

**FULLERTON ARBORETUM COMMISSION**

MINUTES  
REGULAR MEETING  
September 12, 2018  
-DRAFT-

*approved  
12/12/18*

The 192<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the Fullerton Arboretum Commission was held in the Pavilion Classroom at the Fullerton Arboretum.

Commissioners present: Greg Saks, Amir Dabirian, Kristin Prior, RJ Stager, Kari Knutson-Miller, Anthony Florentine and Doug Chaffee

Others Present: Gregory Dymont, Director  
Gregory Pongetti, Living Collections Curator  
Marta McDaniel, Recorder  
Miguel Macias, Education Manager  
Steve Eldredge, Friends Board member  
Shannon Niemeyer, Facility Rental Coordinator  
Harriet Bouldin, Development Manager  
Christopher Swarat, Interim A.V.P., EIP  
Lynn Stewart, Director of Business Development, EIP  
Doug Butler, Director of Budget & Finance, EIP  
Jeanne Tran, Director of Government Relations  
Katie Savant, Director of Local & Community Relations  
Patrick Guzman, Auditor, Guzman & Gray CPAs

Commissioner Saks called the meeting to order at 3:11 p.m.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

No public comments.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**1. Action Item: Approve Minutes of June 13, 2018 - Saks**

Commissioner Saks asked for approval of the June 13, 2018 minutes.

**MSC – Minutes accepted and approved unanimously.**

**2. Review: Financial Statements – Patrick Guzman**

Guzman reviewed the Financial Statements page by page.  
(Exhibit A)

Guzman reviewed the letter of Communication With Those Charged With  
Governance  
(Exhibit B)

Guzman reviewed letter of Communication Of No Material Weakness  
(Exhibit C)

Guzman reviewed letter of Management  
(Exhibit D)

Discussion followed regarding the 2020 Fund held by the Friends. A  
Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) will be drawn up to ensure that the 2020  
Fund will be for the benefit of the Arboretum only.

### **3. Approve Facility Rental Rate Increase – Eldredge and Niemeyer**

Eldredge introduced Shannon Niemeyer as the Facility Rental Coordinator for the  
Friends. The rental rates were last raised in 2016 and since then the demand  
has grown and an increase in rates is reasonable. The increase in rates is  
expected to raise income by about 20 percent.  
(Exhibit E)

Dyment explained that rentals book out a year in advance and the demand exists  
for a rate increase.

Commissioner Saks asked for approval of the Facility Rental Rate Increase

**MSC – Increase accepted and approved unanimously.**

### **4. Update: 2020 Operations Plan – Dyment**

Saks said the Arboretum needed to put together a plan to integrate into the  
university's Master Plan. Saks introduced Katie Savant, Director of Local and  
Community Relations, who will also be assisting with the plan.

Dyment introduced, Chris Swarat, Lynn Stewart and Doug Butler from EIP as key  
figures in assisting the Arboretum with the integration plan.

Dyment said that it was time for the Friends to step in and get involved. Three Friends and Scott Hewitt, CSUF Faculty, will join Arboretum staff.

Dyment discussed the Staff Organization and Funding chart. Pointing out that the Arboretum received money from various sources to operate.  
(Exhibit F)

Dyment said Swarat's memo was clear on the goals to achieve. As such, the Arboretum must integrate operations with EIP. To begin with the Arboretum is building a new web site with the help of EIP, who will begin to host the site once it is developed.

Dyment discussed the blended Financial Statement created from the Arboretum's finances and the Friends finances. The combined spreadsheet gave a complete picture of what the Arboretum's true financial position is really like.  
(Exhibit G)

Dyment explained that when the JPA expires in December 2020, the Arboretum will have to replace approximately \$250, 000 in operating funds and outlined a few possibilities that could help with that effort:

- Use 3% of combined Endowment funds, which would amount to about \$80,000.
- Integrating with EIP would also provide some cost savings, e.g. the Arboretum website currently costs approximately about \$10,000 annually. The website would be in house.
- Increase Membership because this is a way to reach into the community. Members bring their families here and have weddings, memorials and attend events. However, we have had a hard time building this part because there is no perceived value in buying a membership.
- Admission Fee at the gate will add value to a visitor and give value to membership experience. Currently there is no one at the gate to greet guests and tell them about the wonderful things they can expect to see inside. It would also curb bad behaviors that we currently deal with and build membership. This was really pointed out during our visit to Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Gardens. They have been able to build their donor pyramid as they have noticed that members will respond to appeals and continue to renew their memberships.

