipated investing about \$1m, but he has invested about \$2.5m thus far.

Dr. Gannon moved, Dr. Deagan seconded, and the board unanimously approved the budget as presented.

The next action item is the sale of the Bevill lot, a .0449 acre lot. Professor Roy Hunt reported when he was with the Secretary of State's Office, the possibility was raised of selling some of

the properties in St. Augustine, contingent on an endowment for maintenance of the properties. There has been an approach and there was discussion as to whether the property should be sold or not.

Professor Hunt advised he felt a proposal was okay, as long as it provides a benefit program and preservation covenants to secure guidance to preserve. Mr. Poppell indicated that someone had approached the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) regarding the possible acquisition of this property.. The lot is approximately 2,000 square feet. It is costing \$50/month to mow the grass currently. Dr. Deagan noted that cost was not much to use the property to protect archaeological resources. Ms. Dixon indicated that the Florida Division of Historical Resources provided an informal review suggesting the sale could be acceptable with covenants similar to those suggested by Professor Hunt. Mr. Poppell proposed creating language in an appropriations bill that the funds would be shepherded into our appropriations. Mr. Poppell indicated the market price was about \$50,000 based on a cursory review of comparables. Ms. Dixon noted that it had not been appraised, and it would sell through FDEP.

There was a motion made by Professor Hunt to investigate, in the event of the sale of the Bevill lot, what the prospective funds could be used for, and those funds be directed to a specific use for the UFHSA projects on historic properties in the city. Mr. Gonzalez seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously.

Mr. Lastinger asked that Ms. Dixon work with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection and Mr. Poppell to secure a legislative sponsor to make this happen. Mr. Poppell indicated it would be next year.

The next action item was the authorization of the board Chair to extend the Colonial Quarter LLC contract for the management of the Colonial Quarter. Mr. Poppell indicated the Colonial Quarter LLC has approached UFHSA and asked to extend their current contract, which is currently 10 years with a five year extension option, for another 5 years in order to attempt to recoup their investment. Mr. Poppell noted that there is nothing in the protective clause of the agreement that would prohibit this extension. He confirmed the intent for Colonial Quarter LLC to continue to provide quality and refreshing and continuous updating of the Colonial Quarter experience. Mr. Poppell indicated that Colonial Quarter LLC has invested much in social media, cable, and media marketing. He also mentioned the need for more wayfinding signage for entry on St. George Street that could assist in accessing the museum.

A motion was made by Dr. Gannon and seconded by Mr. Gonzalez to authorize Mr. Lastinger, as board Chair, to execute the contract with the Colonial Quarter LLC for a 5-year extension of their current contract. The motion passed unanimously.

The next action item was the authorization of the board Chair to execute a contract for the operation of the First Colony Museum at the Government House. Mr. Poppell informed the board that the First Colony Museum exhibit would have a soft opening in September with the targeted grand opening celebration on October 17, 2013. He stated that the exhibit would be in St. Augustine for three years, through 2015, and then travel. He has been in discussion with Pat Croce of the Colonial Quarter LLC to manage the Museum and lead groups through it. This

would require tour guides. He approached Mr. Croce to manage the Museum in concert with the Colonial Quarter, as an extension of the CQ. There are possibilities for joint ticketing, wayfinding, on-line revenues, as well as promotional and marketing to school groups. Dr. Deagan inquired as to whether the contract would include exhibit maintenance. Mr. Poppell indicated those details would be worked through with the Colonial Quarter LLC; but noted that we would continue to maintain the exhibit. Mr. Croce has agreed to run the gift shop, as well. Professor Hunt suggested calling it “The History Shop” instead of the “gift shop.” There might be event revenues in order to help him recoup his costs with revenue sharing after that point. Mr. Poppell also indicated to the board that there is possibility for ticket partnering with the National Park Service. Mr. Poppell will negotiate an agreement with Mr. Croce that is mutually beneficial. A motion was made by Professor Hunt and seconded by Mr. Gonzalez to authorize the board Chair to execute a contract for the operation of the First Colony Museum at the Government House. The motion passed unanimously.

With regard to the next 3 action items, Mr. Lastinger asked Mr. Poppell to give a legislative update. Mr. Poppell informed the board that the budget was with the Governor at the current time, awaiting approval or veto. The UFHSA projects requested funding of \$2.25m for:

- \$750,000 – expansion and rehabilitation of existing restrooms on St. George Street.
- \$1m – Phase II Government House rehabilitation – 2nd level restoration.
- \$500,000 – St. Augustine documentary film.

