

Dudley Observatory Board of Trustees
Minutes of the Meeting on
September 10, 2008

Members present: Sam Wait (Chair), Erin Breslin, James B. Comly, Mary Crone Odekon, Janie Schwab, Vince Amodeo, Lucy Comly, Doug Klein, Mike Kornstein, Heidi Newberg, Jean Sheviak, Cherrice Traver, Robert Ward, Francis Wilkin, Daniel Wulff

Members absent: Alan French, Susan French, Tom McFadden, Brian Mercy, Jillian Perno

Guests: Debbie Ennis (Project manager and support for Dudley)
Ellen Fladger (Collections and History Committee, Board member Emeritus)
Mike Powell (Volunteer, photographer)

Sam Wait called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

Welcome and Introductions

Sam Wait and Janie Schwab introduced new Board members Doug Klein and Mike Kornstein, and volunteer Mike Powell. Everyone present introduced themselves.

Approval of Minutes

The board approved the minutes of the meeting on July 16, 2008.

Executive and Long-Range Planning

Sam Wait drew attention to the draft of committee lists and membership, and requested that committee chairs add list of volunteer members to their lists

Events Committee

Mary Crone Odekon, Janie Schwab, and Debbie Ennis summarized the status of three recent and current events:

- The Planets night at SPAC went extremely well, and had the 2nd highest attendance of any orchestra night at SPAC this summer. A formal declaration was made in appreciation of Janie's work setting up this event.
- The Skywatch Lecture Series is set to take place at Proctors this fall. Board members have received information in the mail and are encouraged join the honorary committee. Debbie pointed out that a number of volunteers from the gala, and parents of Rising Star interns, are offering to help with these events
- Dudley will host an open-mic night about Dudley History next Wednesday. Janie requested that people respond if they intend to participate; so far there have been few responses.

Education Committee

Dan Wulff reviewed the distributed report prepared by Alan French, highlighting the fact that we have enough funding for a significantly higher number of Rising Stars interns. The Board reviewed the list of schools to which we are advertising the program, and discussed the advantage of having more people to visit and contact schools.

Janie reported that she is trying to keep Dudley open on Tuesday evenings to encourage interactions with rising star interns and their families.

Collections

Ellen Fladger reported that the Committee is currently affixing the Dudley holding symbol to a variety of types of publications. More projects will follow.

Member/Donor Development

Janie and Debbie described a handout for Board members to use in approaching possible sponsors for the Skywatch lectures. They also reported that three restaurants have agreed to partner with Dudley by offering astro-themed dinners or discounts before Skywatch lecture nights; details appear in the Dudley newsletter.

Francis Wilkin suggested asking oil companies for funds, as the current economic situation has not affected them in the same way as it has other kinds of businesses.

Nominating/Board Development

Bob Ward is the Chair of this recently-constituted committee. This committee will nominate new Board officers to begin in January, as well as consider the skills we should add to our current Board.

Janie requested paragraph-long bios of recent board members to use for grants and promotional materials. She will send requests over email.

Finance/Physical Plant

Jim Comly reviewed the distributed Financial report (endowment going down, but not as quickly as the market) and drew attention to the annual audit statement. The Board discussed moving some funds from our cash account and to an interest-earning account such as a money market account.

Executive Director Report

Janie reviewed the distributed Report of the Executive Director, highlighting the surprisingly good condition of the Brashear scope. Doug suggested that if this means we have enough grant money, we might use it for new crates.

Vision Statement

Heidi Jo Newberg distributed and presented the Vision statement prepared by the committee charged with bringing together the individual statements prepared by each Board member. (This committee also included Vince, Bob, Janie, and Sam.) After a general discussion, each board member presented his or her reaction to it. The overall response was a very positive endorsement, as well as a need for a short pithy version for use in promotional materials and short conversations. Doug, Heidi, and Cherrice agreed to help pull this together.

Review of By-Laws

Sam suggested that an ad-hoc committee be formed to review the by-laws with an eye to liability issues. Brian Mercy, Bob Ward, Lucy Comly, and Mike Kornstein agreed to serve on this committee.

Lease Renewal

The time for renewing our lease is approaching. Jim will look into this with the help of Janie and Mike Kornstein.

Mike Powell took photographs of the Board.
The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Mary Crone Odekon, Dudley Board Secretary