

Minutes of St. John's Advisory Council Meeting August 2, 2000 in the Science Center Natural History Museum

Present: Bob Ellenbecker, John Geissler, Dorothy Johnson, Fr. John Kulas, O.S.B., Janette Monear, Peter Olin, Ron Weinhold, Linda Mock

Absent: Gordon Bailey, Larry Davis, David Hartwell, Tom Kroll, Linda Marrin, Scott May, Bob Thomsen

Acting Director, John Geissler called the meeting to order about 1:20 p.m. He called everyone's attention to the handouts on the table in front of them. The first handout is the meeting agenda.

1. The Inner Campus Native Flower Garden

The Native Flower Garden is planted and growing well. The money raised from the May 20th plant sale helped pay for the 17 different native species that were planted. Prairie Restoration made a matching donation.

2. Newsletter

The next newsletter should be mailed out by the end of August. John suggested building a bank of articles for future newsletters. Since the members of this advisory council have a variety of backgrounds relating to the arboretum, John asked the council members if they would be willing to contribute articles. Members were willing to write articles given enough notice.

3. Oak Savanna

We have been clearing areas in the oak savanna with the Seppi Brush clearing machine, which has been on loan to St. John's Arboretum by David Hartwell and the Belwin Nature Center. With the aid of the machine, five acres on the south end of the savanna will be ready for groundlayer planting in Spring, 2001.

4. Kiosk Signage

John presented signage samples for the Kiosk. There was discussion about the wording. A question was raised about the Bible text. The sample used an old translation Bible text. Will visitors, especially younger students understand the old Bible text? Should new Bible text be used? The council did not show a preference, however, agreed the signage needs to be consistent throughout the campus. John decided the new Biblical translation would be used.

5. Budget

Handout number two is the budget. The council reviewed the handout. A suggestion was made to include the In-Kind contributions in the format. It is important to keep track of this. There was discussion about redoing the format. A primary area of importance to the Arboretum is fundraising. The budget needs to reflect the bottom line. In that way, we will know what fundraising needs to be done and the amount needed. It was suggested that a budget summary would be helpful. There was discussion about what to include in a summary. The Arboretum has been applying to foundations for grants.

There are times when a budget summary is preferred over a full budget report. Peter Olin offered to set up a time for John to meet with the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum's budget personnel. John will be in touch with Peter.

6. Boardwalk Planning

John presented pictures and diagrams of the location of the proposed boardwalk. St. John's University has donated \$1,000 toward the boardwalk planning expenses. John Geissler, Janette Monear and James Dean (Architect) have recently visited boardwalks. There was discussion about what material the boardwalk will be made of. At this time, they think it will be made of pressure treated wood but, cedar will be priced as well. This will be a floating boardwalk. There was discussion about the product used to float it on. Dow Products makes a plastic coated styrofoam that seems to be the most stable. James Dean is in the process of drawing plans. The boardwalk will be dedicated to Fr. Paul Schwietz, O.S.B.

The boardwalk proposal will then be presented to the Abbey Design Committee for approval. John Geissler, Fr. John Kulas, O.S.B. and Br. Benedict Leuthner, O.S.B. will be making the presentation.

A question was raised regarding the liability insurance coverage on the boardwalk. This should be discussed with Br. Benedict Leuthner, O.S.B. the Treasurer.

7. Writing to Foundations for Grants

John reported he would apply for an internal professional development grant. There was discussion about what foundations to apply to for grants. The DNR has small grants available that should be checked out. The Arboretum should focus on both short term and long term needs. When those needs are identified, then we can search out foundations. This is an area that John has not been able to spend as much time as necessary to ensure future funding. When the half-time office support position is filled, John will be able to devote more time to this area. Peter Olin offered to review the Arboretum grant proposals.

Another fundraising possibility would be to have contracts with area school districts to bring students out to the Arboretum.

8. A Walk through Time

This 2-week event was organized by the University and will be spearheaded by two speaker events. The opening speech will be given by the creator of this exhibit that leads students of all ages through the major events of time. World-renowned speaker, Robert Bakker, will give the second speech. The Arboretum will help to coordinate tours and have a booth set up during these two major speaker events.

9. Strategic Plan, Draft 7, August, 2000

Dorothy Johnson presented the Strategic Plan. Handout number three. She requested the council members read through Section I. Executive Summary parts A, B, and C. This section has been completed. It was not in the previous draft. Section IV. Background has been revised and has additions. Section V. Goals, Item E, Administration has an added paragraph about Fr. Paul Schwietz.

The section titled **Actions for Strategic Plan Goals - Draft 7, August 2000** are detailed plans to reach the goals of the Arboretum's three committees.

There was discussion about the function of the Strategic Plan. One of its main purposes is to explain St. John's Arboretum to contributors. It is also helpful for internal framework. The Advisory Council decided to delete the statement - "The current Arboretum council supports the current Acting Director as a candidate for this position" from the Strategic Plan. Instead, it will write letters of support, for John Geissler to become the Arboretum Director, to Abbot Timothy Kelly, O.S.B, Corporate Treasurer, Br. Benedict Leuthner, O.S.B. and University President, Br. Dietrich Reinhart, O.S.B.

Dorothy Johnson requested that all Advisory Council Members read through the Strategic Plan. Please get your comments back to Dorothy within one week of receiving it.

Peter Olin made a motion to approve the Strategic Plan in concept with modifications in wording. Bob Ellenbecker seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor.

It was suggested the Strategic Plan be reviewed every six months.

There was discussion about developing a plan for existing and future facilities to accommodate outreach programs.

10. Saint John's Arboretum Flyer

This is handout number four. John presented this draft of a flyer that will be going to the Arboretum fundraising consultant. The flyer lists the key items the Arboretum are fundraising for. It was suggested that John review previous Advisory Council meeting minutes to be sure the wording matches. Perhaps a copy of the Strategic Plan would be helpful for the fundraising consultant. The council liked the Vision statement. This flyer could be given to potential donors. It was suggested to include education outreach in the flyer.

11. St. John's Arboretum Fall Activities

This is handout number five. John asked the Advisory Council members to complete this sign-up sheet and return it to him.

12. Council Retreat

Dorothy Johnson asked if the Advisory Council would be interested in a fall council retreat, the same as last year. The retreat is included in handout number five also. Who will be able to attend?

13. Fundraising Dinners

Don Willeke will have a dinner on Thursday, August 17th. Linda & Dan Marrin are having a fundraising event at their home in September.

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by:

Linda Mock

