

**University of Florida Historic St. Augustine, Inc. (UFHSA)**

**A direct support organization to UF as provided, Chapter 267.1736 Laws of Florida**

**UFHSA Board of Directors Meeting**

**10:00 A.M., November 7, 2014**

**Government House, 48 King Street, St. Augustine, FL**

Board Members Present: Chair Allen Lastinger, Roy Hunt, Danny Ponce, Bill Proctor, Kathy Deagan, Herschel Shepard, Tracy Upchurch.

Board Members Absent: Rick Gonzalez, Arva Parks, Michael Gannon, Don Slesnick, Larry Rivers

Staff Present: Ed Poppell, Linda Dixon, Jan Matthews, Billy Triay, Sue Cobb.

Mr. Lastinger, Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

**Action Items**

Mr. Lastinger welcomed Mr. Herschel Shepard as a new board member and noted that his appointment letter from Dr. Machen and a brief bio had been provided in the board materials.

Minutes of the May 30, 2014, meeting, had been provided to the board prior to the meeting. Mr. Lastinger called for additions or corrections. Dr. Deagan moved, and Professor Hunt seconded approval of the minutes, as provided. The board approved unanimously.

**Financial Report**

- **Colonial Quarter (CQ)** - Mr. Poppell presented a business report regarding the CQ. UFHSA does not have any financial risk with Pat Croce's company, Colonial Quarter, LLC, the operator of the CQ. UFHSA is receiving the monthly commission consistently, guaranteed \$100,000 per year. The CQ has been open 2 years, but continues to have challenges. It has taken longer to "ramp up" than expected. Mr. Croce has taken on a partner to assist with making positive changes. Dr. Deagan inquired if there were methods in place for monitoring the content and information presented at the CQ. Mr. Poppell responded affirmatively. No action was required for this item.
- **First Colony Museum Exhibit** – Mr. Poppell reported that business operations of First Colony were still a struggle. UFHSA has now contributed \$150,000 to assist with getting the operations going. School groups continue to visit, but the visitor numbers are still less than hoped for. Mr. Poppell noted there is a UF class that is presently working on a way to present Government House in a different way to increase visitation. Mr. Croce's group, who operates the First Colony, does not take any of the financial risk, per his

contract. Mr. Lastinger assured the board that staff is focused on the financials and issues are being addressed as appropriately as possible. Mr. Poppell indicated the First Colony Exhibit will be moving to the University of Florida Museum of Natural History in September of 2015. It will reside there approximately 7 months through the Spring of 2016, and begin to tour in the Summer of 2016. Ms. Darcie MacMahon informed the board there is marketing being done to promote the exhibit for touring. The State History Museum of Raleigh, NC has expressed interest. No action required on this item.

- Financial Update – Ms. Linda Dixon, from UF Planning, Design and Construction, presented the financial report/budget update. She reviewed amended 2014-15 budget information that was provided to the board members prior to the meeting noting these updates:
  - UFHSA received an additional \$4,000 PO&M funding for the additional square footage of the public restroom project.
  - Ms. Dixon noted a reduction of \$2,000 from revenues, due to elimination of interest revenues. Mr. Poppell noted that UF is now sweeping all DSO accounts of non-endowed funds and investing those funds. There will be small revenues from late fees with no interest accrual, and these are not reflected in the budget.
  - She noted a portion of Billy Triay’s salary is now paid from PO&M funds.
  - The Research Program salaries were increased by \$5,000 to help fund the Digitization project through the Smathers Libraries.
  - The Events/Programs/Research category was increased \$10,000, per the Board’s approval at the May 30, 2014, meeting, for assistance provided to the University Press for the publication of Buff Gordon’s, *“Guidebook of St. Augustine.”*
  - Mr. Poppell reviewed other budget to actual data provided to the board members. He explained that the Documentary Film was not funded by the DSO; it is being funded through other sources. He explained that the DSO is doing well with good tenants. He feels the St. Augustine economy is strong
  - Mr. Poppell presented the Draft Financial Statements that had just been received from James Moore, the audit firm, for FY ending June 30, 2014.

