



CLARK PLANETARIUM ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

Location: Virtual Meeting
Thursday, November 19, 2020

Board attendance:

Allison Thompson, Chair
Jordan Hansen, Vice-Chair
Rees Petersen
Kim Wilson
Jim Brass
James Karner
Julia Kamenetzky
Mike Hanson
Ahsan Iqbal
Andrea Garavito-Martinez
Michelle Love-Day
Tanasia Valdez
Olga Siggins
Bianca Lyon
Councilwoman Shireen Ghorbani
Lauren Littlefield

Board Absent:

Ulrich Rassner

Others Present:

Lindsie Smith
Durand Johnson
Tim Glenn
Joe Stohel
Richard Cox
Rob Morris
Robin Chalhoub
April Townsend
Sterling Poulsen
Tom Beckett

- I. **STELLAR SHARE** – Mike Hanson reviewed the current television series “Away” which speculates about the first manned mission to Mars. Mike Hanson’s primary focus was on how accurate the series was with the regards to use of science as well the portrayal of human physiological and psychological responses during such a journey. Doing research, he found it to be surprisingly accurate and he recommends the series. It has drama as well as a realistic approach to how such a mission might be accomplished.
- II. **CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME** at 12:41 p.m. by Allison Thompson. She noted that the meeting was being held virtually and as such read a statement on why this decision was





made in order to ensure compliance with the Open Meeting Acts. It was determined that holding a meeting in a physical location would present a substantial risk to the health and safety to those who may be present due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Members of the public have been provided with the means to observe the Board's meeting virtually and to provide comments electronically. This statement was also included in the public notice that went out about today's meeting.

III. PUBLIC COMMENTS were requested by Allison Thompson. None were brought to the attention of the Board.

IV. REVIEW OF MINUTES – The minutes of October's and November's Board were submitted for approval. Allison Thompson noted that some names were incorrect and that the minutes needed to be reviewed to ensure accuracy. Kim Wilson moved that they adopt those minutes, pursuant to the corrections being made. Councilwoman Shireen Ghorbani seconded the motion. The Board unanimously approved the minutes with the stipulation that the proper corrections be made.

V. BOARD BUSINESS

- a. Allison Thomson thanked the Board for their overwhelming support for the Oct. 30, 2020 gala/fundraiser. It was truly a success thanks to their efforts.
- b. Thanks to the generosity of Board members donating to the cost of Duke Johnson's photograph, NEOWISE, there was a surplus of funds that came in. Allison Thomson gave contributors the option of either receiving a refund or letting the funds be held on the side for the benefit of the Planetarium. She

suggested that, rather than a vote, it would be easier to take care of it by email on an individual basis.

- c. Allison Thomson noted that this year, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Planetarium would not be hosting a morning break during the upcoming Utah legislative session, nor would it be hosting its annual Legislature Family Night. The Planetarium hopes to send a note with some talking points up to the legislators, and to let them know the Planetarium and the Board is grateful for their support.
- d. Regarding the December Board meeting, Allison Thomson proposed cancelling it due to the Planetarium's closure in response to the COVID-19 upsurge. Councilwoman Shireen Ghorbani moved to cancel the December Board meeting. Rees Petersen seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous to cancel the December meeting.

VI. PLANETARIUM REPORT

- a. Lindsie Smith opened the opportunity for any questions, concerns, or thoughts from the Board about the upcoming closure. She complimented the staff on their resiliency during a difficult year.
- b. Bianca Lyon requested more information on the staff that would be impacted the Planetarium's closure and what the financials looked like.
 - i. Lindsie Smith said 17 part-time staff members were affected by the closure. The Planetarium is working with Salt Lake County to move them into redeployment options to help keep them employed

throughout this closure. There is a lot of support from the Mayor's office. None of the Planetarium's full-time staff are affected.

ii. The Planetarium is keeping the Planet Fun store open with limited hours through the holiday season.

iii. Financially, it's been a hard year. The Planetarium is running a little over a million dollars behind. The Planetarium was projecting a \$300,000 shortfall in revenue, but the Utah Department of Arts and Museums awarded it a very broad \$200,000 grant that helped fill the gap.

iv. Thanks to the efforts of the Planetarium's fiscal manager, the Planetarium was able to cut expenses by an additional \$163,000 so that it will not end the year in a deficit.

