

Minutes  
Board of Trustees Meeting  
Chippokes Plantation Farm Foundation  
Monday, November 27, 2006  
10:00 a.m.  
Chippokes Mansion Conference Room  
Chippokes Plantation State Park  
Surry, Virginia

Present:

Mr. Russ Baxter (representing Mr. Joe Maroon)  
Mrs. Nancy Bradshaw  
Mr. E. Henry Doggett, III  
Mr. Tyrone Franklin

Mrs. Judy S. Lyttle  
Mr. Alan V. Monette  
Mrs. Linda D. Morse  
Senator Frederick M. Quayle

Absent:

Mr. E. C. Michael Abley  
Mrs. Shirley Davis  
Mr. Robert Soble

Delegate Harry B. Blevins  
Delegate William K. Barlow  
Dr. Craig L. Nessler

Staff:

Mrs. Carol Bowman  
M. Kenneth Gray

Mrs. Danette Poole  
Mrs. Katherine R. Wright

Quests:

Mr. Carlton S. Abbott  
Mr. Ed Pillsbury

Mr. Dave Stemann

Senator Fred Quayle, chairman, welcomed everyone.

Chairman Quayle explained that Carlton Courter, Commissioner of the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, has left that agency and was appointed Director of the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries. Mr. Courter had been on the Board since 1994. Mr. Courter's position has not been filled, and his Deputy, Don Blankenship, could not attend because of the Virginia Farm Bureau's annual meeting.

**Public Comment**

No one was present to comment.

**Past Minutes**

The minutes of the July 26<sup>th</sup> were previously distributed. There were no corrections to the minutes, and Senator Quayle stated they would be filed as circulated.

**Educational Center Update**

Carlton Abbott and Partners from Williamsburg is under contract to provide the initial design phase for the Educational Center to support planned fundraising activities of the Foundation.

Mr. Abbott showed a PowerPoint display of the latest drawing concept. These particular drawings gave the buildings and drawings a farm look, which the Board found very appealing. Mr. Abbott explained that the two elements considered were education and collections. Since Mr. Abbott had reviewed some of these drawings in depth at a previous Board Meeting, he quickly reviewed the site circulation, parking, educational center buildings, areas for future expansion, pedestrian linkage to Farm & Forestry Museum complex, and conceptual building floor plans that showed interior circulation. He handed out the Class C conceptual estimate of construction costs (attached). At this time, the estimated cost of the 29,000 sq. ft. Agriculture and Forestry Education Center, including a fiscal year 2008 escalation, is \$7,101,194.00.

Mr. Abbott stated that the project has donor appeal, and plans to make it totally handicap accessible. Phase I is a starter package. The view shed is very important, and we should start planting trees now concentrating on native plant materials.

Mr. Abbott also showed the scale model of the project. Mr. Monette asked that the scale model also show the potential expansion for the complex, which could be in a different color.

There were questions and discussions. Overall, everyone was pleased with the conceptual plans.

Mrs. Poole asked about a catering kitchen versus a regular kitchen. Mr. Abbott stated that there is space for a catering kitchen, and that's a Board decision. A catering kitchen does cost much more than a regular kitchen mainly because of the dish cleaning aspect. There is a screened porch off the banquet hall for added entertaining.

Mr. Doggett asked if anyone knew whether there was an agricultural historian in Virginia. No one knew of such a position. In the plan is an agriculture hall of fame. Mrs. Wright pointed out that the Virginia State Fair had mentioned a hall of fame being incorporated into their plans several years ago, but it is not known if this is still in their plans.

Mr. Abbott stated that the project should go for the LEAD design designation. There is a lot of emphasis lately to go with green design and green conservation, and the LEAD designation is a good thing. Also, consideration should be given to geo-thermal heating/air, and new concrete external materials that are on the market and would be more maintenance free. The forestry theme could be given more emphasis inside while the outside with the LEAD design designation and use of modern materials could be used as a teaching tool as well.

Mr. Abbott stated that if you build the center, it will be an instant success. Chairman Quayle stated not if, but when we build the center.

There was discussion on the use of the silo for sprinkler system water, about the potential of hooking up to the Park's existing water system, about storm water runoff, and the desire to have a weather station at some point.

The project will go before the Art and Architectural Review Board on Friday, December 1 to seek their approval.