Following this discussion, the Board concurred with the updated FY 2014-15 budget information as presented.

The next action item was presented by Professor Roy Hunt regarding the Spanish Mission Trail signage. He had provided documentation to the board for review. It was requested they be placed on St. George Street for higher visibility, and would be framed in the same manner as the other city signs on St. George Street. Professor Hunt moved that the board approve the requested planned signage for the Spanish Mission Trail on the wall near the newly upgraded & historically interpreted public restrooms on St. George Street. Dr. Kathy Deagan seconded the motion, and the board approved unanimously.

## **Informational Items**

### Committee Reports

- Development Committee – Mr. Lastinger introduced Mr. Needles for a board update from the UF Foundation, Inc. Mr. Needles noted that he and the Committee Chair, Don Slesnick, had met and spoken on several occasions since the last board meeting. He noted that there were over 155 responses for the VIP reception to be held November 8, 2014, with potential donors in this invited group. He noted that the AVD Foundation had turned down the grant request for funding for the St. Augustine Documentary Film, but the next deadline was April 1, 2015, for an amendment to the proposal. To acquire capstone funds, there must be a guarantee of a national airing. After Episode 1 is shown, more donor interest is hoped for. Mr. Needles advised the board they are working on creating more opportunities for donors to support St. Augustine. He advised that the new UF President Kent Fuchs will begin his tenure January 1, 2015. His schedule is to visit the First Coast area in the first quarter of 2015. Mr. Needles is hoping to engage the new President with UFHSA and Whitney Lab in the St. Augustine area. Professor Hunt commented it was important that the new President know how much past presidents had engaged and been critically involved in the preservation of St. Augustine. Mr. Lastinger encouraged the board members to give thought to preservation maintenance and interpretation projects and go to people with a need or idea. Please communicate those with Mr. Lastinger, Mr. Poppell, or Mr. Needles.
- Education, Interpretation, Facilities Committee

The committee had been given authorization to adopt a Final Collection Management Policy at the October 2013 board meeting. Professor Roy Hunt advised the board that it still requires some rework before the committee’s final approval. He informed the board there were 50 pages completed, at this time.

Professor Hunt advised the board of the quality of the “*Guidebook of St. Augustine*” of Buff Gordon’s that was complete. He feels it will provide an impact. It is a block by block, building by building description of St. Augustine. The colored bands on the book provide keys to the text in the book. He commended the board for providing the funding to University Press for assisting with this publication. There was discussion regarding the possibility of conversion of the book to a digital format. Mr. Tom Caswell indicated that a grant has been submitted for digitization, and he should hear back in February or March 2015 if the grant will be received. This possibility can be pursued at that time.

As requested by the board in October 2013, Glenn Willumson was to provide a one-page update for his “Exhibition Proposal” for Government House when the First Colony exhibit leaves for its travel elsewhere. Professor Hunt informed the board that this presentation is no longer viable. There was discussion regarding possible options to pursue:

- Michael Francis’ map exhibit
- *Fort Mose Exhibit* available for possible use – only about 500 sq. ft. – the larger exhibit is no longer available. Further exploration of this option is worth exploring for possible reinventing/refreshing/checking on the condition.

- Ms. Darcie MacMahon advised that with the First Colony Exhibit grant received, moveable walls were purchased to use and incorporate for the next exhibit to be placed there. Mr. Poppell expressed to the need for the preparation of another exhibit, so the space does not sit idle when First Colony begins its travel.
- The “*Journey: 450 Years of the African American Experience*” Exhibit – the City of St. Augustine exhibit and documentary was noted as a possibility.
- Mr. Tracy Upchurch suggested seeking out an exhibit not specific to St. Augustine, other exhibits that are traveling as the First Colony will be doing. Finding an exhibit that is dynamic and different to attract a wider variety of visitors is a key. Ms. Dixon advised that Doug Nobles’ class is researching other museums with traveling exhibits and possibly they will obtain some leads for other options here. Ms. MacMahon noted that private collections were costly and a history market may be more affordable.

