

MINUTES
FORT MYERS BEACH
Cultural and Environmental
Learning Center Advisory Board
DiamondHead Beach Resort
2000 Estero Boulevard
Fort Myers Beach, FL 33931
Thursday, April 27, 2023

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 3:02 p.m. by Chair Hill.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL

Members present: Kerrie Henderson (via phone), Barbara Anderson Hill, Betty Simpson, Cheri Smith, Ellen Vaughan and Lorrie Wolf.

Excused: Becky Werner

Town Staff: Interim Cultural Parks & Recreation Director Jeff Hauge

Town Council Liaison: Jim Atterholt

REORGANIZATION

MOTION: CELCAB Member Simpson moved to nominate Barbara Anderson Hill as chair, second by CELCAB Member Vaughan.

VOTE: Motion passed unanimously.

MOTION: CELCAB Member Simpson moved to nominate Cheri Smith as vice chair; second by Chair Hill.

VOTE: Motion passed unanimously.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – July 28, 2022

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

VOTE: Motion passed unanimously.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT – no public comment.

V. STAFF LIAISON REPORT

Chair Hill thanked Alison Giesen for her work during her tenure and Interim Director Hauge for stepping into the position. He stated that three employees were still working at the Mound House and noted that some did not return after Ian.

VI. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

A. Mound House

Interim Director Hauge reported that the damage was limited and the Mound House was open. Electricians were working on the wiring for the underground exhibit and it should be open soon. An Earth Day event was held and Interim Director Hauge was looking forward to more events. Guided tours will resume next week and kayak tours will start on Saturday. He noted that a few trees had to be removed, but the vegetation was returning. He thought all the signs were intact except for the brown one from the county on Estero Blvd. CELCAB Member Henderson offered to assist with the CELCAB website. Interim Director Hauge encouraged people to sign up for upcoming lectures scheduled through September. He noted it would be nice to have summer programming for students since Bay Oaks was unavailable.

B. Newton Beach Park

Interim Director Hauge noted that the debris was removed from the site and Environmental Project Manager Chadd Chustz indicated that the property might be used as a sand distribution site. After the sand is removed, temporary restrooms will be installed. Funds for new shade structures were approved by the TDC (Tourist Development Council) and plans to revitalize the park were moving forward.

CELCAB Member Henderson questioned whether they would have input regarding the property. Chair Hill replied affirmatively and described the strategic plan. CELCAB Member Smith asked whether they could address renaming the property. Chair Hill suggested adding the topic to the strategic plan and reviewing it at their next meeting.

Liaison Atterholt discussed the emergency berm and sand renourishment projects. He encouraged property owners on the beach to sign the easement paperwork for free sand. He described topics and people he spoke with in his Key Questions with Key Staffers interviews. He was not sure whether funds would be available to rebuild the structure. Interim Director Hauge reported that the parking lot would remain the same and the goal was to rebuild a structure.

VII. FRIENDS OF MOUND HOUSE REPORT

CELCAB Member Vaughan reported that CELCAB Member Simpson came up with the name "Party for Preservation" for the event at the end of March, which was a success. The Friends spent just under \$3,000.00 for the event and raised \$2,000.00 in donations. An event will be planned in the fall and another in the spring. She added that the Friends could insert the word preservation in the title of future fundraisers. She noted that the Mound House books were not lost and were being sold at the museum store. CELCAB Member Vaughan reported that TDC funds for a website were approved and a subcommittee was formed to redo the website. She invited CELCAB Member Henderson to attend a ZOOM meeting next week and she accepted. She indicated that the Friends were discussing how to honor Bill Grace with input from his wife.

VIII. MEMBER ITEMS AND REPORTS

CELCAB Member Simpson noted that it was good to meet again and move forward with plans. CELCAB Member Smith noted that the Mound House opening was successful and was available for meetings. New merchandise will be ordered for the Gift Shop. She thanked everyone for their hard work putting it back together.

CELCAB Member Wolf was in awe that the Mound House survived the hurricane.

Liaison Atterholt described the fishing opportunities at the dock at the Mound House. He noted that the new Town Manager started May 1 and a temporary lighting fix on Estero Blvd. will be proposed at the next town council meeting. He reported that the Lee County Resiliency Committee would conduct a public hearing from 6:00-8:00 p.m. on May 4, 2023, at DiamondHead regarding available funds for recovery. He stated that the vote on the interlocal for the beach school was postponed. He encouraged CELCAB members to email school board members to support the school.

Chair Hill mentioned how much she missed Bill Grace and thanked Susan Grace for attending the meeting.

No items from other members.

IX. PUBLIC COMMENT

Susan Grace stated that the museum inventory was on ShopKeep and thought they could migrate the merchandise to the website. She questioned the legality of feather flags for the Mound House on Estero Blvd. until the county replaces the sign. Interim Director Hauge noted the signs they had were used before, but he will double check with permitting.

X. SET NEXT MEETING AGENDA AND DATE

Chair Hill received support to schedule monthly meetings again starting May 25, 2023.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: CELCAB Member Simpson moved to adjourn; second by CELCAB Member Vaughan.

VOTE: Motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:08 p.m.

Adopted 5/25/23 with/without changes. Motion by _____
(DATE)

Vote: _____ Signature: Barbara Hill

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