c. Bianca Lyon asked what the Board could do to support the Planetarium over the next few months. Lindsie Smith suggested the Board shop at the store and encourage friends and family to shop there as well. The Planetarium is looking to expand the store space out into the lobby so that there is more room for social distancing and keeping the customers are safe. The Board can also encourage people to become members. The Planetarium is pushing holiday membership sales.

d. Councilwoman Shireen Ghorbani mentioned writing an open letter to Utah's Senators for an additional round of relief.

e. Jim Karner wanted to know the incidents of exposures and cases experienced since last spring, and whether there is substantial risk in having the public in the building.

i. Lindsie Smith said that the closure is not about an outbreak at the Planetarium per se, but about public safety within the broader community. Robin Chalhoub mentioned that it is a community wide health and safety move that the County is taking due to the record-breaking number of current COVID-19 cases and the extreme impact these cases are having on health and medical resources. It's something the County can do in the community to support the larger need.

ii. Allison Thompson noted that the Planetarium is lucky to have such supportive science-based members.

iii. Jim Karner thought the decision was very broad sweeping, and could hurt parts of the community that aren't having a big transmission rate. Ahsan Iqbal thinks it is a very prudent step to take with cases spiking since the virus' methods of transmission are still uncertain.

Allison Thompson noted that the closure was mandated by the County, so the Board does not have an option in this.

f. Andrea Garavito-Martinez suggested making a virtual tour of the Planetarium that care givers and teachers can show at home or in the classroom. She also talked about supporting teachers in training.



g. Lauren Littlefield brought up the possibility of selling Planet Fun items online.

Lindsie said that the Planetarium was still working on a cost/benefits analysis of doing so.

VII. PLANETARIUM REPORT

a. Lindsie Smith presented a financial overview for October. Numbers were again down from last year due to COVID-19. Some of the money received from the Gala will be presented in the November overview since the Planetarium is still closing out that event. As mentioned earlier, income was down about a million dollars from this time last year.

b. Tim Glenn gave some highlights from the Full Moon Fundraising Virtual Gala.

i. Clark Planetarium's first-time virtual Gala!

ii. Fifty individual donors and businesses gave in-kind to support the silent auction.

iii. Total funds raised: \$20,330.

iv. Overhead costs were much, much less than a site-based gala would have been.

v. A lot of credit goes to the Board for their support in helping to raise this money.

VIII. PLANETARIUM STRATEGIC PLAN

a. Lindsie Smith introduced the digital Strategic Planning Idea Board for the Planetarium. This planning Board concentrates primarily on Staff Teamwork



and Communications, Guest Experiences, Inclusive and Accessible Programming, and Community Visibility.

b. Some of the ideas brainstormed include:

- i. More training for staff using science demonstrations.
- ii. More timely science updates.
- iii. Expand the Planetarium's digital universe through digital advertising.
- iv. Have members tell about a moment in their life that cemented a love of science; let them share their stories on social media.
- v. Show Spanish versions of the Planetarium's shows on a regular basis.
- vi. Make QR codes linking to French and Spanish translations of the Planetarium's exhibits.; create multilingual podcast content; use the free Google translation app.
- vii. Partner with the Neighborhood House.
- viii. Consider rotating exhibits and partnering with various groups such as sister museums to keep the Planetarium fresh.
- ix. Create programming that connects diverse cultural heritage to science content.
- x. Harness a volunteer network.
- xi. Embed partnering with other programs, such as Dark Skies, in the strategic plans.
- xii. Partner with Guadalupe School on virtual learning opportunities.

xiii. Partner with non-science organizations to build new audiences, like the Planetarium did with the Utah Symphony.

xiv. Create a junior board of high school students to work as an advisory committee.

xv. Create a women and STEM committee as well.

xvi. Develop special packages/kits for children with sensory issues or who might be on the autism spectrum.

xvii. Have a sensory awareness day; become certified as a sensory awareness museum.

xviii. Have sensory friendly showings of programs, i.e., with lower audio volume or with 2D presentations.

xix. Start brown bag lunches for the staff, and perhaps the public, which feature community leaders; make it an informal speaker series.

IX. CLOSING REMARKS – Lindsie Smith appreciates the Board’s participation in and excitement for shaping the future of the Planetarium.