

**Florida Oceanographic Society  
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes  
March 22, 2021**

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

**Board Present via Telephone:** none

**Staff Attendance:** Mark Perry, Cathy Muir

**Not Present:** Gary Goforth, Paul Hederman, Matt Hooks

**Board Chair**

Board Chair, Allen Herskowitz, called the meeting to order at 2:59 pm

**Consent Items**

- A. Minutes from the Board Meeting February 23, 2021
- 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 February 23, 2021 meeting and the consent agenda. Pat Noonan made a motion to approve and Nancy Rand seconded it. It was voted on and unanimously approved.

**Mission Moment:** Volunteers during COVID times update, Rosemary Badger, Volunteer Coordinator

Rosemary Badger thanked the volunteer Board members for working tirelessly in this time of COVID and stated how thankful we are to have them. She reported that although many of the volunteers pulled back our water quality testers continued working, many of them at their own sites.

Communication with the volunteers has been critical at this time. We kept them informed of FOS decisions, updates on animals, staff and construction. Webinars and Zoom meetings continued to keep everyone engaged. We received guidance and continued conversations with other organizations. United Way kept us informed of CDC protocols and provided us with masks and thermometers.

Some of our teams who did continue working were the green team, research, seagrass and teen ambassadors. The programs were adjusted.

Sea turtle scouts have been polled and they would like to continue with the sea turtle walks with limited capacity, wearing masks and taking temperatures. Right now there is only one volunteer at the touch tank. Education volunteers have fallen off because it is considered high risk.

We have a new normal for training which includes social distancing and smaller sessions. Cleanups have resumed with new guidelines. We have also implemented independent beach cleanups using mycoast.org where volunteers can tally their trash pickups and take group pictures.

We have been contacting our volunteers to get a timetable for their return. Many are older and don't feel safe, don't want to wear a mask or simply wanted to wait until the majority of people are vaccinated. We are grateful that we continue to have volunteers who still want to interact with the public.

Our goal for the future is to have one exhibit guide at the touch tank, an exhibit guide at theEcoCenter and a Roving Exhibit Guide for two shifts a day for seven days. Education guides would have a rotating shift with an indoor component.

Mark Perry encouraged the Board to read all of the reports on the Board website.

Our visitation on weekends is almost at 100% and the Gift Shop is at 67% of last year. The Research Department has 12 programs and projects going on and just received a \$190K Grant which enabled us to purchase a truck. The Educations Department reported that over 2,500 attended the lecture series. The lecture series is recorded and can be viewed on the FOS website. Summer Camp is 100% full.

#### Financial Report, Matt King, Chair

- There has been a rebound in Admissions. Education looks solid and camps are full. Gift Shop sales have bounced back. General Contributions are still successful and \$110K ahead of budget. Membership is still steady with many renewing early. April, May and June do not have a lot of renewals coming due.
- Oceans Alive has \$132K in sponsorships.
- Revenue is at \$164K which is \$200K ahead of budget.
- Expenses are in line or below budget. We have added one additional Education Staff member.
- The month ended with a \$49K surplus.
- Cash is up at \$2M which is up \$215K due to positive operating cost and the PPP loan. The second PPP loan of \$235 has been received.
- Unconditional promises are at \$585K which is up \$323K over the previous month because we received a \$350K pledge at \$70K a year for the next 5 years.
- Assets are at \$4,750,000. Liabilities are up \$372K due to Color Ad invoices.
- The Seacoast Account balance is at \$498K.
- The building Account has \$1,090,000. We have funds to finish the buildings and exhibits with funds left over for other projects.
- The Endowment Account has \$161,000 and we have a bequest that is in the settlement process. This would be a good time to review the investment policy.
- Allen Herskowitz emphasized that we are now cash positive on the project.

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

- Nancy Perry has now raised \$7,727,000 and had another great month. The Everglades Foundation has given us \$100K for a named exhibit. There is also another \$75K for 3 named exhibits and another \$150K coming. Unrecorded pledges of \$35K have been received.
- The Treasured Reef fund has \$80K.
- There are 3 positive responses with no amounts yet.
- There is also a new legacy gift and the amount is to be determined.
- At the Oceans Auction review another donor said they would send \$25K for the operations shortfall.

