

Friends of the GTM NERR

Minutes of Board Meeting: Tuesday, December 11, 2007

Members Present:

**Pierre Pierce, Anita Pierce, Chris Rich, Carl Hampp,
Nancy Schachnovsky, Jonathan Katzen, Joe Hutnan,
Peter Difatta, Irene Kaufman, Michael Timpane, Bill Coleman**

Staff Present:

Teri Webley, Janet Zimmerman

Meeting called to order at 5 pm by Pierre Pierce at the EEC

The meeting was opened with the Flag salute led by Pierre.

November Meeting Minutes Approval by Pierre Pierce

Motion to approve the November meeting minutes was made by Peter.

Seconded by Carl.

All in favor none opposed the October meeting minutes were approved.

Governance Committee Update by Peter Difatta

Peter explained that the Governance Committee met the previous week. In addition to committee members present Peter Difatta, Bill Coleman, Frank Pixler, and Mike Timpane: Teri Webley and Janet Zimmerman attended.

Peter passed out the minutes from the Governance Committee meeting.

The Governance Committee goals as presented to the Board by Peter are:

1. Setting up a policy for new board member orientation. This may include participation by Research Reserve staff as done in volunteer orientation at the EEC.
2. Consolidating all existing policies into one manual that will be maintained by the Administrative Assistant and made available to current and future board members.
3. Defining and documenting all committee responsibilities. These committee definitions would be supplied to the Governance Committee by each committee. These descriptions would be maintained on the Friends computer by the Administrative Assistant.
4. Investigating a revision on officer election dates, and coming up with a defined board calendar. The Governance Committee will look into the benefits if any of earlier elections and committee formation to prepare for the new fiscal year.

Governance Committee cont.

Peter stated that once the Governance Committee has Board approval on these four subjects they will proceed and present each at future Board meetings for final approval as they are developed by the Governance Committee.

A vote by the Board is not necessary at this time on these four subjects just a consensus from the board as to the acceptability of these subjects for future consideration by the Board.

Peter opened the matter for Board discussion

Jonathan voiced his approval of the new board member orientation procedure.

Peter explained that the desired end result of the 4 goals is to establish some continuity and structure for the Friends of the GTM Reserve Board of Directors. As new Board members come in they have something to look at.

The Board agreed that these goals were worth investigating and that Peter would bring them back to the Board when they were ready to be voted on.

Peter reminded the Board that the Nominating Committee is actively looking for people with legal, accounting, marketing, scientific, and business expertise. Any leads supplied to the Nominating Committee by Board members are greatly appreciated.

Peter stated that he was asked by Carl and Bill to encourage committees to bring items before the board to be voted on rather than at the research and debate stages. Committees should keep in mind that issues should be researched and debated at the committee level and only when they have a recommendation should these issues be brought before the Board.

In addition Peter discussed the way Board meetings are structured in particular the board's adherence to Roberts Rules of Order. He said that he looked for a printed version of Roberts Rules of Order that would work for the Friends of the GTM Reserve Board meetings. What he could find was too cumbersome to serve the board well. The Governance Committee will continue to pursue the matter and make recommendations later.

Michael explained that his primary concern on the matter of meeting structure was that if someone outside the Board asked for discovery on a Board decision, what they would need to find is proof of a rational process being used by the Board in their decision making. And that if that was not apparent in the records the result could be legal action against the Friends of the GTM Reserve.

The Board discussed the procedure used for decision making and agreed that the procedure in place at this time uses the structure necessary to ensure that all decisions are arrived at in a fair and orderly manner. In the voting process, motions, seconds, and in favor and opposed are always used to arrive at decisions. Teri was reminded that the record keeping was essential and that she has the

Governance Committee cont.

ability to stop a meeting to ensure that she is recording the events of the meetings accurately.

The final subject Peter brought before the Board was to consider changing bylaws to allow for voting on issues at committee level to be done by email. The bylaws state that you cannot be absent from a meeting and vote and you cannot vote by proxy. How these rules apply to email voting Peter was not sure.

Pierre stated that voting by email has been done at committee level but he would not recommend it for votes done by the Board.

The board discussed the procedure for tallying email votes and how that information would be recorded and dispersed. The Board agreed that the tally would be read and put into minutes at the first committee meeting following any committee vote by email.

Development Committee (direct mail campaign) Update by Jonathan Katzen

Jonathan told the Board that the 2007 Direct Mail Campaign was sent in its entirety the week after Thanksgiving.

The original budget for the Direct Mail Campaign was for 18000 pieces at \$15000. The actual number of pieces mailed was 22274 with an additional set of 500 for handout and future mailing. The final cost was \$14198. The final cost included enough materials to see the Friends of the GTM Reserve through 2008.

Using information provided by Teri, Jonathan reported that:

For the month of December to date (12/07/07)

30 new members

7 renewals

For \$3214.

7 requests for bricks

For \$1200.

