

**Minutes of Saint John's Arboretum Advisory Council Meeting
February 11, 2002 in New Science Center Natural History Museum**

Present: Al Barth, John Geissler, Tom Kroll, Fr. John Kulas, O.S.B., Linda Marrin, Scott May, Janette Monear, Elizabeth Sim, Amy Schwietz, Larry Schwietz, Bob Thomsen,

Absent: Bob Ellenbecker, David Hartwell, Dorothy Johnson, Linda Mock, Steve Saupe, Ron Wienhold

Arboretum Director Tom Kroll called the meeting to order at 2:40 p.m. and Fr. John Kulas opened with a prayer.

Tom introduced the University's Strategic Plan update and noted that the Arboretum is prominently featured. The plan hits on each of the Arboretum's major goals, including preservation, restoration, sustainability, and environmental education and outreach. The president's office appreciated the Arboretum's timely contributions and focus on concrete goals.

Old Business / Committee Reports

1. PR/Membership-

Newsletter-Elizabeth reported that the following articles were planned for the next newsletter: a profile of district teacher Alison Binsfeld; an overview of the Elementary education project currently underway; an introduction to Green Certification; a spring wildflower primer; 'reflections' of a graduating senior; and a piece by Gordon Brown on the work his environmental studies class did in the fall monitoring forest health. Scott May asked that something on the upcoming Plant Sale be included.

Membership- Elizabeth reported that we have a meeting upcoming with Institutional Advancement (IA) to turn over the database. Last full renewal only netted about 30 returns. Janette Monear suggested that perhaps personal contact was needed (Council phone calls); another issue raised was whether many of those members might be one-time memorial donors; Linda Marrin said she would like to see some hard statistics; Tom agreed and noted that we should be able to get those from IA.

Free Ski Lessons- Tom reported that the ski coach offered to give a free ski lesson to new members.

PR/Homecoming events-John reported that we plan to offer a youth environmental mini-camp during next falls' Homecoming Events, from 3:30-5:00. This is in conjunction with Alumni, so is coordinated with their schedule and planning. This also gives us the opportunity to send out advertising flyers when they send out reunion class registration packages—about 3000-4000 people. We'll also get a bit in the Alumni Magazine.

At this point Larry Schwietz suggested the Homecoming booth be set up for all home football games. It was discussed and agreed that two other important games would be sufficient provided volunteers can be found and staff time permits. Janette emphasized the need to have items to sell at the booth—t-shirts, etc. Small potted trees were suggested as gifts for people who purchase memberships at the booth.

2. Fundraising-

Central MN Foundation-Tom reported that Scott May set up an account for the Arboretum with the Foundation through a start-up donation. This is significant as it gives us increased visibility with potential donors. All thanked Scott for his generosity. Janette suggested we announce this in the newsletter.

Grants-Elizabeth reported that we have or are in the process of applying for the following grants: Gannett Foundation, \$3000; Xcel Energy, \$4500; Unity Avenue, \$8000; Stearns Electric,

\$1000; Laird Norton, \$16,800—since amended to \$17,200. The first four are to support the District education plan, and Laird Norton is a comprehensive sustainable forestry initiative in collaboration with Biology and Environmental Studies.

Larry reported that he had made contact with a large-scale donor associated w/ Campbell's Soup and had pitched the idea of funding for a mobile education lab for \$100,000.

Janette expressed concern that we may not be thinking in broad enough terms, and need to focus on finding some larger funders for operational funding. She suggested several avenues to explore, including national Tree Trust; corporate funders in general; and getting our hands on some more resources, such as Environmental Funders Handbook (?). Would also like to see a budget presented. Tom asked Janette if she would help lay this out more distinctly in the Fundraising committee.

Logo-Bob Thomsen brought nine beautiful samples of logos that he's had worked up. Council agreed that they were all wonderful, there was general consensus that one of them (#9) was probably best suited—clean lines, not too busy, reflects mission and vision, and very printable. Janette made the suggestion that a subcommittee (Tom, Bob, John, Elizabeth) be given go-ahead to choose one and submit it to the Abbey Design Committee for review and approval. Tom made the motion, Linda Marrin seconded, and all agreed. All thanked Bob for doing an amazing job.

3. Volunteer Management/Administration-

Volunteer management process/database-Linda Mock was unable to attend due to illness, so Elizabeth gave a brief summary of her activities. She has been working with John to become familiar with the database system so volunteers can be tracked and managed through the same system that John uses to set up tours/activities. She's also been busy collecting information from other organizations to assist in planning our system. Had a very productive visit with Elizabeth Nystrom, the volunteer coordinator at the MN Landscape Arb.

Student participation-John reported several opportunities for student volunteerism: A father/son maple syruping event (in conjunction w/ Gar Kellom); Campus Ministry students; and AKS, the campus service fraternity (we've worked with them before).

At this point, Janette raised concerns about what had happened with acknowledgment plaques for Boardwalk donors. It was agreed that this needed to be finished up, and that it should take the form of a plaque in the Kiosk. Tom wondered if Membership should be working on this. Once again, it was generally agreed that the issue of acknowledgment—of members, donors, and volunteers—needed to be addressed by all three committees: Membership/PR, Fundraising, and Volunteers.

4. CSB/SJU Education-

Service Learning-John reported that we are working with the Service Learning Program. One group of 5 students is slated to help with maple syruping; another group of 4 are planning to help work on drainage ponds for the parking lots—these are intended to hold runoff before it goes into Sag. The Service Learning people are very interested and excited about pursuing these projects and future projects we have.

