

Minutes of Saint John's Arboretum Advisory Council Meeting
October 3, 2005
Natural History Museum, Saint John's University

Council Members:

Present: Terri Barreiro, Alison Binsfeld, Emily Franklin, Sarah Gainey, Tom Haeg, Abby Johnstone, Tom Kroll, Scott May, Stephanie O'Keefe, Steve Saupe, Larry Schwietz, Matthew Voight, Chuck Wocken, Bruce Wollmering, O.S.B.,

Absent: Mike Brown, Kari Dombrowski, Bob Ellenbecker, David Hartwell, John Kulas, O.S.B., Janette Monear, Tom Wicks, Ron Wienhold

The meeting was called to order at 2:30 p.m.

Bruce Wollmering, O.S.B. began the meeting with a prayer.

Each advisory council member introduced themselves to the full council. Emily Franklin (Office Coordinator) and Abby Johnstone (CSB student senate representative) and Matthew Voight (SJU student senate rep) are members new to the council. Tom began the meeting with a brief overview on his time spent in San Antonio, Texas at an evacuee shelter aiding victims of Hurricane Katrina.

Emily then provided an overview of the Annual Report for FY 2005. Highlights from the overview included: an increase in prek-8 student participation, community member participation, and CSB/SJU student participation in Arboretum programs during FY 2005. Memberships totaled 276 on June 30, 2005 and 32 new student members have been added since the beginning of the academic year at CSB/SJU.

On behalf of Carole Coleman, Vice President of Finance and Administration at Saint John's, Tom wanted to extend thanks to the advisory council for all of our work and leadership. Academic affairs has determined to increase the Arboretum budget for salaries by \$60,000 per year; half from CSB, half from SJU. This increased budget will support an additional fellowship position and fund a portion of the environmental education (EE) coordinator's salary.

John Taylor from Institutional Advancement at Saint John's provided a brief overview of the current capital campaign. Saint John's Arboretum falls under the category of the college of arts and sciences and "Great Places". The campaign is now entering the public phase as of homecoming weekend.

Sarah revisited the FY 2006 work plan covering all six areas of focus. The majority of goals outlined in the work plan are either in progress, or have already been achieved.

Committee Reports

The remainder of the Arboretum Advisory Council meeting was spent discussing reports from individual committees

Fundraising Committee

Environmental Education Endowment

Larry provided an update on the EE fund now totaling \$30,505 and encouraged everyone to continue talking about the endowment, reminding people the fund is there and our desire for it to continue to grow. Sarah asked at which point we should solicit funds for the endowment again. Terri suggested another mailing in November along with a copy of the annual report, as people tend to donate as the calendar year closes. Fr. Bruce mentioned checking with IA before coordinating a second notice. Staff will discuss when to pursue a second notice in the coming weeks.

Grants

Grants will continue to be a part of our operating budget. The deadline for the EPA grant is approaching in November and will be applied for again. Other grants to be pursued will fund general operating expenses. We received two grants this summer in order to continue to fund busing costs and provide traveling trunks to kindergarten and 1st grade teachers. Xcel Energy granted us \$3,500 for expansion of the K-6 environmental education field study program. The DNR granted us \$5,000. We have already used \$1,600 of the total \$5,000 grant to provide trunks to kindergarten and 1st grade students and teachers for the 2005-2006 academic year. We are still waiting to hear from Gannett on our \$3,000 proposal to duplicate traveling trunks.

Membership Appreciation Open House

There is a planning session scheduled on Thursday, October 6th for the membership appreciation open house. Scott has agreed to help organize the silent auction again this year. Stephanie offered to help the day of the event, and potentially find items available for auction. The December 2nd council meeting will precede the open house.

Community Education

Fee structure

After Sarah presented the existing program fees to the council there was much discussion. Sarah wanted advice on whether to charge a per person fee or a per program fee. Terri suggested considering the length of a program and amount of

planning for a program when determining price. It was decided to establish a \$5 per person fee with a \$50 minimum charge and to advertise this as a discount. This would cover a typical 1-2 hour session. The \$95 per program fee is retained for specialized sessions only. In addition, teachers from the surrounding schools have been notified that the \$2 per student pre-payment will be raised to \$3 per student next fall.

Homecoming and Collegeville Colors

Homecoming and Collegeville Colors were this past weekend and were very successful events. Over \$200 in memberships and merchandise were sold between the two days. Actual attendance for Collegeville Colors is being generated by Saint John's Prep, but there were a lot of people at the event on Sunday and the event went very well.

PreK-12 Education

New Curriculum

There is now new curriculum for kindergarten and 1st grade classes. In previous years these groups were taught the same curriculum. New trunks have been constructed and will be used as a part of this new curriculum. 4th and 5th grade curriculum was also revised with new curriculum covering Minnesota biomes established for 4th grade.