Mr. Poppell introduced the next action item for authorization of the selection of architects, etc. to get the first 2 projects going. It is necessary to be in a position to be ready to begin work if/when the funding is appropriated. As for the St. Augustine documentary film, Mr. Lastinger informed the board that he, Mr. Poppell, Dr. Gannon, Dr. Deagan, Professor Hunt, Dr. Susan Parker, Dr. Churchill Roberts, and Dr. David Colburn are involved in conceptualizing four 1-hour documentaries to be edited down to four 30-minute films. There are three producers that will be giving presentations in Gainesville on May 30, 2013:

- Tony Haines, Small Planet Pictures
- Susan Howarth, WEDU
- Rick Schneider, WPBT

It is the intent to select a producer late May or early June. If the funding is available in July, it is targeted to complete the project by June 30, 2014.

Rick Gonzalez moved to:

- Authorize hiring of architect with historic preservation credentials to plan/design restroom rehab/construction
- Authorize hiring of architect with historic preservation credentials to plan/design the rehab of Government House Phase II
- Authorize the contracting/hiring of talent to facilitate the documentary film

Professor Hunt seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Committee Reports

Development Committee: Ms. Suzanne Lewis, committee chair, was unable to attend the meeting, so Mr. Lastinger reported for the committee in her stead. He informed the board that Orrie Covert, who had formerly been working with the committee regarding fundraising, has left UF. He introduced Mr. Chris Needles, with the UF Foundation, who is now working with UFHSA's Development Committee for this purpose. Mr. Needles has been with the UF Foundation for 14 years. He is experienced in foundation and corporate giving.

Mr. Needles assured the board that he shared collective concern with the lack of fundraising success at this time. He stated that the Foundation had fallen short on execution and accountability. He noted some major points to the board:

- His first job is to ramp up the pace.
- The prospect pool needs additional research.
- He is looking internationally at high profile individuals.
- High priority of getting the project visible.
- Researching accessibility.
- Target state and national foundations with historic preservation in their bases
 - Target 50 to begin with
 - Get them concept papers
 - Create conversations
- Progress with naming opportunities at Government House

Mr. Lastinger encouraged Mr. Needles to contact Darcie MacMahon at the Florida Museum of Natural History. Mr. Gonzalez encouraged him to look into cultural grants. Mr. Needles indicated he would touch base with the Division of Sponsored Research.

Mr. Lastinger advised that the board has responsibilities and requested each board member to identify and send to Ms. Lewis or Mr. Needles three (3) donor's names to put on a list for future contact.

Finance / Audit / Governance Committee: Mr. Slesnick, committee chair, was unable to attend the meeting, so Mr. Poppell reported for the committee in his stead. He informed the board that Carr Riggs Ingram in Gainesville would be performing the audit of the corporation for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2013, which is required. They have begun preliminary work, and there should be an update by the October 18, 2013, board meeting.

Education / Interpretation / Facilities Committee: Professor Roy Hunt indicated that the board expanded the committee for reviewing and commenting on the content of interpretive panels for the Colonial Quarter LLC to assure accuracy and authenticity. In addition to the standing committee members, Buff Gordon, Susan Parker, Barbara Wingo, Jan Matthews, and Herschel Shepard have worked 100's of hours to create these panels. These panels have been bound for staff and board members. He thanked Michael Kung in the College of Design, Planning and Construction, for his help with the project. Professor Hunt noted that there was a failure to credit where images came from on some of the boards in the CQ. Mr. Poppell stated

that the content has been provided. It is important for spot-checking, secret shoppers to ask questions. Dr. Deagan noted that the arrangement does allow for changes for review.

The goal for Government House is to tell the most accurate story of St. Augustine. Previously, a 1-page collections management mission statement for Government House was approved. He stated that at the next board meeting, there would be an amended policy to include all collections, not just Government House. It was noted that there are a lot of duplicate items and, with adoption of a complete collections policy, de-accessioning may be contemplated. There will be further updates for the October board meeting. An inventory of almost 2,000 items has been completed. It is a varied list of items.

Government House Rehabilitation/Construction Update

Ms. Linda Dixon presented the construction update.

