



## **Meeting Minutes (Approved)**

Education Citizen Advisory Committee

Tuesday, July 18, 2023 | 3:00 p.m.

Ford Nature Center Education Building

Prepared by Cindy Fernback, *Education Steward*

## **Committee Members in Attendance**

Cindy Andrews, Nancy Brundage, Cindy Fernback, Tabitha Fitzpatrick, Peggy Palma, Katharine Paull, Carol Truitt Missing: Joshua Boyle

## **New Business**

- Committee member introductions
- Education, Lanterman's Mill Staff Introductions
- 2023 First Half Overview
  - Nature-Ology Camps
  - Spring, Summer, Fall Field Trips
  - General Public Programming
  - Trolley Tours
  - Tractor/Wagon Tours
  - Step-On Tours
  - Events (Baby Shower, Bug Day, Pumpkin Walk, Christmas at the Mill)
  - Volunteer Engagement
  - Program Statistics January-June 2023

## **Open Discussion**

- Brundage asked for clarification on which programs have a fee and which do not.
  - Popular programs that fill up have a \$3.00 fee. This fee is assessed to establish a commitment from participants. In the past, popular programs, such as Full Moon Hikes, were offered free of charge. Unfortunately, many people would sign up and not show up to the actual program—nor would they take the time to call and cancel

their attendance. As a result, many people who wanted to attend could get registered. On the night of the event, only half of the people would show up for the hike. Programs that have a higher fee do so because there are materials and/or equipment being used during the program and the fee helps to cover the cost of those supplies. Programs that are offered for free are usually new, rarely fill up, and/or have no expenditure on supplies/materials.

- Katharine Paull asked for clarification on fees for field trips and if that fee could be waived for financially struggling school districts, specifically Youngstown City Schools District.
  - The current fees for field trips for Mahoning County schools/organizations are \$2.00 for students and \$3.00 for adults/chaperones/teachers. For non-residents, the fees are \$4.00 for students and \$5.00 for adults/chaperones/teachers. In preparation for next year's field trips, we are going to explore discounting those fees in relation to the percentage of free and reduced lunches within the district.
- Katharine Paull asked for our policy on creating standards-based field trips.
  - We have been working one-on-one with teachers who request certain areas of focus for their field trips. For example, we have tailored our Ford Nature Center field trips to habitats for some teachers at their request; we have tailored some of our field trips to native plants vs. invasive plants at their request. We find that that works best for most teachers. In preparation for the upcoming year of field trips, we will explore making that feature part of the actual field trip request form on the website so teachers know before they book the field trip that we can customize their experience.
- Fitzpatrick requested that butterfly specific programming be included in future programming options—specifically monarch butterflies. She suggested a monarch tagging program.
  - Butterflies are covered in our pollinator programs. We are having a butterfly table at our upcoming Bug Day. We are open to exploring that possible program topic.
- Truitt requested that programming specifically targeting the 13-15 years olds be added to our offerings.
  - We have had several programs for 9–12-year-olds that have not filled. For example, Nature's Detectives Rocks (9-12 y.o.), Nature Detectives Water (9-12 y.o.), and Nature-Ology Camp (10-12 y.o.) have been cancelled due to lack of interest. Though not specifically targeting the 13–15-year-old group, the suspicion is that children at this age are involved in sports and other organized clubs and that involvement precludes their attending our programming.
- Andrews expressed her pleasure in all the different groups we are appealing to with programs for the very young (Critter Tales, Sprout Club, Forest Babies) as well as the old (Senior Stroll).
  - We have made a concerted effort to reach as many age groups as possible by creating new programs designed especially for all the groups.

## **Public Comment**

None

## **Date of Next Meeting**

We will aim for the first week or two of January. Emails will be sent to determine the date of next meeting in December.

## **Adjournment**

4:04 p.m.