

**Florida Oceanographic Society
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
December 14, 2020**

Board Present via Zoom Conference call: Allen Herskowitz, Board Chair, - John Amerling, - Mark Cocorullo, - Gary Goforth, - Paul Hederman, - Matt King, - Bob Mathias, - Dan Merritt, - Patricia Noonan,- Nancy Rand, and Scott Turnbull

Board Present via Telephone: none

Staff Attendance: Mark Perry and Cathy Muir

Not Present: Linda Houston, Matt Hooks

Board Chair

Board Chair, Allen Herskowitz, called the meeting to order at 3:02 pm

Mission Moment:

Research in the time of COVID, Dr. Loraé T. Simpson, Director of Research and Conservation

Dr. Loraé Simpson began her presentation stating that science doesn't stop and research goes on. She explained that the how and why of what she does falls in line with the visions of the strategic plan put forth back in 2018. The Indian River Lagoon is a fantastic place for science and one of the most biodiverse estuaries in the world. The area itself lends so much to understanding oysters, mangroves, seagrass, clams and birds. The focus in the past was oysters through the FLOOR program and seagrass through FOSTER program and that will continue.

Research is working on restoring the mangroves in the Jensen Beach impoundment where 22 acres were destroyed by Hurricane Irma.

Loraé Simpson brought in a College Summer Intern to do an independent project on microplastics. We can use his preliminary data to apply for grants. We are also collaborating with other organizations to apply for grants.

The research department is also working on the Living Shore line and has received a grant to come up with alternatives for plastics.

We need to make science meaningful to the public. The summer intern program will continue to grow and we will continue to contribute knowledge to the public.

Gary Goforth emphasized that we do need to get this out to the public. The research webpage is updated monthly and all projects are listed.

Consent Items

A. Minutes from the Board Meeting November 16, 2020

B. Executive Director Reports-Education, Research, Animal Care, Operations and Development

C. Committee & Task Groups
(See Board Website for Minutes, Reports and details)

Board Action – The Chair requested approval of the Minutes from the November 16, 2020 meeting and the consent agenda. Pat Noonan made a motion to approve the Minutes and the consent agenda. Matt King seconded the motion. It was voted on and unanimously approved.

Finance Report, Matt King, Chair

- The balance sheet shows November 2020 was a successful month. Membership and general contributions are up. Admissions is lagging behind. We have \$2,051,000 cash on hand and \$300K outflow. Due to the success on the fundraising side we are only down by about \$158K
- Accounts payable are around \$95K down from \$392K in prior month due to payment of construction draw.
- Susan Scheyder updated us that she is submitting the paper work to Seacoast Bank for the forgiveness of the PPP loan of \$235K received back in the spring.
- Operating account is up \$116K primarily due to acceleration of education grants; \$50K CARES Act grant from the county and a legacy gift which came in early and was larger than expected.
- We are in receipt of documents from Northern Trust for the \$300k Line of Credit approved at last month's Board meeting. This is to cover any outflows related to moving ahead with exhibits and will give us the ability to execute the contract for the exhibits
- Expenses are in line with the budget. We are ahead of last year. This bolsters our cash position and gives us a little more room.
- Abbie Flood reported that we are doing a running cash flow forecast for six months. Admissions, gift shop and membership are based off of forecasted formulas and tracking to those indicate they are doing a little better than forecast, about 35%.
- The capital campaign shows cash on hand is \$1,415,993; total needed for the building without exhibits is \$756,946, cash left over to put towards exhibits is \$659,047, potential contingency from building is \$40,000 pledge payments received are \$18,700. The subtotal of cash towards the exhibits is \$717,747, exhibit cost and fabrication is \$914,033 and the balance of cash needed to complete the exhibits is \$196,286. Balance of booked capital pledges as of November 30, 2020 is \$297,165. There is \$87,557 due by December 31, 2020, \$33,000 needed by January 31, 2021 so the balance needed after January 31, 2021 is \$75,229.
- Matt King reported the Line of credit gives us flexibility and is tied to Prime minus one quarter percent. It has a two year maturity which puts it beyond the scope of the project. Every dollar collected against pledges needs to be earmarked to pay down the line of credit.
- Nancy Rand stated that the Color Ad payments will be spaced out over 6 month so the cash balance would be due in April 2021. There will be three other phases to be discussed: the bridges, gift shop and water exploration zone. We have to prioritize which has to be tackled first.

