

Minutes of St. John's Advisory Council Meeting February 7, 2001 in New Science Center Natural History Museum

Present: Gordon Bailey, Bob Ellenbecker, John Geissler, Tom Kroll, Fr. John Kulas, O.S.B., Br. Benedict Leuthner, O.S.B., Scott May, Elizabeth Sim, Bob Thomsen, Linda Mock

Absent: Larry Davis, Dorothy Johnson, David Hartwell, Linda Marrin, Janette Monear, Peter Olin, Ron Weinhold

Acting Director, John Geissler, called the meeting to order about 2:00 p.m.

1. Update of Saint John's Arboretum Office Staff and Director/Land Manager

John introduced Elizabeth Sim. Elizabeth works half-time, primarily mornings, in the office and does a variety of duties. Welcome Elizabeth!

The search for a Director continues. John reported 18 people applied for the position. After the various stages of the screening process was completed, two applicants were invited to campus for a final interview. The committee's first choice candidate was offered the position. He declined because he decided to stay at his current job. The committee decided not to offer the position to the second candidate because he didn't seem to be the right individual for the position. The committee is reevaluating the criteria for the position. A visionary - the ability to lead the Arboretum into the next phase is important.

2. Boardwalk Dedication

The dedication of the boardwalk, which will connect the prairie, wetland and oak savanna, will be May 19, 2001. A draft copy of the agenda was distributed. Paul Gruchow will be the keynote speaker. He was the keynote speaker at the Arboretum Dedication. Archbishop Roger Schwietz will do the Blessing. In addition, Dave Morreim will be presented with the SJU alumni Award. In the event of rain, "plan B" will be in place.

John asked the Advisory Council Members for a list of people to invite to the dedication. Some suggestions were: put a notice in the local area church bulletins, invite the St. Cloud Times, Star Tribune, Pioneer press, the Alexandria TV station, Minnesota Monthly, Pheasants Forever, Ducks Unlimited, Rice Sportsman club, Wild Ones, Audubon Society, Master Gardeners, Stearns County Horticulture Society, Nature Conservancy, Minnesota DNR, and St. John's Board of Regents. Abbot John Klassen, O.S.B. will be forwarding a list of people he thinks should be invited.

The Stearns County Master Gardeners and the Stearns County Horticulture Society are having their annual plant sale May 19th also. There was discussion about inviting them to have the plant sale in the field across from the kiosk. No decision was made.

John indicated he would need help with the walking tours of the Habitat Restoration Project that day. His thought is to place people at strategic locations along the tour route. A suggestion was made to have a mini training session for the individuals who volunteer.

There was discussion about putting together a brochure/pamphlet of the dedication to be a memorial keepsake.

3. Boardwalk Installation

We currently have 18 of the 48 stationary sections of the boardwalk on campus. the balance of the sections are scheduled to arrive in the near future. **March 10, 2001 is Volunteer Day to install the stationary sections. March 31, 2001 is Volunteer Day to place the 58 floating sections. Any and all help is welcome.**

There was discussion about finding someone to donate the shipping of the boardwalk sections. A suggestion was made to approach Dean Budde, owner of Budde Trucking in Avon. Their trucks make deliveries to the

Twin Cities area and sometimes are empty on the return trip.

4. Boardwalk Fundraising

John reported the current fundraising has generated about \$20,000 more than the budgeted expenses. If there is an excess at the end of the project, they are considering putting the excess toward developing more specific educational programs and developing a partnership with the St. Cloud School District. See handout titled Environmental Education Proposal Summary.

5. Membership Update

The membership is currently at 361.

6. Arboretum Council Committees

The Arboretum Council Member Questionnaire, which was distributed at the November 8, 2000 meeting, has been tallied. The handout titled "Arboretum Council Committees-2000, 2001" reflects the results. There was discussion about soliciting new members for these committees. John asked the Council members to make recommendations of individuals who would fit the skills needed. The new committee members should be in place by the November 7, 2001 Advisory Council meeting.

7. Strategic Planning for SJU

Saint John's University is formulating a new comprehensive capital campaign which will include Saint John's Arboretum. Patti Epsky's from the Office of the President, sent out a memo dated January 16, 2001. Included with the memo was the Strategic Planning Definitions and the Guidelines, Assumptions and Process for SAINT JOHN'S UNIVERSITY Strategic Planning. This three year Strategic Plan will be submitted to Saint John's University President's Cabinet. As outlined in Patti's memo, we needed to prepare a condensed version of "Saint John's Arboretum Strategic Plan-Fiscal Years 2001-2005". The first draft of the condensed version is titled "Arboretum Strategic Planning Directives". Copies of this information were distributed.

The goal statement lists three areas: I. Land Management; II. Education; III. PR, Marketing and Fundraising. Among the goals and objectives for Land Management are Green Certification and a SmartWood Certification. The Arboretum currently has a self-guided conifers walk. We would like to develop a self-guided deciduous tree walk and possibly a shrub walk. We would like to restore the tamaracks along the North Fork of the Watab River on the North side of the freeway and will continue planting in the oak savanna.

The educational goals include creating an elementary education program tailored to meet the environmental science education requirements of District 742 schools and develop a program to disseminate information on sustainable harvesting techniques.

The PR, Marketing and Fundraising goals include hosting conferences, workshops, develop education and outreach programs promoting sustainability and environmental awareness.

There was discussion about the importance of establishing an Endowment Fund for Saint John's Arboretum. Can an Endowment fit into the Capital Campaign?

8. Newsletter

The next newsletter will be distributed in late March. The outline for the contents was distributed.

9. Snow Shoe Walk

The snow shoe walk held on January 10th was a great success. Approximately 60 people participated.

10. Request For Assistance From Council Members

Would Tom Kroll help with the SmartWood Certification? Would Scott May assist with the dedication budget?

Would Bob Ellenbecker assist with contacting the St. Cloud School District and developing programs?

Would Bob Thomsen assist with informing the local community about the boardwalk dedication? Would

Gordon Bailey assist with the shrub walk? Would Fr. John Kulas, O.S.B. assist Janette Monear with the Dedication brochure? Thank you to everyone for your help.

The second annual Owl Hoot will be held tonight from 6-8 p.m. All Advisory Council members are invited to join the fun.

Respectfully submitted,
Linda Mock

*The next Advisory Council meeting is **May 2, 2001 at 2 p.m.** in the New Science Center, Natural History Museum. **Mark your calendars.***