

Nature Education Standing Committee Minutes Oct. 4th, 2018

Present: Nancy Brundage, Laurel Gay, Stacey Sahli, Kat Paull, Nick Visingardi, Advisor Carol Vigorito, Josh Boyle

Mr. Boyle called the meeting to order. We went over the minutes from the last meeting. Pending a few edits, Mr. Boyle motioned to approve the minutes and Mrs. Paull seconded them.

Old business:

Mr. Boyle opened discussion of Robert's Rule, using the outlines that both Mr. Boyle and Mrs. Paull brought with them. When discussing new topics, the person who brought it to the meeting should introduce the topic; someone would need to second it before we proceed. Then, if you would like to speak you should raise your hand and only discuss that topic for an allotted time. When voting, use aye, nay, or state that you abstain from the vote. Mrs. Vigorito mentioned that less than four votes would result in no quorum and the vote does not count. Mrs. Brundage asked what would happen if someone wanted to amend a motion? Mr. Boyle believes that we should cross that road when we get to it because it would be different in every situation and the general format is what we are most concerned with at this time. Mrs. Vigorito suggested that we keep the Boards "fixed order of business" and asked that we add "public comments" before announcements in case someone comes to the meeting. Mrs. Paull suggested that we don't call it "Robert's Rule" but rather "meeting protocol" so that we can be flexible. Mrs. Brundage suggested that we have a section titled "comments Board and/or Public" in place of the announcements and comments sections. Mr. Boyle asked if everyone agreed with these edits to Mrs. Paull's protocol. Mrs. Sahli motioned to approve the Meeting Protocol, Mr. Visingardi seconded, all voted aye and no opposed.

Mr. Boyle is still attempting to collect any/all information from this year so that we can set goals to present to the Board and provide a summary of what the committee has accomplished this year.

New business:

Mr. Boyle began new business with a discussion of SMART Goals and asked if anyone had developed any. Mrs. Paull proposed a goal: Assess whether the park is truly meeting the needs of all students and public figures with the Nature Education programs. She also proposed to recommend a better way of data collection so that it can be assessed thoroughly and be more comprehensive in regards to program attendance. Mrs. Paul also proposed a goal of making sure people walk away with increased environmental literacy.

Mr. Boyle mentioned that though these goals are good, they are broad and we should work on being more specific to reach our specific goals. Mr. Boyle asked if Mrs. Vigorito could find data from 2017 programs so the committee could see what kind of data was recorded. Mrs. Vigorito was able to show us data for all the education programs, school and general public.

Our main questions are what does the data show and are they effective and educational? It was suggested that there should be a short evaluation that each teacher/whoever should complete after the program in order to collect good data on the effectiveness of the programs and determine if they truly meet the needs of the teachers. Evaluations from the public and teachers including input on what they would like to see offered would be very helpful to the committee in making goals and recommendations. This information could help use determine which programs are preferred and which ones could be eliminated.

Mr. Boyle thinks that increasing the resources available to environmental education programs by "X" % over the next few years would be a great goal. Mrs. Paull mentioned that they decreased the budget and Mr. Boyle agrees that doing more with less would be a roadblock. Mrs. Paull mentioned that we have the research from other parks similar to ours supporting that more resources will support better education.

Mr. Visingardi asks if socioeconomic factors affect the amount of resources and Mr. Boyle said he would research that information. Mr. Boyle clarified that we would be asking for the money to be allocated from the budget.

Mr. Boyle asked that we all spend some time, possibly two hours, thinking about some goals that would make this park better before the next meeting.

Open Dialogue: Mrs. Paull made a public records request for the data that the programs have been collecting and compiled a spreadsheet to display the data she collected from October. Mrs. Paull mentioned that the data seems to be a little hard to interpret effectively. Mr. Boyle mentioned that this system maybe slightly outdated.

Mrs. Sahli suggested some possible data points that should be collected to that we could use to effectively assess the effectiveness of these parks. Mrs. Vigorito shared with us a spreadsheet that exists for data collection. Mr. Boyle asked that we all look at the document to determine what points of data are being collected and possibly develop some goals based on this information. We also have to keep in mind what is being asked/required by park employees.

Next meeting: Thursday Nov. 8th pending room availability.

Mrs. Paull motioned to adjourn meeting, seconded by Mrs. Brundage. All say aye.