Capital Expansion Project-Facilities Task Group, Nancy Rand, Chair, Zabik & Associates Update

- Nancy Rand encouraged all Board members to visit the EcoCenter and see what has happened recently. She stated that the Exhibits far exceed anything that she had anticipated. At the Ocean Auction preview event everyone who walked into the building and was on third floor deck mentioned how awesome the building was with all of its beautiful views and what a testament it was to all who were involved in the project. After the building and exhibits are completed we will have close to \$860K between cash and pledges.
- The punch list is complete. We still have a list of warranty items being worked on with Mark and the Staff. Mark Perry has expressed concerns about the warranty issues. We are also bringing in all professionals to make sure everything was installed properly and it is going to be hardened and sufficient for on the beach weather. We need to make sure that all warranty paperwork is in good order and tracked to completion. We will check with contractors to make sure correct supplies were used and get a mechanical engineer in to check the air conditioning coils. We also have to make sure that all required inspections are done in a timely manner to make sure the warranties remain valid.
- The sidewalk is complete.
- Trailer area stabilization is complete.
- Tanks for the Exhibits were delivered March 1, 2021 and installation is underway. They should be stocked by May 10, 2021.
- A security gate has been installed.
- The Visitor Center renovation is under way and the floor plan has been approved. We are looking at multiple contractors to price it out. Some additional structural work also needs to be done.
- The Financial Report update is posted on the Board website.
- The Phase II draft budget has been presented for the Welcome Center/Gift Shop Construction, Water Works Learning Area, parking lot lighting, permits and fees. Phase II should come in at \$700K. Larry Zabik asked the Board to review the budget and get back to him with input before the April Meeting
- At the next meeting, we need to discuss prioritizing the projects.
- We have hired Brent Wood as the architect for the Welcome Center and taken on a store designer, Store Tech, for the Gift Shop. Store Tech has also designed the gift shop

for Loggerhead and Marine Life Center. He is also a contractor and supplies the equipment.

- Mark Perry stated that the priority should be to get the building ready to host events. The parking lot lighting needs to be installed before we can have after hours events.
- Mark Perry again expressed his concern with warranty issues. We need Zabik's help to get a guarantee to get things finished. Some of the equipment such as lighting should not be failing the way it is.

#### Development Committee Update, Linda Houston, Chair

- Linda Houston reported that sponsorship revenue to date for Oceans Alive is at \$135K which is at 65% of last year.
- The Oceans mailing was a success and brought in 8 new sponsors.
- The Oceans event on Friday sold a few items but it was really intended to be a trial run to host and market an event.
- The on line Auction runs from March 24 to 28, 2021 and it is forecast it to bring in \$25K.
- Mark Perry was interviewed by US News and World Report and Zack Judd was interviewed by CBS 12. They were both interviewed for a piece in the Indian River Magazine.
- The Freedom of Spirit Lifetime Achievement Award to recognize Mark Perry is coming up in April.
- The Grand Opening is scheduled for the middle of May. We will begin our branding and marketing of the EcoCenter and the implementation of the new pricing structure.

#### Strategic Planning Task Group – Paul Hederman, Chair

No Report

#### Governance & Nominating Committee, Scott Turnbull

- Scott Turnbull said there is a pending recommendation for a new Board Member and an Honorary Trustee. The Governance Committee will have a meeting to discuss the Board elections.
- Allen Herskowitz also mentioned that Nancy Rand is recommending another new Board member.

#### Information Technology Task Group – Dan Merritt, Chair

- Dan Merritt will set up a meeting with Mark Perry and Mark Baer.

#### Advocacy Task Group- Gary Goforth, Chair

- The Board Position Statement and three Resolutions were drafted by Gary Goforth and John Amerling and distributed to the Board for review. Dan Merritt requested that on the Position Statement, under b. first line, the word minimize be changed to stop. There was Motion on the floor to approve the position Statement, as amended, and

resolutions as a body. Matt King made a motion to approve, Nancy Rand seconded it.

It was voted on and unanimously approved.

Allen Herskowitz reminded everyone that the April Meeting is the annual meeting. We will have a normal agenda and will elect new Officers.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:58 pm. The next Board of Directors Meeting is scheduled for April 26, 2021.

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 Chair of the Board of Directors  
Florida Oceanographic Society