

HARRY P. LEU GARDENS BOARD

January 27, 2016 Minutes

The Harry P. Leu Gardens Board of Trustees held its regular meeting on Wednesday, January 27, 2016, at Leu Gardens. **The meeting was called to order by Jay Hood at 7:54 a.m. announcing a quorum present:**

TRUSTEES PRESENT: (12 meetings scheduled; **3 meetings** held year-to-date for 2015-16 fiscal year)

Alberto Sanchez de Fuentes, (3/0) Chair

Jennifer Lombardo, (3/0)

Jay Hood, (3/0) Vice-Chair

Michael Provenzale, (3/0)

Lorelei Anderson-Francis, (3/0)

Camara Williams, (3/0)

Michelle Francos, (3/0) **conference call**

STAFF PRESENT: Robert Bowden, Executive Director, Harry P. Leu Gardens
Keri Byrum, Assistant Director, Harry P. Leu Gardens
Antoinette Ashman, Recording Secretary

Conference call established at 7:54 a.m. with Michelle Francos.

MINUTES:

It was moved by Michael Provenzale and seconded by Jennifer Lombardo to approve the November 18, 2015 Harry P. Leu Board minutes. There was no discussion. **It was approved by all as presented.**

There was no December 16, 2015 Leu Board Meeting.

ATTENDANCE, REVENUE AND EXPENSE REPORTS:

Robert Bowden reported on November 2015 and December 2015 Leu Attendance.

It was moved by Camara Williams and seconded by Michael Provenzale to approve Leu's November 2015 and December 2015 Attendance reports. It was approved by all as presented.

Alberto Sanchez de Fuentes and Antoinette Ashman arrived at 7:57 a.m.

The Board reviewed and discussed December 2015 Revenue and Expense Reports.

It was moved by Jay Hood and seconded by Camara Williams to approve Leu's December 2015 Revenue and Expense reports. There was no further discussion. **It was approved by all as presented.**

PUBLIC COMMENT: Hearing no public comment, the meeting proceeded.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Robert Bowden shared the positive comments heard on the museum's holiday decorations. The Museum was decorated by professional designers from the community and Seminole State College Department of Interior Design students.

Leu Gardens' chain-link fence on the south border along the Nebraska Street was replaced and now matches the existing faux wrought-iron fence at the entrance of Leu Gardens. The faux wrought-iron fence was paid for by District 3 Commissioner Robert Stuart's discretionary fund. Mr. Bowden also thanked District 4 Commissioner Patty Sheehan for the repairs completed to the sidewalks on the opposite side of Nebraska Street.

The board requested Robert Bowden draft a formal letter for the boards' signature thanking Commissioner Robert Stuart for funding the installation of the faux wrought-iron fence along Nebraska Street.

Mr. Bowden shared a letter received from Governor Rick Scott congratulating the Gardens on being included in the Orlando Business Journal list of top attractions.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

HORTICULTURE:

Jay Hood reported from Thomas Hurst,

- With the cooler weather has helped the Horticulture Staff with weed control. All of our cool weather annuals have been planted and are doing great.

- The camellias are now in full bloom and are looking very nice and guests are enjoying the color throughout the gardens. We will also start cutting back roses over the next few weeks so that they may have a short dormant period before they flush out for spring.
- We have also welcomed a new horticulture assistant, Kristin Neron, to our team. Ms. Neron has been a very welcomed addition to our staff.

Last week Channel 13 featured Leu Gardens with Keri Byrum speaking on the affect the approaching cold front would have on the Gardens.

EDUCATION:

Michael Provenzale reported from Linda Schmidt,

Tours:

November 2015 - 6 tours, 111 people **November 2014** – 3 tours, 43 people

December 2015 - 5 tours, 102 people, **December 2014** – 2 tours, 22 people

Tours have been going well and children's tours are very busy through April. We introduced a new tour this year to go with the Big Bugs exhibit, with the emphasis being on why insects are vital to our environment and how honeybees and pollinators are important to food production. There are over 30 big bug tours scheduled so far.

Ms. Byrum updated the Board on reservations for tours for the Big Bugs exhibit have quadrupled in comparison to the last year's Ribbit the Exhibit (i.e., Frogs exhibition) time frame.

Classes:

November 2015 - 13 classes, 154 attending (4 cancelled); **November 2014** - 12 classes, 197 attending (1 cancelled)

December 2015 - 6 classes, 47 attending (2 cancelled); **December 2014** - 5 classes, 61 attending (1 cancelled)

November and December 2015 seemed to be a busy time for people this year. We had to cancel the Hypertufa class, for which we usually have a waiting list. However, January's classes are going very well.

