

HARRY P. LEU GARDENS BOARD
October 26, 2016 Minutes

The Harry P. Leu Gardens Board of Trustees held its regular meeting on Wednesday, October 26, 2016, at Leu Gardens. **The meeting was called to order by Michelle Francos, Chair, at 7:55 a.m. announcing a quorum present:**

TRUSTEES PRESENT: (12 meetings scheduled; **1 meeting** held year-to-date for 2016-17 fiscal year)
Michelle Francos, (1/0) Chair
Lorelei Anderson-Francis, (1/0) Vice-Chair
Isaiah Cottle, (1/0)
Jennifer Lombardo, (1/0)
Brendan O'Connor, (1/0)
Michael Provenzale, (1/0)
Camara Williams, (1/0)

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

MINUTES:

It was moved by Michael Provenzale and seconded by Jennifer Lombardo to approve the September 28, 2016 Harry P. Leu Board minutes. There was no discussion. **The minutes were approved by all as presented.**

ATTENDANCE, REVENUE AND EXPENSE REPORTS:

Robert Bowden reported on September 2016 Leu Attendance. The 2015-16 fiscal year had record breaking attendance of 162,114 since fiscal year 2008-09 attendance of 154,303. Mr. Bowden noted that paid garden admission was the highest ever with 57,294 people.

It was moved by Isaiah Cottle and seconded by Lorelei Anderson-Francis to approve Leu's September 2016 Attendance, report. There was no further discussion. **It was approved by all as presented.**

Camara Williams arrived at 7:59 a.m.

Mr. Bowden updated the Board of the record breaking revenue of \$1,298,429. It was noted that Paid Admissions of \$491,712 and Memberships of \$218,544 broke records and the Gift Shop Resales of \$141,495 nearly matched its sales record since 1999.

Discussion continued on expenses. Mr. Bowden and Keri Byrum discussed the next fiscal year expenses with the Board. The Gardens will be receiving three replacement golf carts this fiscal year.

It was moved by Lorelei Anderson-Francis and seconded by Camara Williams to approve Leu's September 2016 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:

Mr. Bowden introduced Eric Sondgeroth, Leu Gardens' new Horticultural Manager to the Board.

Eric Sondgeroth left at 8:15 a.m.

Linda Schmidt, Education Supervisor, after 20 years at the Gardens, will be retiring December 2016.

Mr. Bowden will meet with Paul Taylor, one of the previous landscape designers, for the design of the trellis in the former Citrus Grove.

The camellias purchased through the Friends of Leu Gardens will be planted soon.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

HORTICULTURE:

Brendan O'Connor reported from Eric Sondgeroth,

The team did a great job with the clean up from Hurricane Matthew. Overall the Gardens fared well with minimal impact.

The Horticulture staff performed some maintenance around the floral clock. The plant material in the clock was trimmed and re-mulched. We will also be cleaning the groundcover for a more manicured appearance.

Work continues in the Rose Garden with the replacement of roses and upgrading the irrigation system. The new irrigation will allow for an even distribution of water which will be more efficient.

EDUCATION:

Michael Provenzale reported from Linda Schmidt,

Tours:

September 2016 - 2 tours, 66 people; 1 complimentary tour with 4 people; **September 2015** - 3 tours, 107 people

The Education Department is busy scheduling for the upcoming Dinosaur tours. During the months of January to April 2017, regular tours will be available in addition to children's tours focusing on dinosaurs. The tour will include information on each dinosaur, the unique, fun facts as well as the prehistoric plants we have growing in the Gardens. There are 27 dinosaur tours scheduled so far.

Classes:

September 2016 - 8 classes, 99 attending (2 cancelled); **September 2015** - 11 classes, 144 attending

There were fewer classes this month, but Mr. Bowden's "Fall and Winter Vegetable" class had 37 participants. Ms. Schmidt is currently working on the winter quarter class schedule and hopes to include some dinosaur, fossils and prehistoric plant classes.