What has not been done yet is to compare this year with last. Jonathan said that he would like to get a sense of how the Direct Mail Campaign is tracking compared to last year. Jonathan will report back to the Board about the comparison.

Peter reminded all Board members who had not already done so to renew their memberships.

Education and Communications Committee Update by Michael Timpane

Addressing the Education and Communications Committee Michael asked for input about a good time to meet as a committee.

Education and Communications Committee cont.

Michael suggested that a permanent display at the EEC would help define the Friends of the GTM Reserve and their function at the Research Reserve and would lead to more memberships.

Michael added that a pop up display for off site events would serve the same purpose.

After working the Friends of the GTM Reserve table three times Michael has surmised that most people don't know who the Friends of the GTM Reserve are or their function at the Research Reserve.

Michael explained that in his opinion these displays are a pressing need and would like to make them a focus of the Education and Communications Committee.

Pierre agreed that people don't know who the Friends of the GTM Reserve are.

The pop up display that the Research Reserve uses was mentioned and Janet explained the display does not explain the function of the Friends of the GTM Reserve.

The Board agreed that the displays were worth investigating. Michael was reminded that Mike Shirley would need to be consulted before a permanent display for the EEC could be made. Michael explained that he is getting guidance from EEC staff.

Anita asked if Guana could be added to the commonly used name of the Research Reserve for public recognition.

Janet explained that GTM Research Reserve is the commonly used name approved by Mike Shirley. And that while Guana may help with recognition in the short term using multiple names will only confuse the public in the long term.

Pierre suggested Research Reserve at Guana.

Janet explained that Mike Shirley's intention is to use the most defining name and this is the only Research Reserve while Guana is not used only for this facility.

Michael was encouraged to pursue the recognition issue in committee.

Another issue Michael brought before the Board for consideration is the GTM NERR EVENT signs used for all public events at the EEC. Michael said that the signs were not descriptive enough to be a benefit when events such as Artist Receptions are held at the EEC.

Michael used the Holiday Artist Showcase as an example. There was a noticeable lack of walk in traffic at the event. The signs were not specific enough to let people know what type of event was at the GTM NERR. More specific signage such as EEC Art Show would have been better.

Education and Communications Committee cont.

The Board agreed that more specific signage was worth investigating.

Irene suggested that better signage to the Nature Store on A1A might be worth investigating.

The Board agreed with Irene.

Pierre added that print advertising is another direction to look for the Nature Store.

Michael summarized that the Education and Communications Committee would list pop ups for the Friends of the GTM Reserve, Names, and A1A signs for events and the Nature Store as projects to investigate. He said he would get back to the Board when he had recommendations from the Education and Committee on these subjects.

Holiday Artist Showcase Report by Teri Webley

Teri reported that the Holiday Artist Showcase went well.

The financial report is:

\$744.94 in expenses

\$1801. In vendor commission

\$493.77 in Nature Store cost of sales

\$3039.56 total expenses

\$3042.79 in vendor sales

\$987.53 in Nature Store sales

\$38. bake sale

\$64. donation box

\$4132.32 total sales

\$1092.61 made at event

Teri reported that the only negative feedback received to date was concern over signage. Shoppers and vendors were concerned that there was not enough signage on A1A and the existing signage was not descriptive enough. And the lack of lighting in the EEC parking lot on Friday night after the reception.

Janet addressed the lighting saying that it was a timer issue. The timers for the parking lot lights had not been reset for the time change. That has been fixed.

All of the vendors Teri spoke to said that they would do the event again.

The question of advertising for the Holiday Artist showcase was raised.

Holiday Artist Showcase cont.

Teri said that the event was announced in the weekly advertising that Diana sends to local papers, post cards were sent to Friends of the GTM Reserve members, flyers were posted and passed out at the EEC, and some vendors took flyers to other shows around the same time. The event was also announced on the Friends of the GTM Reserve and Harry Hellas' websites.

Pierre remarked that the Friends of the GTM Reserve need more publicity for everything they do.

Pierre also said that he did notice that most people paid no attention to the Friends of the GTM Reserve table.

Research Reserve Update by Janet Zimmerman

Janet passed out the latest CICEET updates.

This group offers grants to researchers to develop new technologies. A couple of the funded CICEET projects have been done at the GTM Research Reserve. The handouts focus on the activities going on in Florida through CICEET.

Janet passed out part of chapter 6 of the management plan.

Janet suggested that the Friends of the GTM Reserve committees use this as a reference when planning their calendars for 2008.

Chapter 6 lists the goals, objectives, and strategies of the management plan.

Because of the volume of information Janet said she was passing out 3 sections this month, and 2 next month. This is the five year plan at the GTM Research Reserve.

Pierre asked if the management plan was still pending approval from Tallahassee.

Janet said it is still waiting for approval from Tallahassee.