ISD 742 Grade Level Meetings

ISD had grade level meetings this summer to discuss new science standards and science in the classroom. All K-6 classes will hear about Saint John's Arboretum and how our programs can help meet the new standards for science. Currently, the 6th grade science program is in re-design and again, these teachers will hear about how the Arboretum can help meet the new standards. Alison mentioned that 5th grade has the field experience at the Arboretum as a required component of their curriculum, which is a large selling point.

CSB/SJU Education

Student Senate Representatives

Abby Johnstone (CSB Senate) and Matthew Voight (SJU Senate) were introduced to the council. The purpose of involving the senate was to engage students who represent the CSB/SJU student body so they may aid us in determining how we can better serve the student population. Both Abby and Matt contributed wonderful ideas. There was discussion relative to setting up an Arboretum club in order to attain funds from the co-funding board for CSB/SJU student events. Sarah mentioned that this would fall under the responsibility of the new fellow next spring. In addition, the senates are willing to provide support as far as conducting student surveys, sending mass e-mails, and co-sponsoring events.

Lands

Vision for the nearby properties

Tom and Br. Benedict met with some members of a group that owns land adjacent to Saint John's and St. Ben's. Currently, the landowners are not interested in selling, but could become interested sometime in the future. It may be in the best interest of the stakeholders (College of Saint Benedict, Saint Benedict's Monastery, Saint John's Abbey and Saint John's University) to consider the purchase of this 400 acre parcel to preserve the rural and natural character of the two campuses as well as physically connect them through a corridor. A motion was made to have the Arboretum Council to raise the level of conversation on the adjacent properties to applicable stakeholders (College of Saint Benedict Board of Trustees, Saint Benedict's Monastery, Saint John's Abbey, and the Saint John's University Board of Regents). The motion was seconded, and passed.

Environmental Education/Cross Country Ski Building

There is still interest in constructing an Environmental Education (EE) and ski building near the baseball field. This would be a warming house type structure which would provide a starting and ending place for winter EE classes. The cross-country ski team would also use this structure in the winter for races and storage and may also serve some needs of the baseball team. The structure could incorporate possible green building elements (i.e. solar powered, composting toilets etc). The building would be approximately the same size as the natural history room (150) in the New Science Center.

Chapel/Chapel Trail

An anonymous donor to the Prep School has given money for Chapel/Chapel Trail repairs. An architect has been consulted and has several ideas about changing the outer appearance of the chapel. Parameters will be set and the exterior of the chapel will most likely not be drastically altered beyond repairs to the structure. The University of Minnesota was consulted about improvements that need to be made to the trail. For the most part, the trail is in good shape considering the usage it receives. A boardwalk will most likely be constructed near the beach.

Beneficial Use of Ash on Trails

The lands committee met with Ganard Orionzi, Director of Environmental Health and Safety earlier in the day to discuss the proposal to be submitted to the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) regarding the use of bottom ash for trail maintenance on Arboretum lands. Bottom ash is a by-product of the coal fired at the plant on the St. John's campus and had been used in the past on the trails. A change in the MN rules prompted the proposal to MPCA in order to gain approval for the continuation of this practice. Tom stated that the lands

committee sees this as a proper use of the by-product, and as an appropriate cost saving mechanism for the university, as long as MPCA approves the practice. The mailing to the membership constitutes a public notification for the PCA.

PR/Membership

MN Landscape Arboretum Visit

Sarah, Emily and Grace Brogan (student employee) met with the membership manager, coordinator of the annual fund at the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum earlier this fall. We received ideas we hope to incorporate at Saint John's Arboretum. One such idea was to give our members reciprocal benefits at other arboretum's, gardens, and conservatories through a paid membership with the American Horticultural Society. This is a benefit members of the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum receive. Larry spoke with the American Horticultural Society and Saint John's Arboretum will be paying for a membership with that organization. Our membership allows members of Saint John's Arboretum to receive reciprocal benefits at over 180 botanical gardens, arboretums and conservatories nationwide. Benefits include reduced or free admissions and discounts on merchandise. We will have to offer a similar benefit to participate in the program.

CSB/SJU Marketing Class

Sarah and Emily met with a group of five CSB/SJU students in the management program. They will be working with us throughout the course of the semester conducting a survey of our membership base. This will allow us to determine what sorts of programs our members are interested, why we retain members from year to year and other ways to increase membership involvement.

Water Bottles and Patches

Water bottles and patches are now available for purchase and are also offered to students as another incentive for membership. Patches are sold for \$3, water bottles for \$10. We are considering selling the water bottles for more than \$10, possibly \$12 to account for the flip-top feature. We will also check to see how much the bookstore is charging for similar water bottles before deciding on a price. The water bottles have become very popular with students. We would like to thank Scott May for all of his help in attaining this new merchandise for us.

Administration/Volunteers

Dates for February and May council meetings will be set at a later time.

The meeting was adjourned.

Submitted by,

Emily Franklin

The next Advisory Council meeting is *Friday, December 2, 2005 at 2:30-5:30 p.m.* in the New Science Center, Natural History Museum. In addition, the membership appreciation open house will follow the meeting on the evening of December 2nd. **Mark your calendars!**