Plant Clinic:

September 2016 - 4 days, with 6 people; **September 2015** - 4 days, with 5 people

LEU HOUSE MUSEUM:

Lorelei Anderson-Francis reported from Antoinette Ashman,

Visitors

▪ **September 2016** – 1,558 visitors, 242 tours; **September 2015** – 1,242 visitors, 220 tours

Donations

▪ **September 2016** was **\$340.00** **Breakdown:** \$304 cash donation + \$52 (26 cookbooks sold)
▪ **September 2015** was **\$246.00** **Breakdown:** \$166 cash donation + \$80 (40 cookbooks sold)

October 2015 thru September 2016 the Leu Museum had attendance of 28,812 visitors.

Ms. Anderson-Francis noted coinciding with increased garden admission the museum visitation increased as well.

MARKETING & SPECIAL EVENTS:

Jennifer Lombardo reported from Tracy Micciche,

Events in Review

- **Story Time at Leu Gardens** on October 3 had attendance of 400.
- **Movie Night** on October 7 featuring the classic 1954 movie "Dial M for Murder" was canceled due to Hurricane Matthew.
- **Jazz'n Blues Concert** on October 10 featured 3 bands with attendance of 1,374. Cost of \$1,334.79. Revenue of \$20,363.00. Profit of \$19,028.21. Rain, other major community events and UCF homecoming played a significant role in attendance.

Upcoming Events

- **Movie Night** is on Friday, November 4 featuring the film "Me Before You." The movie starts at 7:30 p.m. The cost is \$6 for adults and free for Garden members.
- **Story Time at Leu Gardens** is on November 7, the first Monday of the month starting at 10:00 a.m.
- **Christmas at the Leu House** is from November 13 thru January 2. Visit the Leu House Museum adorned with many festive holiday decorations designed by local interior designers.
- **Holiday Wreath Display and Silent Auction** is from November 11 thru December 1. The holiday wreath display will feature one-of-a-kind wreaths. Guests may bid on wreaths through our online silent auction with the proceeds benefiting the Friends of Leu Gardens.

Marketing

O'Arts Magazine will feature Leu Gardens' holiday plans in the November/December issue.

Travel and Leisure online magazine will be mentioning the Gardens in an upcoming article about Orlando.

Robin Draper, myauthenticflorida.com, visited the gardens in September and wrote about her experience. She will be back to visit the gardens in the winter.

MEMBERSHIP & VOLUNTEERS:

Camara Williams reported from Kim Robinson,

- **September 2016 Membership:** New 101, Renew 133, Upgrade 7, Downsize 3
- **September 2015 Membership:** New 127, Renew 242, Upgrade 2, Downsize 4

September 2016 Paid Membership total was 4,665, comparing to **September 2015** Paid Membership total of 3,496.

There were 2 complimentary memberships in September 2016 and 2 in September 2015.

There were 2,149 Leu volunteer hours for July thru September 2016.

OLD BUSINESS:

Update from Leu's Historical Markers Committee met on September 28, 2016 at 9:15 a.m. after Leu Gardens' regular board meeting. The committee consisted of Brendan O'Connor, Chair, Isaiah Cottle and Executive Director, Robert Bowden.

After reviewing the printed information from the State of Florida's webpage about historical markers, the committee made two recommendations. The committee recommended the placement of one double-sided "Florida Heritage Landmark" sign describing the four families that lived in the Leu House Museum and a second sign at the Leu House Museum describing the numerous collections of plants and how they had been developed over the years.

Discussion ensued on the committee recommendations.

NEW BUSINESS:

Ms. Anderson-Francis mentioned inviting Christopher Castro, City of Orlando's Sustainability Director, Senior Adviser to Mayor Buddy Dyer and supporter of the Fleet Farming program to attend Leu Gardens' next board meeting.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting be adjourned at 8:58 a.m. The next board meeting is scheduled for November 16, 2016.

Antoinette Ashman, Recording Secretary