- LM-5080 – Historic Building Rehabilitation and maintenance - Complete
 - 6 state buildings, \$189,143 (under GMP)
 - 3 St. Augustine Historical Society buildings, \$101,460 (under GMP)
- LM-5046 – Government House Rehabilitation
 - \$1.6m projected budget
 - Construction began November 2012
 - Substantial completion June 14, 2013
 - Final completion July 12, 2013
- SM-5174 Government House Lobby-Exhibits and Signage – design underway; install by October 17, 2013 Grand Opening
- LM-5056 First Colony Exhibit – install July 15-August 9, 2013

Mr. Lastinger inquired if the funding was received from the Legislature as expected, what would the next priority be? Ms. Dixon responded:

- Restoration of the floor plan of the east wing
- 2nd floor – rework offices, creating more flexible space
- Elevator to be ADA accessible to most of upper floors
- Possible chair lift
- Infrastructure upgrades for mechanical, electrical, plumbing, heat/air, fire protection, and telecommunications

Ms. Dixon noted there is a lot of mechanical equipment in the basement. It's not a good area for storage. The Fire Marshal has requested that there be minimal storage there. Ms. Dixon noted that the Library collection and digitization lab is housed on the 2nd floor. There are object collections and others rooms where there is an opportunity for academic areas, possibly open up for more flexibility; public meeting spaces, seminars. She stated that there is a small conference room there now. There are no plans for residential space. She noted that mechanical/electrical updates were at the top of the list and replacing old HVAC systems. The Sala will receive lighting improvements in the current project.

Mr. Miles Albertson, UF Facilities Planning and Construction indicated they have exterior restoration consultants for Government House. The cost of that renovation would be \$14m for everything.

First Colony Update

Mr. Lastinger introduced Dr. Kathleen Deagan, who reported on the First Colony Exhibit timeline:

- \$1.7m for the exhibit
- Involved a team in the project
 - Florida Museum of Natural History
 - UF Facilities Planning and Construction
 - UF Historic St. Augustine DSO
 - Scholar Consultants
 - Community Partners
- AV-11: QR Codes – short AV pieces accessed through QR code scans on personal mobile devices will augment the interpretation of existing exhibit elements and provide interpretation where none exists, to enhance the visitor experience.
- Area I – Introduction
- Area II – World of the Timucua
- Area III – How do we know? Life in the New Colony
- Area IV – Convergence of Culture
- Area V – Where are we now?
- Possible soft-open in late August, if not sooner
- Formal opening – October 17, 2013

Professor Hunt commented that some thought should be given to what to do after the completion.

Mr. Lastinger noted none of this would not have been possible without Dr. William Proctor proposing the legislation four years ago – Colonial Quarter totally running; Government House rehabilitation well on its way; and the First Colony Museum Exhibit – October opening. Dr. Proctor stated it had far surpassed his expectations. Mr. Lastinger also noted that Senator Thrasher had also been instrumental in helping with legislation for St. Augustine.

St. Augustine Historical Society (SAHS) Report

Mr. Lastinger introduced Dr. Susan Parker, Executive Director, SAHS. Dr. Parker gave a brief history of the Tovar House to the board. Renovations had just been completed before the lease with UFHSA. With the new heat and air installed, people were more inclined to visit the house. The building had been completely assessed by UF's ADA representatives. The house had been given an exemption exception. She noted that Herschel Shepard had been doing extensive research on the building. Dr. Parker noted that since UFHSA had begun taking care of the operations, it had freed up time for more historical research. She noted that the administration building was built to celebrate the 400th anniversary of St. Augustine. The SAHS was established 130 years ago. They purchased their first properties in 1918, one being the Tovar House. She noted some possible plans for the Tovar House:

- Space to display artwork
- Small exhibit about the house or about historic preservation – short video in exhibit

Dr. Parker distributed a flyer for a book signing and advised the board about some events that the SAHS was involved in coming up this year and next. She is very enthused about the important relationship between UF and SAHS, and the benefits for both.