Mr. Lastinger requested that Professor Hunt’s committee take the lead on this project and report at the spring 2015 meeting – what is available, the cost, specific options.

Professor Hunt had provided his committee’s Annual Report to the board, as information.

- Discussion on Committee Meetings – A memo was provided to the board prior to the meeting from Mr. Poppell regarding future committee meetings. Per the Articles of Incorporation for UF Historic St. Augustine, Inc., it is required that minutes be maintained for any committee meetings that are held. The committees are asked to provide the dates and minutes for any committee meetings for Sue Cobb, to be kept on file with all other UFHSA documents/information. This will be a great help for audit purposes.

At this time, Mr. Lastinger introduced Dr. Michael Francis (University of South Florida). He introduced two visitors from Spain that had come to attend the St. Augustine Documentary Film – Don Alvaro Maria Armada Barcaiztegui (direct descendant to Pedro Menendez) and Don Javier Cancio Donleburn Ballve (direct descendant to the 6<sup>th</sup> Governor of Florida from 1597-1603). He explained they would be also working with them to expand use of their historical family archives for possible digitization. The group welcomed the visitors to St. Augustine and expressed appreciation for their attendance at the documentary film premiere.

Digitization Project – Mr. Lastinger introduced Mr. Tom Caswell, with UF Smathers Libraries, to present his project to the board. In 2007, state legislation provided for UF to assume management responsibilities to ensure long-term preservation and interpretation of state-owned historic properties in St. Augustine, while facilitating an educational program at the University of Florida. By default, UF Smathers Libraries assumed stewardship of the research collections housed within the Government House archives and is committed to their preservation and access.

- Grants
  - 2009 –Historic St. Augustine Block and Lot Files Digitization - \$5,000
  - 2014 – UF Libraries’ mini-grant - \$5,000
  - 2014 – UF Technology Fee Grant - \$95,572
  - 2012/14 – National Endowment for the Humanities Grant - \$265,000
- Partnering collections

- UF Smathers Libraries
- St. Augustine Historical Society
- City of St. Augustine Archaeology Program
- Herschel E. Shepard Digital Collection
- NEH grant target was 11,000 digital objects – as of October 30, 2014, 25,168 items have been scanned
- Established the first digital lab in St. Augustine as a community resource devoted to digitization and preservation of archival collections
- Outreach
  - Staff of contributing partner institutions
  - Students from UF & Flagler College
  - Volunteers interested in learning about digitization methods
  - Digital collection presented at 2 national conferences
  - Journal article “Collaborating with Archives to Build a Local history collection” to be published in Computers in Libraries (Jan. 2015)
  - Promotion of digital collection through blogs and Facebook
- Next Steps
  - Digitizing materials for Florida National Guard & SAHS (others?)
  - Recently submitted grant to NEH - \$406,298 request
  - Partnering with FL Humanities Council on their grant project
  - Configure and set up “untethered” collaborative instruction equipment from UF Tech Fee grant

The Goal – “Bringing Order to Chaos!”

Mr. Upchurch inquired as to what happens to the original documents once scanned, and Mr. Caswell noted that the documents are properly/protectively stored either in St. Augustine or Gainesville.