At an appropriate time, the project needs to be presented to the Surry County Board of Supervisors. However, before doing so, we want to make sure we address economic development, the traffic issues and arrange for supporters, such as the Friends of Chippokes, etc. Mr. Abbott stated that when the project is presented to the Board of Supervisors, it would hit the media. Press packets need to be prepared.

Mr. Franklin mentioned showing the benefit to the county, the number of people that would come, etc. It is critical to have local support. It was explained that we had a feasibility study from several years ago that addressed these issues.

Mr. Doggett asked if we should do something in 2007 that would kick off the project such as planting a tree, etc. Mrs. Lyttle asked about the possibility of doing a display that could be pulled together detailing this project that could be used for all events. She mentioned that programming could also include bio-fuel/ethanol.

Mrs. Wright asked when the environmental impact report (EIR) should be accomplished. Should this be done now to get it under our belt? She understood that the cost would be about \$10,000. It was explained that this should be done in the next phase when the architectural drawings are being prepared and we know critical items such as where the drain field lines will be.

Mr. Abbott was asked about a timeline of critical steps, and he stated that he would provide the Board with a list.

The Board members were very pleased with the drawings, and stated that they were excited about the emerging plans. Mr. Abbott stated that he had about two more weeks of work before the drawings would be finalized. He would be available to make a presentation to the Surry County Board of Supervisors whenever we are ready.

Chairman Quayle thanked Mr. Abbott for his efforts on this project.

### **Foundation/Museum Report**

#### **Getting Ready for 2007**

The Museum's 2007 projects are three fold.

1. Interpretation was expanded to include the "Heritage Harvest Days". The project was begun this year so that we could work out any problems before 2007. This project will be ongoing. (More details are listed later in minutes.)

2. To make animals more visible to visitors. The fence installation and lining with wire fencing has been accomplished. Next comes building the stables and installing the waterline before the two heifers, two sheep and a donkey are delivered. This project will be ongoing.
3. Infrastructure projects need to be accomplished. One project includes the repair of the two older Museum Buildings #1 & #2, which will be very costly since the buildings are under the historic designation. Building #2's roof is sagging, and has been declared unsafe for snow-loaded conditions. See the attached letter from Design & Construction. (This was discussed in more depth later in meeting.)

“Heritage Harvest Days” - September 23-October 14

Four Saturdays in September and October were devoted to the Museum's first year of the Heritage Harvest Days. The plan was to harvest cotton and corn, and shock peanuts.

However, Mother Nature interfered with our plans. First there was Tropical Storm Ernesto at the beginning of August and another heavy rain October 7<sup>th</sup> with smaller rains in between. Because of the unusual weather, Mr. Berryman's normal harvesting schedule was different. He also farms a number of acres besides Chippokes and he picks in areas that are dry enough to get heavy equipment on the fields, or where crops are mature or that are beginning to show disease.

Corn normally picked in August was picked at Chippokes the end of October. Peanuts that are usually dug the end of September-first of October were dug at Chippokes the end of October. Cotton usually picked in October was picked at Chippokes in November.

We never were able to have a corn picking heritage day. We needed Mr. Berryman to pick his corn leaving us a strip not picked. We were to demonstrate hand picking of corn, and then see a demonstration of corn picked with a one-row corn picker that needed a wide turnaround area.

		Attendance
September 23	Cotton Picking	60
September 30	Cotton Picking	20
October 7	Cancelled – heavy rains	0
October 14	Peanut Shocking	75
October 27	Peanut Shocking	20

(During Plantation Christmas)

**Museum Attendance**

In reviewing the Museum's history attendance, it has become clear that our attendance comes from special events and programs, and that the day user attendance is declining.

A contributing factor is a frustration of guests who must pay additional fees at the Museum and Mansion once in the Park. Additionally, we have to quiz our guests since

there is free admission for cabin guests to the Mansion and Museum, while campers and day users have to pay.

During the April-October 2005 timeframe, the Park's front gate attendance figures show that 32,528 were at the park, but only 567 day users (excludes special events and programs) paid to tour the Museum.

The Park and Museum are investigating alternatives to increase attendance to the Museum and Mansion.