Janet explained how the staff at the GTM Research Reserve is using the current draft of the management plan to plan the next 5 years for their departments.

Janet suggested that in addition to helping plan their calendars the Management Plan could be used to identify potential funding needs at the GTM Research Reserve.

Pierre asked if some of the future grant needs for the GTM Research Reserve have been identified by the staff.

Research Reserve update cont.

Janet said some of those needs can be found in the information she passed out today and encouraged Board members to take notes as they read the plan in anticipation of funds requests.

Pierre brought up the subject of the staff aquarists at the GTM Research Reserve and the desire to expand the aquarium displays to include more local tropical fish. And the addition of an outside fish pond. The pond would mean the installation of a salt water well. The pond at Whitney Lab was used as an example.

Michael asked if the issues and goals in the management plan had been prioritized by the GTM Research Reserve staff yet.

Janet explained that the prioritizing would begin in 2008.

Michael said that without knowing more about staff prioritizing of the issues and goals in the management plan the Friends of the GTM Reserve committees would find it difficult to organize a working calendar based on the plan.

Janet said that the staff should have the prioritizing done by March 2008. If that is the case that information would be passed on to the Board at the March 2008 meeting.

Pierre asked if the Management Plan makes any concessions for the EEC opening on State Holidays.

Janet said that there is nothing in the Management Plan that specifically addresses opening the EEC on State Holidays. There is a section about visitor use that may address that issue.

Other Business

Nancy listed the items needed by the accountant for the tax returns that are coming due.

After discussing the items needed it was decided that Nancy will email Janet the list of what is needed for the accountant and Janet and Teri will put the items together.

Nancy will obtain any items from the list that Janet and Teri cannot find and submit them to the Board for approval.

Pierre discussed the damage feral pigs are doing to the Research Reserve. Pierre said that he has researched the matter and after discussing the matter with Mike Shirley had designed a trap for the feral pigs. Pierre informed the Board that the feral pig problem has worsened in the last

Other cont.

couple of years. And that the feral pigs are tearing the Reserve property to shreds.

Peter raised the question “when discussing restoration how far back do we go?”

It was stated that the feral pigs are not indigenous to the area and that they are destructive to the property on which the GTM Research Reserve stands.

Joe asked if the feral pig problem was one the Friends of the GTM Reserve should be involved in.

Pierre said that the involvement was only that he (Pierre) knows the people with the traps.

Bill pointed out that there would be no action on the part of the Friends of the GTM Reserve. This is simply an FYI.

Pierre agreed that the Friends of the GTM Reserve were not going to take action.

Pierre referred to the Comcast ad on TV. Pierre suggested investigating ad space in the crawls or even an ad on a national program inserted for the local market. These ads are available for very little money. These ads could be beneficial for certain events and targeted times of the year.

Peter said the Education and Communications Committee could look into the ad.

Bill suggested that the Marketing Committee could investigate the ads also.

Michael asked about film classes offered at the GTM Research Reserve.

Janet said that some things have been done at the Research Reserve through local universities. And that some of these things have been broadcast.

Pierre asked if we could get copies of what has been filmed at the Research Reserve for broadcast.

Janet said that the Research Reserve is in possession of a couple of these films.

Janet added that the introductory video played in the EEC was sent to Flagler and St Johns County and are played on TV when scheduling permits.

Other cont.

Pierre asked Teri about the books in the Nature Store. There had been discussion about carrying books about local history.

Teri said that she has gotten lists from GTM Research Reserve staff of books that relate to the projects they are involved in and that she carries the books that have selling potential in the Nature Store.

Pierre asked about books about local geology and history.

Teri said there is a book from the St Augustine Historical Society and some about N/E Florida. But she has not found any books about the GTM Research Reserve or its history.

The Board discussed the possibility of approaching a local writer about writing something about the Geology and history of the GTM Research Reserve.

Michael told of his experience with the Friends of Newport Bay and hiring a writer for a similar project there. He said the experience was a positive one.

Peter said that the best bet would be a historian for the book project.

Chris suggested David Nolan for the book project.

Michael said he would bring the project before the Education and Communications Committee for review.

Pierre said he would research the book project further.

Michael asked if the Friends of the GTM Reserve have ever call local universities about papers done about the GRM Research Reserve.

Janet explained that there is a history written of the GTM Research Reserve. It is not in a concise readable version. It consists of documented archeological surveys and histories. These are not in lay terms.

Pierre asked Nancy if her husband has made progress on the spy cams.

Nancy said her husband is still investigating the needs of the project. Some of the preliminary findings are that good equipment that will go where the animals do is very expensive, and that the equipment in the magazine provided by Pierre was not adequate.

Nancy's husband will continue to explore the equipment needs of the spy cam project.

Meeting Adjourned at 6:00 by Pierre Pierce

Peter motioned to adjourn, Carl seconded, all in favor, none objected.

The next monthly board meeting will be Tuesday, January 8, 2008.