

DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes



DELAWARE CENTER FOR THE
INLAND BAYS
Research. Educate. Restore.

DATE & TIME: Thursday, February 11, 2021 at 3PM

LOCATION: *Remote via Zoom:*

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87842184941>

Dial-in: 301-715-8592 *Meeting ID:* 878 4218 4941

Meeting called by: Jerry Esposito, Committee Chair

Attendees: [Nicole Ashton](#), [Susan Ball](#), [John Grandy](#), [Richard Mais](#), [Pat Ragan](#), [Anna Short](#), [Ken Sigvardson](#)

AGENDA ITEMS

Call to Order 3:07

Meeting Agenda Review

Approval of Previous Meeting's Minutes

[P. Ragan](#) made a motion to approve. [R. Mais](#) seconded. Unanimous approval.

Old Business

Annual Appeal Wrap Up (A. Short)

-A. Short reported that the Annual Appeal raised \$45,513, surpassing its initial goal of \$32,500. A detailed summary of the appeal's performance can be found in the supplemental document.

Capital Campaign Update (A. Short)

-A. Short reported that the campaign has raised \$375K to date, nearly 44% of the \$850K goal.

-Recent focus has been on the Center's application to the Longwood Foundation, which is due March 1. S. Ball and C. Bason attended an information session with Longwood funders and a pre-proposal meeting is forthcoming. A. Short indicated that the Center's request will fall somewhere between \$200-\$250K and this amount will be refined based upon guidance provided at the pre-proposal meeting.

-A. Short and C. Bason met with Reps. Ron Gray and Ruth Briggs-King on January 29 to discuss a Bond Bill appropriation for the project, as well as Community Transportation Funds. A letter of request and packet of information have been sent to the Bond Bill committee along with a request for \$150K. Outlook is good given Rep. Gray's support of the project. Rep. Briggs-King has committed \$10K in CTFs, and Rep. Pete Schwartzkopf has committed \$20K. The Center is hoping for an additional \$20K each from Rep. Gray, Sen. Gerald Hocker, and Sen. Ernie Lopez. The Center plans to request \$10K from all other Sussex County legislators. Outlook is good.

-A. Isaac and A. Short presented to Contractors for a Cause on February 9. They expressed willingness to assist with cost estimates on remaining project components. They also expressed interest in assisting with the replacement of the Red Trail boardwalk.

Statement of Purpose: The Development Committee of the Delaware Center for the Inland Bays is a network of Board members, loyal donors, business and community leaders working to achieve the philanthropic goals of the Center through a collaborative effort with the Board and the Center's staff.

The Delaware Center for the Inland Bays mission is to preserve, protect and restore Delaware's Inland Bays and their watershed.

Representatives from Contractors for a Cause will follow up with Bob Collins to make final determinations. Outlook is good.

-J. Esposito, D. Baird, and A. Short have collaborated on an ask for in-kind work from George & Lynch associated with site preparation for installation of the restroom facility. Contact has been made and they are awaiting a response.

Development Plan Follow Up

(A. Short)

Spring Appeal

-In the January meeting, the committee raised concerns about “donor fatigue” related to the Spring Appeal. A. Short and Chris Bason discussed these concerns and determined that because the Spring Appeal is designed to target lapsed donors and waterfront property owners that don’t currently give to the Center, that donor fatigue is not an issue. As such, the Center will move forward with the Spring Appeal. A. Short reported that she is exploring the possibility of the Spring Appeal benefitting the capital campaign, but at this time she is unsure of what that might look like.

-S. Ball reminded the committee of N. Ashton’s suggestion to offer donors a “menu” of programs to contribute to. A. Short confirmed that she is considering that approach and that the capital campaign could certainly be one of those programs.

Facility Rental

-N. Ashton and A. Short met at the Center’s Inlet facility to discuss the facility rental program. N. Ashton agrees there is good opportunity for revenue generation. Pricing, event type, and catering partners were discussed, as well as marketing opportunities. A. Short has a number of action items to follow up with and stated she would keep the committee apprised of her progress.

-S. Ball inquired about the possibility of offering up James Farm facilities as a venue for rent. A. Short reported that she has discussed this possibility with C. Bason and that the Center will move forward with the opportunity.

Decked Out

(A. Short)

Date and Venue

-A. Short reported that the Center has booked the Big Chill Beach Club for Thursday, September 16 and she is in talks with Kathy MacDonald of La Vida about event details. S. Ball pointed out that September 16 is Yom Kippur and that the holiday may affect attendance. A. Short will revisit the venue’s availability and consider changing the date.

-J. Esposito asked about promotional plans, specifically when the Center will send save the dates for the event, given people’s eagerness to return to their normal social schedules. N. Ashton confirmed that sending save the dates soon to generate excitement. She expressed that timing is key and that people might find the opportunity especially appealing while we are still in the midst of poor winter weather.

-N. Ashton inquired as to whether the Center had given any thought to format, specifically seating arrangements (i.e. cocktail seating vs. a sit-down dinner) and the manner in which food will be served. A. Short informed the committee that

this has not yet been determined. N. Ashton advised that these decisions will be dependent upon how the COVID-19 pandemic progresses but either way, there is opportunity to commodify tables similar to the 25th Anniversary Gala.

-A. Short advised the committee that previous Decked Out formats, in which the Center requested food and beverage donations, may not be a viable option due to economic challenges that the hospitality industry has faced. The committee agreed that planning for expenditures on food and beverage would be wise, but that there may still be opportunity for donations. A. Short advised the committee that auction items could also be challenging to acquire for the same reasons and that alternative revenue opportunities, such as the pledge drive at the 25th Anniversary Gala, should be considered to make up the difference.

Get Out for the Bays

-After discussions with C. Bason, A. Short advised the committee that it would be wise to focus solely on an in-person event due to time constraints. However, should an in-person event not be possible by September, Get Out for the Bays is still a viable alternative. The committee agreed.

Event Committee

-A. Short informed the committee that she is working with the Center's volunteer coordinator to recruit volunteers to assist with the event. She asked the committee to consider their contact lists for possible candidates and inform her of any that come to mind. A. Short also indicated that prospective members of the event committee could also be candidates for the Development Committee.

New Business

Board Training Debrief

(All)

Open Forum

-J. Esposito inquired about a possible partnership opportunity with Delaware Botanic Gardens to help raise awareness for both places. Could DBG encourage visitation to the Preserve and vice versa with some sort of cross-promotion program? The committee agreed that some sort of opportunity could lie in the birding community, perhaps through Delmarva Birding Weekends. A. Short will explore the idea with C. Bason.

-P. Ragan informed the committee that, once able, she and J. Grandy will host an appreciation party for the Center's major donors.

NEXT MEETING: THURSDAY, MARCH 11, 2021 AT 3PM

Adjourn

4:04 pm

R. Mais made a motion to adjourn. J. Grandy seconded. Unanimous approval.