#### Accomplishments

1. Have two teachers on staff
2. Made personal contacts with schools
3. Participated in 12 outreach programs
4. Received 911 designation for Store & Museum
5. Enclosed Museum Store before April (insulation, ceiling, slatwall, painting)
6. Purchased QuickBooks for Store
7. Installed Equipment building behind Museum
8. Purchased truck with cap for outreach programming
9. Relocated mulch pile at sawmill

#### Museum Programming

Now that we have two teachers on staff, the Museum will be doubling its efforts towards programming. The Museum is committed to:

1. increase the numbers of individuals we serve on-site at CFFM;
2. increase the variety of lessons we offer by topic (i.e. tractors, livestock);
3. increase the variety of lessons we offer by subject (i.e. math, physics);
4. expand the grade levels to which we offer lessons;
5. expand scout programs (i.e. badges, projects, patches); and
6. develop an active outreach program by taking our lessons to schools and providing instruction in the classroom.

Teachers and scout leaders are our best contacts for programs. If you know a teacher or scout leader who might be interested in our programs, let them know what we have to offer.

#### Recent Group Visits:

- the first grade from Carrollton Elementary and Hardy Elementary (Smithfield) for SOL-based lessons;
- Smithfield and Windsor Middle Schools' Gifted & Talented students for problem solving lessons;
- Troops 7 (Smithfield), 2 (Surry), and 414 & 155 (Williamsburg) for forestry badge requirements;
- Cub Packs 892 (Chesterfield) and 704 (Hanover) for heritage harvest programs;

- several private schools and homeschool groups from the James City and Williamsburg area.
- November 11 - partnered with the Virginia Farm Bureau's Ag in the Classroom curriculum for a teacher in-service workshop. Another workshop will be scheduled for the spring.

Mr. Gray explained that we have the best staff ever at the Museum. Brian Frye has a degree from Virginia Tech in Wildlife Management and an Associates Degree in General Science with a strong minor in Biology. Dr. Carla Kirts is from the Newport News/Smithfield area, and has an Agricultural Education Degree from Virginia Tech; a Masters Degree in Vocational-Technical Education from Virginia Tech; and a PhD in Agricultural Education from the University of Missouri-Columbia. She is retired from college administration from the University of Alaska Fairbanks.

It takes time to establish a relationship with schools. The Museum staff is making personal contacts, and developing some exciting new programs in the areas of applied math and physics and programs involving certain types of equipment. Chippokes would be a natural site for FFA agriculture programs.

Mr. Gray explained that he is very excited about the relationship with the Virginia Farm Bureau's Ag in the Classroom. Materials valued at over \$100 were given to teachers during the November 11<sup>th</sup> teacher in-service day that was attended by 14 teachers. A spring teacher in-service day is being scheduled.

#### Projects in the Works

- Newsletter – Going to press this week
- June 9-10, 2007 Chippokes Steam & Gas Engine Show – have already booked some advertising to take advantage of discounts offered.
- Tree Work - currently bidding project. Bids due Thursday, November 30<sup>th</sup>.
  1. Six trees that need to be cut down.
  2. Corrective pruning on four large trees and several smaller trees from Mr. Berryman's trimming of overhanging limbs;
  3. Certain high visibility bulldozed areas resulting from defining filter strips and trimming overhanging limbs.
- Install two new phone lines to Museum - partially completed
  1. Currently we have two lines, one for calls; one for fax and Internet shared by four people.
  2. The two new lines will allow a designated fax line and two lines for Internet access and credit card use in the Store.
- Credit Card Capability in Store – This is underway with the installation of the phone lines.

- Buildings #1 & 2 Repair - \$ 150,000 estimate – scope of work being developed
  1. Building #1 – minor structural repairs
  2. Building #2 – sagging roof – unsafe for snow-loaded conditions  
See attached letter from Design & Construction. The letter states the estimated cost of repair to be \$150,000. The high cost is because of the Park’s Historic Register designation. Mrs. Wright has authorized a scope of work for \$8,000 that will take about three weeks to prepare. (The project was discussed in more detail later in the meeting.)
- Paint Museum Buildings  
In lieu of the above more expensive items, we might paint this spring on an “as needed basis” or with use of the Men’s Detention Center.
- Repair soil erosion grade structure in Field # 10  
Last winter, this project was advertised for bids and site-visits. However, a couple of contractors recommended making changes to the structure repair plans. USDA/NRCS said they stood by their plans, and if we wanted to pursue changes, come back to see them. By this time, we were in the middle of the operating season. Have now made contact with USDA/NRCS to redesign structure.
- Pasture Pond Cleaned Out  
Needs to be dredged. Plan to incorporate this project into the grade structure project so that the dredged material can be put into the grade structure project.
- Farm Contract – The current farm contract expires December 31, 2007. A new five-year farm contract needs to be issued next summer.
- The Bruce Skalsky Memorial Fund:  
Volunteer friends of Bruce and Kathy Skalsky wanted to start a fund to assist Kathy. To date, \$723.00 has been collected. The funds will be going to a designated project, which at this time, might be towards the purchase of a headstone.

