



Education & Public Outreach Committee Meeting Minutes

November 16, 2024, 9 AM

Walker Lecture Hall

Members of the Board: Nathan Sanford (chair), Emma Ito, Lauren Hall, Christy Deatherage (staff ex officio)

Present:

Nathan Sanford (chair), Gail Vogler (foundation liaison), Emma Ito, Elizabeth Carter Bailey (foundation liaison), Christy Deatherage (staff ex officio), Jonathan Martin (staff), Jennifer Whitlow (minutes)

Ms. Deatherage opened meeting at 9:00 AM

Nathan Sanford moved to approve the minutes from the May 16, 2024, meeting. Gail Vogle seconded, and motion was approved unanimously.

Ms. Deatherage reported that a teacher appreciation event held was held in May with over 100 teachers in attendance. The MH-C Chamber of Commerce partners with the museum to put together prize raffles for this event. May 1, 2025, is the next appreciation event. Teachers from Patrick Co., Henry Co., M-HC, Franklin Co., and Pittsylvania counties were in attendance from all grade levels. Feels this is good museum based event.

Education staff participated in an early childhood conference and hope to participate in any upcoming events.

Ms. Deatherage reviewed the numbers from the first quarter. Museum visits are trending up possibly for a variety of reasons. Perhaps it is easier for teachers to get out of the classroom and transportation also seems to be easier to arrange.

Summer camps were successful. However, the June camps were not at capacity. Feel this is due to timing being one or two weeks after the end of school year. The timing will be looked at again as summer camps are being planned.

Ms. Deatherage mentioned that campers were allowed to use a Gloforge laser cutting machine. Campers loved to pick out a design and laser cut it to create a keepsake. There are plans to continue using this tool. \$7000 was earned through the summer camps.

Ms. Deatherage and Jordan worked at a 2-day Boy Scout camp with fossil related programming at Camp Cherokee. Worked with over 200 scouts in two days. Plan to work with Camp Cherokee in the future. This was a great outreach event.

The museum is in partnership with Martinsville City Schools. Staff have developed seven programs per grade level. Also busy working with Franklin County, in two elementary schools doing monthly programs.

The museum will welcome a new educator in mid-December. Annabelle Sechrist has already volunteered with museum education staff for some unofficial orientation to the programs offered.

Staff assisted by 4-5 leaders from the Virginia Environmental Educators (VAEE) of the Virginia Master Naturalist chapter meet with home school students twice monthly for the museum's Homeschool Science and Engineering Academy.

Master Naturalists are working in the Hall of Ancient Life several Saturdays for face-to-face engagement with museum patrons.

Staff participated in the Latino Festival held at P&HCC.

Grants are very important for the education programs (outreach and at-the-museum). Grants to cover cost of field trips or educators going into the classroom. Danville City sent every 5th grader to the museum in August/September.

The museum Educators are using grants consistently and always welcome other grant opportunities.

Upcoming event, December 6, 2024. Night with Santa. Educational activities planned. During this event the Partners for Early Childhood and the Dolly Parton Library Project are donating books for the first 150 children who attend.

Ms. Vogler mentioned that as a former educator, teachers appreciate the efforts of the education staff in bringing quality programming to students.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:40.