



SEHOME HILL ARBORETUM BOARD OF GOVERNORS

March 21, 2024 Meeting Minutes

PRESENT: John Tuxill, Kendra Bradford, Jenna Kelling, Joan Drinkwin, Nicole Oliver, Steve Hollenhorst, Wayne Galloway III, Nick Leader, Travis Tennesen, Steve Janiszewski, Kate Bemis, Caryn Regimbal

ABSENT:

VISITORS: Joyce Lopes, WWU

The meeting was called to order at 4:05 p.m. by chair, John Tuxill.

- I. **AGENDA REVIEW:** John T. presented the agenda. Two items were added: Board Member introductions, and review of the Lease Agreement between the City and WWU for the campus Longhouse.
- II. **ANNOUNCEMENTS:** John T. welcomed newly appointed Board members Nick Leader and Travis Tennesen. Board member introductions were made.
- III. **PUBLIC COMMENTS:** No public comments were offered.
- IV. **MEETING MINUTES:** John T. presented the minutes from the February 2024 Board meeting. Approved without objection on a motion by Steve H., seconded by Kendra B.
- V. **OLD BUSINESS:**

1. Review of revisions to Arboretum Interlocal Agreement: The text of proposed revisions to the Interlocal was provided to Board members ahead of the meeting by Nicole Oliver. John T. began by summarizing prior Board discussion about potentially having one of the University Board appointees be designated for a person affiliated with the campus Longhouse once it is operational. Board members discussed the current processes by which University, City, and at-large Board members are recruited and appointed. John T. pointed out that the language in the Interlocal for how University Board members are appointed is slightly different from that in the Arboretum By-Laws, which may reflect more recent updating of the Interlocal. Nicole O. stated that the By-Laws would also need to be revised to align with the new revisions proposed for the Interlocal. Multiple Board members stated their support for the revisions to the Interlocal clarifying that all WWU employees--staff as well as faculty—are eligible for University appointments to the Board (with the exception of staff serving directly under the WWU Facilities VP). Steve H. and Joyce Lopes (WWU) confirmed that the idea of having a campus Longhouse affiliate serve on the Arboretum Board had been shared with current House of Healing Longhouse project

participants (including WWU VP and Tribal Liaison Laural Ballew) and that the idea was favorably received. After further discussion, Board members settled on wording for the Interlocal that specified two University positions on the Board for WWU faculty, staff, or other members of the University community, one of which is preferably affiliated with the campus Longhouse.

John T. pointed out that one revision would remove the requirement for the University to establish a Capital Improvement and Endowment Fund, which has never been acted upon. Steve H. and Nicole O. clarified that this clause was not actually enforceable and that the City and WWU have instead established a process for identifying and sharing expenses for essential ongoing maintenance and improvement projects in the Arboretum, clarified elsewhere in the Interlocal. Multiple Board members agreed on removing the relevant outdated language.

Travis T. raised a concern over lack of Tribal representation on the Board with current plans for the Longhouse, and that having one Board member slot preferentially dedicated to a Longhouse affiliate feels very minimal. John T. replied that the wording of preferentially is being advocated specifically to allow for dialogue with the Longhouse community rather than the Board assuming a particular community preference for what Tribal representation should consist of. Nicole O. and Joyce Lopes emphasized that the Longhouse project has been driven by the WWU Native community and local Tribal leaders from its onset, and that management and decision-making about the Longhouse will be multi-layered (centered on the Lease Agreement) and continue to be directed by Tribal representatives.

Steve H. made a motion that the revisions to the Interlocal Agreement be approved as presented and discussed. Joan D. seconded. The motion was approved with one abstention.

2. Review of the proposed Lease Agreement: Steve H. and Nicole O. explained that this has been a very complicated project involving extended, extensive dialogue between all parties. The Lease Agreement at its core is designed to reconcile the status of the Arboretum as publicly owned and accessed open space, with the Longhouse as a project that is emblematic and affirming of Tribal sovereignty, but is also, in a regulatory context, an infrastructure development project. The Lease Agreement applies both to the Longhouse and grounds itself, as well as the immediate surrounding area of forest (approximately 2 acres) at the Arboretum main entrance. The surrounding area would be managed as a food forest emphasizing traditionally important native plant species. Additionally, the Lease Agreement would place parking at the main Arboretum entrance under WWU management, and involve upgrades to sidewalks, lighting, and stormwater runoff infrastructure. In response to Board member questions, Nicole O. pointed out that the Lease Agreement contains specific guidelines for tree clearance and removal and emphasis on native species for planting that would apply to management of the food forest area moving forward.

John T. asked whether subsequent amendments to the Lease would come back to SHABOG for review and approval. Steve H. and Nicole O. confirmed that SHABOG would retain a public review role for future changes to the Lease Agreement.

Joan D. made a motion to approve the Lease Agreement as presented and discussed. Steve H. seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Board members thanked City and University staff and Kendra Bradford (as Board representative) for all their hard work and dialogue in bringing the House of Healing Longhouse Project to fruition.

3. With the Board's consent, John Tuxill tabled the additional agenda items until the following meeting.

VI. NEW BUSINESS:

VII. EXECUTIVE SESSION:

There was no executive session.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT: The March 21, 2024, Sehome Hill Arboretum Board of Governors adjourned by consent at 5:39 p.m.