Mr. Doggett asked about the free admission to cabin guests and not camping guests. Mrs. Poole indicated that this would be addressed next year.

### **Financial Report**

Mrs. Wright reviewed the financial statement in everyone’s folder. At the beginning of the Fiscal Year, the 09 Contributions Fund contained \$430,510.22, the Checking Account \$20,327.51, and the 01 General Fund \$162,185.00 for a total of \$613,022.73.

To date, revenues in the 09 Contribution Fund come to \$7,150.40, Checking Account \$4,491.36 for a total of \$11,641.76.

The expenditures for the 09 Contribution Fund come to \$15,154.60, Checking Account \$9,887.95, and the 01 General Fund \$43,482.02 for a total of \$68,524.57.

The balance as of November 27, 2006, for the 09 Contribution Fund is \$422,506.02, Checking Account \$14,930.92, and the 01 General Fund \$118,702.98 for a total balance of \$556,139.92.

The Endowment Fund contains \$20,343.81. The grand total on hand as of November 27, 2006, is \$576,483.73.

There were no comments or questions on the report.

### **Repair of Buildings #1 & #2**

There was a discussion of the \$750,000 exemption for construction projects that Senator Quayle had obtained in the 2005 General Assembly Session. Mrs. Wright indicated that this would be the first project that would fit the exemption, and she would proceed using this exemption. Chairman Quayle suggested the Executive Committee could handle getting bids and come back to the Board for action.

### **Update on Chippokes Plantation State Park**

Mrs. Danette Poole reported on the activities of the Park. Highlights include:

1. 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Virginia State Parks
2. The new park video partnership between the Friends of Chippokes and the Chippokes Plantation Farm Foundation is coming along quite well. Videotaping is complete, and they are putting the video together. Completion will be soon.
3. Monthly programs are planned for 2007; mansion hours expanded to daily during April-October.
4. The annual meeting of the National Association of State Park Directors will be hosted by Virginia State Parks in September 2007 in Williamsburg. This meeting will include a tour of First Landing and Chippokes.
5. Work has begun on the concessions/camp store at the pool, and the new maintenance facility at Walnut Grove. Unfortunately, the maintenance area will not include storage. A seven-bay pole barn will be constructed later in order to house the materials that are currently stored in the barns. The barns on Quarter Lane will not be ready for interpretation until later.
6. The mansion needs a new roof, and a scope of work is being prepared.

Mrs. Poole's full report is attached.

### **Hiring Fund Raiser**

Mrs. Wright wanted to ask once again what the wishes of the Board of Trustees are regarding hiring an individual or a firm. The conscience of the Board is to hire a firm with experience in this area.

Mrs. Wright will proceed with developing a scope of work and begin the advertising process.

Mrs. Morse asked if we had visited other sites as a Board. Mr. Monette said no we had not. Mr. Baxter mentioned that a good person to contact would be Tim Getty from the State project in Martinsville, the Museum of Natural History. This Museum's new facility is about ready to open, and they have worked with private partners.

Mrs. Lyttle asked about our method of advertising. Mrs. Wright explained that in the Virginia Is For Lovers book, we have a line item. It is way too expensive to purchase an ad in this booklet. We also advertise with the Southside of the James, which is a huge marketing group. From there, we advertise in local papers.

Mr. Doggett mentioned the passing of David Haverty from Smithfield, a former Museum volunteer. He thought it would be appropriate to send the family a note of condolence from the Board of Trustees.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Katherine R. Wright  
Executive Secretary

Attachments:

1. Financial Statement July 1-November 27, 2006
2. Education Center Conceptual Drawings & Estimate of Construction Costs
3. Design and Construction Letter – Buildings #1 & #2
4. Chippokes Plantation State Park Report