

MINUTES
FORT MYERS BEACH
Cultural and Environmental
Learning Center Advisory Board
Town Hall
2525 Estero Boulevard
Fort Myers Beach, FL 33931

Thursday, January 23, 2020

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m. by Chair Hill.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. ROLL CALL

Members present: Barbara Hill, Cynthia Richardson, Betty Simpson, Cherie Smith, Ceel Spuhler, Becky Werner and Lorrie Wolf.

Historical Advisor: Bill Grace

Town Staff: Director Alison Giesen

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – October 24, 2019

MOTION: CELCAB Member Simpson moved to approve the minutes; second by CELCAB Member Wolf.

VOTE: Motion passed unanimously.

V. PUBLIC COMMENT – no public comment.

VI. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Director Giesen reported that the lecture series sold out for each event. She stated that interviews would be held next week for the social media communications coordinator position. She indicated that she was working with Director O'Riley and staff regarding the Tourism Development Council (TDC) Grant application for next fiscal year. She noted that WGCU ran radio ads for the Mound House and they were creating TV ads. The Christmas Market fundraiser hosted by the Friends of the Mound House was successful and Director Giesen mentioned the March 27, 2020, Artful Intersection fundraiser. She thanked volunteers for participating in the certification program, which is part of the process on accreditation for the Florida Society of Ethical Ecotourism.

Director Giesen will keep CELCAB informed concerning the publication of Pat McCowan's Mound House book. She commented that she was interested in holding a Centennial Celebration multi-day event with an Arts and Attractions Grant and that they were organizing a trip to Cuba from April 30, 2020, to May 7, 2020, and 10 people were interested. She reported that Penny Jarrett continued to work on the "What's in the Water" project. She noted that a teen trip to Costa

Rica was being planned in conjunction with Bay Oaks and that she was planning to use scholarship funding, raised by the Community Foundation. She stated that Science Camp was pared down to four weeks. She reviewed student tours and special events for January and February. Although net sales in December were disappointing, due to low visitor counts, free events and the unusual rainy December, Chair Hill pointed out that they did more with less and there was steady growth from year to year.

VII. PLACEMENT OF NATIONAL REGISTER PLAQUE (Board Action)

Director Giesen shared a photo of the placement of the plaque, as suggested by Advisor Grace.

MOTION: CELCAB Member Werner moved to install the historic register plaque centered in the space to the right of the entrance to the museum store; second by CELCAB Member Richardson.

VOTE: Motion passed unanimously.

VIII. NEWTON BEACH PARK STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE

CELCAB Members agreed that the updated restrooms looked great. Chair Hill addressed the paint color and signage. Director Giesen will provide a color wheel at the next meeting and members will research the original color of the building.

Chair Hill questioned approach on the signage in light of Town branding efforts. Director Giesen remarked that the conversation should be held in the summer after RMA created a master plan and it will include coordination of signage with a new name.

Discussion was held regarding the bocce ball courts. CELCAB Member Wolf suggested contacting condominiums with bocce ball teams with the possibility of hosting tournaments at Newton Beach. CELCAB Member Werner suggested submitting a press release.

Director Giesen indicated she would research food service options.

CELCAB Member Smith brought up Breakfast on the Beach and the Conservation Café. Director Giesen stated that she would offer them in March.

Chair Hill questioned whether visitors would be tracked. Director Giesen responded affirmatively. CELCAB Member Werner questioned whether they received parking revenue. Director Giesen replied negatively and indicated requesting a report from parking.

CELCAB Member Werner supported renaming Newton Beach. CELCAB Member Simpson revealed that she was part of a past committee to rename Newton Beach and she will review her records of the meetings. Director Giesen expressed an interest in holding public meetings and will check with the Town regarding requirements.

IX. BOARD MEMBER ITEMS AND REPORTS

CELCAB Member Wolf enjoyed the volunteer certification program and hoped to volunteer in the summer.

CELCAB Member Smith agreed with CELCAB Member Wolf.

Chair Hill shared a story from a friend who always took visitors to the Mound House and continued to learn something new from each visit. She questioned whether they requested funding for a larger screen in the underground exhibit. Director Giesen replied that the exhibit had to be

stabilized before replacing audiovisual equipment. Discussion was held regarding upgrading all equipment and the capital improvement list.

CELCAB Member Spuhler was thrilled regarding the placement of the historic plaque. Advisor Grace shared how he came up with the placement.

CELCAB Member Werner stated that the February 3, 2020, Town Council meeting included the walkover issue on the south end of the island. She was approached by other people who wanted to build a walkover on their section of the beach, and they obtained a permit to destroy the mangroves on one of the shores. She encouraged members to attend the meeting or email Council Members. Chair Hill added that the sand was not there years ago. CELCAB Member Werner stated that the walkover was a money-making deal for the owners.

CELCAB Member Richardson – no items.

X. PUBLIC COMMENT – no public comment.

XI. FUTURE MEETING DATE – March 26, 2020

Chair Hill will present their report to Town Council on February 18, 2020.

XII. ADJOURN

MOTION: CELCAB Member Richardson moved to adjourn; second by CELCAB Member Smith.

VOTE: Motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:12 p.m.

Adopted 2/7/2020 with/without changes. Motion by Betty Simpson
(DATE)

Vote: all Signature: Barbara Hill

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