

Board Meeting

October 19, 2011

Present: Janie Schwab, Dan Wulff, Doug Klein, Prentiss Carnell, Heidi Newberg, John Sherman, Al Weatherwax, Paul Schoch

Minutes of previous meeting

A few changes were suggested. For example, Janie did not seriously suggest that Dudley should be eliminated. Also, Heidi meant to say "I don't think that past practices are compatible with how the board currently operates."

Long-range planning

Heidi Newberg: The Long-range planning committee did not meet.

Janie Schwab: I am continuing to look into organizations that we might engage for helping us with a retreat.

History and collections

Janie Schwab: She is consulting with a graduate student class at Oneonta that helps organizations do strategic plans, business plans, etc. They will figure out how much and what kind of space we need for our collections. The class will meet on Thursday, December 8 for presentations by students, and some board members might like to attend. Janie will get more information so that Dudley board members can interact with individuals as appropriate.

Al Weatherwax: This should be tied into our vision for all of Dudley's activities. He has been meeting with architects and planners for a new building at Siena, and he sees needs for Dudley to do something like this.

General discussion

The discussion on history and collections devolved into a general discussion on programming.

Prentiss Carnell: We need to start with our vision – and not with a building in which to fit things into. The graduate group needs this if they are to give us a framework.

Heidi: The least fleshed out is the programming – what programs do we want to do, what will they cost or what revenues can they generate?

Janie: Do we want something for little kids – or do we want something focused on the whole family?

Doug: At a retreat, we could start with listing things we do, followed by listing of what we would like to do – ending up with a list of important things to do.

Janie: Our programs are now good – but we need to do a lot more.

Heidi: I don't want to wait for the retreat. Let's start now. I would like to start tonight (after we do the brief committee reports). I would like Janie to start writing this stuff – what do we do now, and what do we want to do?

Al and others: Other observatories – e.g., Griffith Observatory in Los Angeles, Cincinnati – are doing things we would like to do and are doing. These include things like Rising Stars, How to Use Your Telescope. We need target dates for doing different kinds of things.

John Sherman: List #1 should contain (1) what we presently have and do, (2) what other operations do that we would like to do, and (3) what are our dreams.

Announcement:

Janie: Next skywatch lecture is next Tuesday night with Dave Latham from Harvard. (John Delano did the previous one. The turnout was respectable.)

The audit:

The auditor is not here, but the audit report was discussed. Rise and fall of endowment value and income can vary a great deal. We had planned to spend 5% of our endowment each year. We spent less, and were greeted with a substantial increase in the value of the endowment.

We received a \$10,000 gift that had been previously pledged.

By-Laws Committee:

John Sherman: The By-Laws Committee has not met. The committee will address: (1) Revisions of the quorum requirement, (2) Status of ex-officio members, (3) Status of committees.

Current and proposed activities of Dudley:

Most items were contributed by Janie Schwab.

Rising Star Program.

Star Parties – schools, street festivals, Tanglewood,

Oral History Program

Sky Watch Lecture Series

(Active partnership trust) – what is this?

Digitization project – digitizing the archives

Dudley Astrophotography Research (K)nights – with teens and adults

Star labs – planetarium shows done for schools.

Teacher training programs – in summer at RPI – for all teachers

Programs done for schools

Pollack award for research in history on Dudley and astrophysics

Hessberg Campership – sends students to Astronomy camp in Tucson

Programs for boys and girls clubs in Schenectady in the summer

Rare books are used for classes, shown to interested people

Maintaining collections – repairing historic clocks, etc.

Skywatch line – phone-line for astronomical information

In response to a question, Janie declared that

Star Lab makes money.

Sky Watch makes money.

Some pay for themselves.

In response to a question, Heidi (?) declared that teachers come to workshops to

Broaden their educational base.

Obtain activities to use.

Be certified for in-service training.

Heidi Newberg: I would like to reproduce programs I did in Chicago for inner-city kids. I would like to use astronomy as a tool to excite kids in physics, math. Al Weatherwax: Siena runs science programs for inner-city kids in Albany. Heidi: I would like to connect astronomy to physics standards, math standards, etc. Interaction between scientists and teachers are required to do a program for teachers.

Prentiss Carnell: I would like to list activities we do, what we would like to do, and what we would do with a facility. Most of programs are outside the facility because there is none. Most programs are with middle school, high school, elementary school, and the general public. We also partner with local colleges.

Adjournment:

The meeting was declared adjourned by Heidi at 9:09 pm.