#### Government House Rehabilitation/Construction Update

Mr. Lastinger introduced Ms. Linda Dixon for UFHSA Construction Updates. Ms. Dixon presented updates for the board:

- Completed the Government House Phase II – elevator work, fire sprinklers/alarms, asbestos duct work, reconfiguring space back to the original room configurations, removing dropped ceilings exposing the original high ceilings and cornice in place, restoring light fixtures and determining their original locations.
- Completed the Restroom expansion, renovation and interpretation
- Completed parking lot lighting
- Began renovation of Salcedo House
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> floor interior – plumbing, appliances, light fixtures, fire alarm, plaster repair, balcony light and wood repair
  - Ground floor bakery/kitchen – HVAC, electrical, north façade window restoration
  - Salcedo Kitchen/Spanish Bakery – mini split AC and air curtain
- De Mesa Sanchez – back exterior stair, roof leak and plaster repair
- Ribera House – roof
- St. Augustine Historical Society Property projects – HVAC repairs/replacement, railing/window repairs (Oldest House and Maint./Apt.), parking lot repairs

- Government House Phase 3 – interior
- Government House and Historic Properties – Building Systems Infrastructure in Government House and up to 17 other buildings.
- Government House Exterior Corrections - Ms. Dixon introduced Mr. Dick Givens, a structural engineer with SEG. He presented his engineering report to the board and visitors about the Government House exterior corrections, their findings and how they would complete the project. The goal is to complete the exterior renovations of Government House by Summer 2015 for the 450<sup>th</sup> City of St. Augustine celebration.

#### Pass Port Program with City of St. Augustine/National Park Service

Mr. Poppell advised the board that the Pass Port Program has been successfully implemented. Tickets can be purchased at a kiosk at the Visitor Information Center. He noted that it is a good program, and ticket sales are good and growing. The school groups have not been that strong, but typically spring is the best time for more school groups.

#### St. Augustine Documentary Films - Small Planet Productions

Mr. Lastinger introduced Jaime Greco and Chris Haines to speak about the St. Augustine Documentary film showing on November 8, 2014. They noted that Episodes 2, 3, and 4 are mostly completed with just editing to be done. They were very excited about the film premiere and expressed how important the story is to all the people involved in the film. Mr. Lastinger advised the board the film is to be presented to show to WNET, a New York PBS station next week with intent to drop nationally. An aggressive program for marketing is essential.

#### St. Augustine Historical Society (SAHS) Report

Dr. Susan Parker provided the board with updates about the buildings owned by the St. Augustine Historical Society. There have been various repair and maintenance projects going on recently. She thanked UF's involvement for these much-needed repairs. She continues to benefit from these maintenance/repair projects in that it frees up SAHS and staff's time to do other projects for the Historical Society.

SAHS recently completed a Conservation Assessment Program to deal with their collection space. She is seeking changes to better handle their current collections and is working on expansion of the SAHS Library for collections of books/artifacts. The Tovar House (early 1700's) is undergoing various improvements.

Dr. Parker spoke about the book entitled "Oldest City" – working title. It will be available several weeks before September 2015 for the 450<sup>th</sup> celebration. About 500 are printed per year and are sold through their bookstore and at the Castillo.

#### City of St. Augustine – City Manager Update

Mr. Lastinger introduced Mr. John Regan, City Manager for the City of St. Augustine. He introduced City Commission Nancy Sikes-Kline, who was in attendance. Mr. Regan advised that 4 years ago, when the City had been managing the historic properties, they had been subsidizing and were running into their reserves. Since UF has been managing the historic properties, the City has refinanced and been able to complete upgrades to City Hall. Other improvements that have been notable are:

- Aviles Street, which has been recognized in a magazine demonstrating shared-space principles.
- Bridge Street – new promenade – 1804’s wall with federal grant funding.
- New sidewalk system
- Orange Street under construction, rebuild of half of urban quarter
- Hypolita Street – urban rebuild – no curbs – December 5<sup>th</sup> celebration
- Treasury and Spanish Streets – rebuild in the future
- The First City Through Eyes of the Masters – November 15, 2014 through January 17, 2015 – Visitor Information Center
- The Journey Exposition – Fort Mose – documentary to show in February 2015 nationally
- Tapestry: The Cultural Threads of First America – April 4 – October 4, 2015 at the Visitor Information Center
- San Palayo – 650-ton replica of a Spanish galleon – serve as signature 450<sup>th</sup> event and anchor exhibition in St. Augustine
- A “build a ship” exhibit – on waterfront – waiting on word of financing to begin construction
- Celebrate 450! – September 4-12, 2015 – Various Locations
- US – Spain Council – November 2015 – International economic group alternates world and US meetings sites. In 2015, the summit comes to St. Augustine with 200+ world leaders – to be held at Flagler College. Have received a commitment from the Royal House and King of Spain for attendance.
- Town Gown Task Force - beginning