Laird/Norton project-Tom explained that Laird/Norton is a forestry company interested in supporting and promoting sustainable forestry practices. We are working with faculty from both Biology and Environmental Studies to put together a proposal that would include funding for GIS, student internships, K-12 teaching kits, speakers, and a workshop, all focusing on sustainable forestry.

Summer workers-John reported that after discussing the summer surveys we've conducted in the past with faculty specializing in those areas, we feel that it is no longer necessary to

conduct those surveys every year (perhaps every 3-5 years on a rotating basis). This summer we will hire two students and have them work primarily on K-12 educational programming, along with the usual restoration and maintenance work. This should make better use of the funds we have available.

5. K-12 Education

Video-John and Al Barth showed the video we made in conjunction with the District, which turned out very nicely. Everyone was pleased with the results.

Environmental Education Project-Al reported that he had shown the video to about 250 K-6 teachers and the response was very positive, a lot of excitement about the program. A committee of about 5 teachers has been working with John and Al on the curriculum and on trunks for 4th and 5th grades. The district has continued funding through Eisenhower grants to provide teacher training and development funding. Some of the teachers have expressed interest in being further trained to be building leaders, and offer training to others or be field trip leaders for other classes.

Al noted that there are more copies of the video to show elsewhere if needed. He also said they would like to do some instructional videos to include with the trunks.

Janette noted that there is some good prairie curriculum from Wisconsin that might work well for trunks.

John showed the new pages from the website that are being developed to go along with the curriculum. Janette thought that it would be a good idea to note on the site that it was developed in conjunction with district—boost credibility.

Suggestions for other funding sources were made: McKnight, Bailey Foundation—also send the video. Funding is primarily needed to cover trunk and busing costs at this point.

6. Community Education

Committee meeting update-Janette reported on the meeting. Audience was determined as follows: we need to start inside the community and work out in concentric circles. Also, decided that the Comm. Ed. committee should stick to adult education activities, other ed. committees will deal with younger audiences. The committee then brainstormed about possible activities. A workshop has been scheduled for May 16th on Building with Trees. Tree Trust will run this with federal funding available. Another activity scheduled is a Chainsaw Safety clinic in the fall for various arborist groups.

Tom asked for suggestions about what to charge for the Building with Trees event. MN Builders Assoc. is working with us on this, will offer Cont. Ed. Credits. Janette suggested \$50-75. Question was raised about whether discounts should be given to Arb. members. Some expressed concern that \$75 was too high, that \$50 might be the upper limit.

It was also noted the Nature Conservancy and the MN Society of Arb. were planning to be here this summer.

Marriage Encounter Week-Tom reported that we are working with the Peer Resource Program and Outdoor Leadership Program to offer kids' activities to families attending the Marriage Encounter Week at St. John's this summer.

In the process of working on that program and figuring out what we should ask for in terms of reimbursement, John reported on a schedule of fees we have developed as an overall guide for our program services. This is intended as a guide that we can begin to use to keep track of the services we are providing and work toward fair compensation.

Scott moved that we approve the schedule of charges, Amy Schwietz seconded, and all agreed.

7. Lands

Trail Map Reprint-Scott reported that the trail map reprint is well underway and on schedule.
GIS-Tom reported that we are working collaboratively with the University to obtain funding for the GIS package we would like to have—it's part of the Laird Norton grant mentioned earlier. Janette wondered if there might be funding available through the DNR. She also noted that the Metropolitan Council or County might have funding available for mapping of Green Corridors.

Watershed study-Tom also reported that we are working with a local engineering company (Bonestroo) on a proposal for a watershed study. This would be paid for through the Abbey and would include sampling, modeling, solutions, and one set of monitoring data. After that it would be up to us to continue upkeep of monitoring.

Boardwalk update-Tom and John reported that we are experiencing some problems with ice movement in the wetlands. The freezing and thawing have created heaving of some of the sections. This has caused some twisting, and some of the flotation pieces have dropped from their sections. We believe that once it thaws we can reposition them, and probably secure them so it won't happen next year.

New Business

1. PR/Membership-

Christmas-Tom and Janette proposed that we move the Nov. Council meeting to Dec., and add a Vol./Member/Donor recognition event to it. The event would be an informal reception following the meeting and would take place the same day as the annual St. John's Christmas concert so people could attend that as well (starts at 8:00 p.m.). That date would be **Friday, Dec. 6th**. Janette moved to change meeting date, Scott seconded, all agreed.

2. Community Ed.-

Newsletter for neighbors- Tom noted that the Community Ed. Committee thought neighbors whose land physically adjoins St. John's should get membership *gratis*. Larry questioned giving out free memberships, suggested just free newsletter. Larry moved to amend proposal to free newsletter, all agreed.

3. Fundraising-

Plant Sale-Scott announced that we will be having a plant sale Sunday, May 19th. Larry and Janette offered to help.

Brush cutter-Tom and John reported that they would like to find funding for a brush cutter, at which point Bob offered to loan us one to try out first.

Digital camera-John said he would like to find funding for a digital camera for the Arboretum. Linda said she had one that would she would donate.

4. Volunteer Management-

Help for Linda-John noted that Linda Mock might need some help with her volunteer coordination work. It was suggested that we might try to find a student intern to help her.

Closing

Next Council Meeting: Monday, May 13, 2002, 2:30 p.m. Mark your calendar!

Subsequent dates: Monday, August 12, 2002, 2:30 p.m.

Friday, December 6, 2002, time undetermined

Respectfully submitted,
Elizabeth Sim