Plant Clinic:

November 2015 - 4 days, with 12 guests; **November 2014** – 4 days, with 7 guests

December 2015 - 4 days, with 15 guests; **December 2014** – 4 days, with 7 guests

Envirothon

The 22nd Annual Envirothon will be held at the Gardens on Thursday, February 4th.

LEU HOUSE MUSEUM:

Lorelei Anderson-Francis reported from Antoinette Ashman,

Visitors

- **November 2015** – 2,413 visitors, 294 tours; **November 2014** – 1,805 visitors, 239 tours.
- **December 2015** – 4,173 visitors, 347 tours; **December 2014** – 2,894 visitors, 323 tours

Donations

- **November 2015** was **\$419.00** **Breakdown:** \$239 cash donation + \$126 (63 cookbooks sold)
- **November 2014** was **\$328.00** **Breakdown:** \$270 cash donation + \$58 (29 cookbooks sold)
- **December 2015** was **\$577.00** **Breakdown:** \$369 cash donation + \$208 (104 cookbooks sold)
- **December 2014** was **\$436.00** **Breakdown:** \$404 cash donation + \$32 (16 cookbooks sold)

Mr. Bowden complimented the museum volunteers' dedication and thanked them for their service to the Gardens.

MARKETING & SPECIAL EVENTS:

Keri Byrum reported from Tracy Micciche,

Events in Review

- **Date Night** on December 4 featured the 1989 movie "**National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation.**" Attendance was 988; Cost was \$24.00; Revenue of \$4,563.36, Profit of \$4,539.36. Sold 12 household memberships (**valued \$600**).
- **Storytime at Leu Gardens**, on December 7 had attendance of 346.
- **Storytime at Leu Gardens**, on January 4 had attendance of 375.

Upcoming Events

- **Bug-a-Palooza** is on Saturday, January 30, 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. It's a family fun-filled day celebrating Big Bugs.

Ms. Byrum updated the board on the increased postings of social media with the Big Bugs exhibit.

- **Storytime at Leu Gardens** is on February 1, the first Monday of the month starting at 10:00 a.m.
- **Date Night** is on Friday, February 5 featuring the movie **"What If."** The movie starts at 7:30 p.m. The cost is \$6 for adults and free for Garden members.
- **Valentine's Stroll** is on Saturday, February 14 at 6:00 p.m., features three bands: Selwyn Birchwood, Dave Capp Project and the Mud Rooster Blues. Tickets are on sale January 27 for \$17 and \$13 plus tax. Purchase tickets online at leugardens.eventbrite.com or in person. Day-of tickets are \$22 plus tax.
- **Seed Swap**, is on Wednesday, February 17 at 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. This is a free event for anyone interested in swapping seeds.

Marketing

Christmas at the Leu House received a lot of press this year. One reason for the increase of press was the earlier decorating of the museum and other attractions were not. We also were able to meet many publication deadlines.

Advertising for Big Bugs exhibit has started, including print, online and social media. We will be reaching The Villages, Tampa area, Volusia, Flagler and Brevard counties, as well as the tri-counties Orange, Seminole and Osceola.

MEMBERSHIP & VOLUNTEERS:

Camara Williams reported from Kim Robinson,

- **November 2015 Membership:** New 159, Renew 141, Upgrade 3, Downsize 5
- **November 2014 Membership:** New 84, Renew 90, Upgrade 5, Downsize 10
- **December 2015 Membership:** New 203, Renew 125, Rejoins 113, Upgrade 4, Downsize 5
- **December 2014 Membership:** New 84, Renew 90, Rejoins 11, Upgrade 5, Downsize 10

November 2015 Paid Membership total was: 3,621

November 2014 Paid Membership total was: 3,135

December 2015 Paid Membership total was: 4,254

December 2014 Paid Membership total was: 3,169

Volunteer hours from October thru December 2015: Education, Special Events and Front Desk had 57 volunteers with 632.5 hours. Leu Museum had 55 volunteers with 1,246 hours. Horticulture had 31 volunteers with 856.25 hours.

OLD BUSINESS:

- A. The Leu House Museum attendance was over 6,000 visitors during the holidays.
- B. The Big Bugs Exhibition press day was January 14, 2016 with the artist David Rogers, Commissioners Robert Stuart and Patty Sheehan, over a dozen press people, and Ferncreek Elementary Kindergarten students attending. With our partnership with Bright House Networks a 30-second commercial for the Big Bugs exhibit will be airing soon.

Mr. Bowden informed the Board on the City of Orlando's Facilities Department hard work on pressure washing and street sweepers cleaning of the slippery roads and pathways in the Gardens. Mr. Bowden thanked David Dunn and the Facilities department.

NEW BUSINESS: **None.**

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business to discuss, it was moved by Jay Hood and seconded by Lorelei Anderson-Francis that the meeting be adjourned at 8:37 a.m. The next board meeting is scheduled for February 24, 2016.