At that time, Don Alvaro Maria Armada Barcaiztegui, one of the visitors from Spain, indicated he would like to participate in this celebration with several original Pedro Menendez documents to more promote Pedro Menendez. The City officials can pursue this generous offer.

#### Visitor Surveys – St. Johns County Visitor & Convention Bureau (VCB)

Mr. Lastinger introduced Mr. Glenn Hastings, with the St. Johns County VCB. Mr. Hastings distributed a handout entitled “*Visitor Profile Top Line Report-Q1-Q3 2014*” to present to the board as to what the visitor surveys had indicated for the first 3 quarters of the year. A large amount of data is included in this report with these summary items:

- Percentage of first-time visitors to the destination (St. Johns County) consistent with 2013 trends
- First-time visitors take their time before acting on desire to visit
- Strength of SJC as a destination continues to build
- The role of event tourism continues to decline in the destination as a purpose to travel to St. Johns County
- The role of family/personal events fueled by destination weddings and family reunions at the beach
- Historic sites/reenactments/museums and visiting attractions are the two strongest influences in the decision to visit St. Johns County
- Historic sites are also cited as what our visitors liked best about their experience in St. Johns County
- “Google-ing” is the most popular way of getting visitor information

- Influence of a recommendation from a friend or relative is still very strong
- 85% of our visitors have post-high school education
- 60% have a college degree
- Age of visitors has remained consistent with what we experienced in 2013
- Boomers still very strong for the destination
- This is also evident in the family status for our visitors
- The number of Hispanic visitors has more than doubled when compared to the number who came in 2013
- African-American visitors has been on par with last year's visitations although we have seen a substantial uptick in February and August

The survey focused on certain criteria:

- Overnight Visitor Accommodations
- Visitor Origin States – Top Ten States
- Overall Visitor Experience vs. Expectations
- What was better than expected?
- What was disappointing to you?
- What did you like best about your experience?
- Recommend and return?
- Important Factors in the Decision to visit
- Most Important Source for Planning Information
- Visitor Demographics
- Age and Income

The SJVCB has graciously allowed us to input questions into their survey to assist in determining how to attract more visitors to the area.

#### Legislative Update

Mr. Poppell informed the board that UFHSA has lost a lobbying power in the fact that John Thrasher was appointed as President of FSU. He advised that we need to work hard on lobbying efforts to attract resources from Tallahassee. He asked for ideas of programs to lobby for. A suggestion was made to lobby for scholarships to provide school systems incentives for field trip opportunities. Mr. Upchurch advised that most schools will not take field trips until after the FCAT testing is complete, the last 6 weeks of the school year, and the curriculum must be tied to Common Core. Mr. Lastinger suggested working with Florida Humanities Council for curriculum requirements. Mr. Poppell indicated that last year the Colonial Quarter hosting 800+ school groups. Mr. Poppell advised the board that the lobbying process will begin in a few weeks and only have a very short time to present your requests, so UFHSA must be ready. Dr. Proctor suggested that the Lt. Governor might help and be interested in the lobbying efforts for funding projects.

#### Next board meeting

Mr. Lastinger discussed with the board regarding dates for Spring 2015. The date of Friday, May 29, 2015, was suggested and the board concurred. This meeting will be held in the Sala at Government House.

There being no further business, Mr. Lastinger adjourned the meeting at 2:00 p.m.

A refreshment reception followed the formal board meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

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Kara Sue Cobb  
Senior Administrative Assistant  
UF Development Corporation  
University of Florida