Discussion followed regarding other gardens that charge admission. Earl Burns Japanese Garden at CSU Long Beach began charging admission as of January 2018 and immediately saw the benefits, e.g. bad behaviors stopped and membership increased as well as the appreciation for the garden. They do not charge students or faculty.

Dyment said we plan to have an Admission Fee Proposal ready for your consideration at the December meeting.

Discussion followed about getting the Arboretum on the New Student Orientation tour and well as the New Employee/Faculty Orientation tour. Bouldin shared that Professor Scott Hewitt was on a mission to make the Arboretum part of other CSUF events as well as making Faculty aware of the opportunities available to enhance learning for students.

- Sell value added products. Whole Foods has approached us about buying our Rare Fruits. They are always looking for local suppliers
- Talking to restauranteurs and the Small Business Development Council to create a meeting and event center in the Pavilion.

Dyment said that Pongetti has been working on a Landscape Management Plan. It divides the garden into 39 Zones.  
(Exhibit H)

Dyment said that Macias has been working on an Environmental Education Programs Operation Plan. His outline is based on one used by the Morton Arboretum.  
(Exhibit I)

Discussion followed regarding funding by the university. It was stated that its best to be able to operate without tax dollars. Bouldin reported that the next Arboretum Magazine contained an article about how 60% of the Arboretum's budget came from donated dollars. Dyment also said we are trying to work with Alumni to get our message out.

## **5. Director's Report – Dyment**

Friends gave us a \$50,000 to help improve the Arboretum. We plan to purchase a dishwasher for the kitchen and improve the lighting in the museum.

## **6. Friends Report – Eldredge for Kingett**

Eldredge said there is a new all-electric cart. Funding came from the Phelps Foundation and the Friends.

Eldredge said Friends continue to have a good year and donated an additional \$50,000 to the Arboretum as Dymment mentioned.

Eldredge said Friends project to earn an additional \$50,000 but are holding those funds until decisions are made as to which part of the Arboretum would be the best place to use it. The extra monies came from a very successful Brews and Blues that drew over 1000 people to our festivities. Party in the Garden that replaced the Gala made us as much in its first year as the Gala usually did, since our expense were lower. For both events guests were encouraged by the design to walk around and enjoy the garden itself. The other sources of the extra money were cost cutting measures through G&A and a very successful year with facility rentals. We would like to thank Shannon Niemeyer for her work as Facilities Rental Coordinator.

The Theatre Department wants to work with us through their Dance Program to put on a Dia De Los Muertos production October 24 and 25<sup>th</sup>. We are excited about this new alliance with the University.

Eldredge said the Native Plant Sale is November 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>. Cactus and Succulent Sale December 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>. Holiday Luminaria Stroll is December 14 and 15<sup>th</sup> and the Glass and Ceramics clubs have been invited to sell their work at this event.

The Friends are eager to work with Dymment and the University in the Master Plan discussions as well as the 2020 reorganization.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

Chaffee recommended the Facility Rental rates be looked at annually.

Discussion followed about year around rentals. However, allowances have to be made for maintenance.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Saks adjourned the meeting at 4:13p.m.

The next Commission meeting will be held Wednesday, December 12, 2018

Lucinda Williams, Fullerton City Clerk and  
Secretary for the Fullerton Arboretum Commission

By Marta McDaniel

Marta McDaniel, Administrative Analyst and  
Recording Secretary for the Fullerton Arboretum Commission

Exhibit A: Financial Audit for FY 2017-2018

Exhibit B: Letter Communication With Those Charged With Governance

Exhibit C: Letter Communication of No Material Weakness

Exhibit D: Letter of Management

Exhibit E: Facility Rental Rate Increase

Exhibit F: Staff Organization and Funding Chart

Exhibit G: Blended Financial Spreadsheet

Exhibit H: Landscape Management Plan

Exhibit I: Environmental Education Programs Operation Outline 2018-19