Capital Campaign Update – Pat Noonan, Chair & Nancy Perry, CFRE

- Nancy Perry reported that even though it has been a slow month, we do have a couple of commitments for a total of \$25K
- There are three tours scheduled for this week. We have 6 positive responses with no amounts yet and some new prospects.
- Nancy Rand stated that since Nancy Perry was able to get \$75K in pledges accelerated we can now start looking beyond the exhibits.
- We are at \$6.9M and really need another \$550K. A lot of gifts are coming from people who have already given.
- Nancy Perry requested that anyone who has any leads please let her know.

Zabik and Associates Update, Larry Zabik, Lindsay Zabik and Nancy Rand, Chair

- Water intrusion problem has been fixed
- The CO was issued on December 4, 2020. Exterior punch is underway. There will be a re-walk punch for completion December 17, 2020.
- Florida Oceanographic will move in this week.
- Georgia Merten will do a final punch on furniture this week.
- There are no change orders.
- The delivery of the tanks to the Eco Center will be on February 22, 2021. The exhibit installation commences on March 29, 2021. The exhibit completion with tanks stocked is set for April 30, 2021
- Larry Zabik provided a financial update.

Development Report, Linda Houston, Chair

- The Development Report is posted on the BOD website.

Strategic Planning Task Group – Paul Hederman, Chair

- Paul Hederman reported that he would begin work on the Strategic Plan starting the first of the year.

Governance & Nominating Committee, Scott Turnbull

- Scott Turnbull said the Governance Committee had a meeting regarding a new candidate but they ended withdrawing their application
- There was discussion regarding adding two Honorary Trustees, Twinks Irvine and Andrea Lutz. Mark Perry had recommended them because they have a long history with us and are strong supporters. Scott Turnbull made a motion to approve both Twinks Irvine and Andrea Lutz as Honorary Trustees. Pat Noonan seconded the motion. It was voted and approved.

Information Technology Task Group – Dan Merritt, Chair

- There is no report this month.

Advocacy Task Group- Gary Goforth, Chair

- Gary Goforth reported that Lake Okeechobee discharges have continued and created impacts this year. The lake is below 16 feet and the Corps of Engineers has reduced discharges to the estuary. The EAA reservoir has been in the news because the incoming Senate President has opined the reservoir is a mistake. The reservoir should reduce discharges to the estuaries by more than 50% and is a vital component of the overall restoration. The SFWMD is well underway with the design of the preliminary construction of the treatment area associated with the reservoir.
- The FOS advocacy webpage will be linked with Captains for Clean Water. They have an active advocacy program.
- Allen Herskowitz asked what the Board could do to counter the incoming Senate President statements. John Amerling suggested that we make a joint statement with the SFWMD. Mark Perry agreed and said he would speak to the Co-Chairs. Gary Goforth stated that we as a Board have already issued a resolution in support of the reservoir and we should either renew it or polish it up. Mark Perry said it is a good plan of action. We need to get it to the Senate before it goes into session. Allen Herskowitz recommended that we do it in two stages. Right now we should send our current Resolution with the following statement: "Please be advised that Florida Oceanographic Society reaffirms this position and is currently creating an additional position in support of the fundamentals announced here." We need to state that we have not changed our position and are still being active. Mark Perry will draft up a cover letter.
- Jacqui Thurlow-Lippisch has been a champion of the reservoir issue.
- Fix the Flow will be presented by the Rivers Coalition on Thursday December 17, 2020 and Mark Perry will send out links.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:20 PM. The next meeting is scheduled for January 25, 2021 at 3:00 through zoom.

Minutes recorded by Cathy Muir, Administrative Assistant and submitted by Nancy Rand Secretary of the Board of Directors of Florida Oceanographic Society.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Rand, Secretary of the Board of Directors
Florida Oceanographic Society