City of St. Augustine – City Manager Update

Mr. Lastinger introduced John Regan, St. Augustine’s City Manager, who presented a Power Point presentation to the board:

- UF & City of St. Augustine - 450th – Principle objectives
 - Destination awareness through true and accurate history of St. Augustine
 - Economic Development through sustainable tourism
 - Celebration – 500th anniversary of discovery of Florida – April 3, 2013
 - Picasso Art & Arena - St Augustine Visitor Center – February 1-August 11, 2013
 - El Galeon – May 23-June 3, 2013 – The Viva FL 500 Voyage
 - National Summit – International Affairs, Economic & Cultural Exchange Programs – Fall 2014
 - Infusion of Spanish Culture – Spanish Market in St. Augustine
 - Ancient City Mosaic – old Wells Fargo bank lobby – auction – funds for St. Johns Education Foundation
 - Gentlemen of the Road Stopover in St. Augustine – September 13-14, 2013 – Mumford & Sons
 - Tapestry: The Cultural Threads of First America – June 20-July 31, 2013
 - St. Augustine Seawall upgrades
 - St. Augustine Infrastructure – major improvements – UF presence critical to St. Augustine making it through economic hard times. St. Augustine is able to proceed with other projects due to UFHSA managing the Colonial Quarter and other properties.
 - Working with public/private partnerships to rebuild downtown streets. Some should be complete by 2015.

Signage/Wayfinding

Mr. Regan introduced Mark Knight, St. Augustine Director of Planning and Building. Mr. Knight distributed a handout to board members, “City of St. Augustine – St. Augustine Wayfinding Program.” The purpose of the wayfinding system is to provide directions to buildings and neighborhoods that authentically represent St. Augustine’s heritage as determined from the National Park Services National Register of Historic Places Program.

The program’s master plan outlined the components of a wayfinding system with recommendations on design and placement of the signs in the St. Augustine context. The design was updated and location of signs studied. His presentation included design samples of the signs and maps indicating the pedestrian system, as well as the location of many of the historic properties that are displayed on the sign listings.

Mr. Poppell informed the board that the St. Augustine Strategic Plan included a wayfinding component. He thanked the City of St. Augustine for their work on implementing this program.

St. Johns Visitor Survey

Mr. Lastinger introduced Mr. Richard Goldman, Executive Director, the St. Augustine, Ponte Vedra & The Beaches Visitors and Convention Bureau (VCB). He gave a presentation to the board showing the baseline results for the St. Johns Visitor Study – the “2013 Winter Season Report.” An online Visitors’ Survey was designed in conjunction with the St. Johns Tourist Development Council (TDC) and the VCB. Respondents accessed the survey in one of the following ways:

- Intercept Method – an email with a link to the survey was sent to visitors whose addresses were collected via an iPad by TDC Intercept Staff
- Lodging Partners – an e-mail with a link to the survey was sent to visitors whose email addresses were collected by lodging properties
- Stakeholder Distribution of Survey URL on Business Card – a link to the survey was printed on business cards distributed by various St. Johns County stakeholders

A “response incentive” was offered to increase the completion package. Results from the surveys are posted real-time in a Management Reporting System, enabling TDC and VCB staff to monitor the results throughout the study.

A total of 962 visitor surveys were completed during the Winter Season (November 26-March 17). This total approached the Winter Season sampling target of 1,250 completed surveys. The various categories surveyed:

- Visitor profiles – survey indicated a high percentage of visitors were well educated and in a higher income level
- Visitor Selection Process categories – survey indicated majority of visitors were coming to St. Augustine for the history/cultural experience
- Visitor Satisfaction & Loyalty
- Visitor Experience – survey indicated high number of visitors visited the Historic District.
- Visitor Spending

Government House-National Landmark Nomination

Dr. Antoinette “Toni” Lee, the historian who is researching Government House and preparing the nomination was unable to attend the meeting. Professor Roy Hunt updated the board in her stead. He informed the board that there is a July 25, 2013, meeting set to review the nomination to the National Register of Historic Places with National Significance. The review board forwards nominations to the National Park Service in Washington. The goal date for final Landmark designation is 2015.

Mr. Poppell advised the board that anyone who was interested could participate in a private tour of the Colonial Quarter after the meeting at 4:00 p.m.

Next Board Meetings

The next board meeting is scheduled for Friday, October 18, 2013, following the grand opening celebration for the First Colony Museum Exhibit on Thursday, October 17, 2013. Both of these events will be held in the Sala at the Government House.

There being no further business, Mr. Lastinger adjourned the meeting at 2:10 p.m.

A refreshment reception followed the board meeting

Respectfully submitted,

Kara Sue Cobb
Senior Administrative Assistant
UF Development Corporation
University of Florida