

Development Committee Meeting Minutes
10/13/21 - 3:30-5:00 pm via Zoom

Attendance: Gordon Aoyagi, Mimi Bornhorst Gaddis, Joan Gossett, Diane Harding, Kathy Whitmire, Paula Ress, Denise Soderholm, Jonathan Sudler, Jackie Wah, Winston Welch, Scott Wilson

Minutes of August 11, 2021 meeting approved.

Planned Giving Mailing - Mailing will go to members, anyone who has donated in the last 2-3 years. Mailing will include: cover letter from Winston, flyer with planned giving opportunities / sample language for bequests, Our Story / TOC chronological history, response card, return envelope.

Bequest packet – would be sent to those as follow-up to anyone who requests additional information. Would include: thank you for your inquiry letter, flyer with planned giving opportunities / sample language for bequests, Our Story / TOC chronological history (2 double-sided pages from first mailing). Could also include tri-fold TOC brochure.

Edits to planned giving mailing pieces:

- Even though accepting real estate can be problematic, decided to keep real estate option wording. TOC does not have to accept but better to have option to refuse. Can decide on case-by-case basis.
- Our story – says “we support branches in every county.” No branch Maui County. Change to “branches operating throughout the state.” Some people still confused and upset about having to join TOC instead of their branch so wording needs to be carefully crafted.
- Bequest Inquiry – Remove request asking for copy of will and contact info for attorney. People change wills plus some may find it off-putting.

Timeline

- Planned Giving Mailing – send right away, by early November, as soon as possible
- Year-End Donor Appeal sent by December 1st - try to keep 30 days in between two mailings
- October Greenleaf put on hold. Send out in November instead. Next Greenleaf include article on Planned Giving.

Year End Appeal - Melanie asked for specific objectives: getting new members, increasing additional giving from prior contributors, planned giving, other items.

Other items to consider: having sustaining donors. Become sustaining donor by making monthly contribution. Even \$5 or \$10 a month via charge. To ask for sustaining membership, need to be clear what TOC is doing and in a more coherent manner. TOC has been advocating for planting and preservation of trees for a century. Before it was a “thing.” Talk about climate crisis. Make it personal, not just recycling. Ask people to make significant personal commitment to making earth sustainable.

The climate crisis is urgent. Awareness is essential. Help continue TOC's effective advocacy, education, and programs to keep Hawai'i clean, green, beautiful, livable and sustainable. Email last year's letter to Board, will work on editing for this year.

Create a tree program for ongoing donations that will not end at specific time. Let people feel good about donating. Donate X amount for 1 tree, offsets your carbon footprint by X amount. Bogus as it takes long time before carbon footprint is offset but people understand that term.

Could TOC receive donations to plant memorial trees? If it were a general tree, not a specific tree. Tree that is part of a grove or a reforestation program. Would have to find land for it which is not easy. Could search for permanently conserved land. Trees would also need to be maintained. Year-end appeal is money to help TOC going, not for tree planting, etc. These other ideas are good for other donation appeals.

Giving Tuesday - TOC members do not respond to Giving Tuesday appeals. Have too many things coming out around same time so drop it this year.

Greenleaf (GL) - Good reaction to September GL. Sent to over 1,000 emails. 39% open rate. 3% open rate is considered good. Next issue, add link to read entire GL online instead of having to click on individual stories. This issue was catch-up. Subsequent issues will have less content. Goal is to tell everyone what TOC is doing. When Winston or Kathy testify, article needs to be included in GL. Encourage branches to send content on ongoing basis. Shows people we are working 24/7.

Melanie Kosaka - We are in stage 2 of 3 stages. First and second have been funded. In January 2022, see where our needs are and decide if we want to go to stage 3.

Press Kit - Ask Melanie to create press kit on TOC and its history, where we started and where we are today. Needs to give history and smattering of branches and activities. Get a press kit in raw form that can be presented at next meeting for review. Social Media Committee can use info from press kit to create social media posts. Can run semi-mirrored campaigns in Greenleaf and Social Media.

Shade Tree Commission (STC) 100 Year Anniversary – 2022 is centennial of STC as we cannot find specific established date with month and date. Does TOC want to set-up event to celebrate and have public recognition for it? Need to plan now as 2022 is not that far off. Melanie can assist with getting PR out for STC event. Need volunteers to joining sub-committee for Shade Tree Commission Committee - contact Winston if interested.

Could go it alone or join with Division of Urban Forestry, Trees for Honolulu's Future (TFHF), and Arborist's Association to get wider message out. Set-up series of events over the course of the year. Or do larger joint event, much like the tree conference where we brought everyone together. Would be ideal for larger scale event. Could hold workshops, history seminars, or bring in tree people to give lectures. TOC would get top billing.

Maybe faster to do alone. Keep it simple but a big splash. Planting tree with the Mayor, with the Director of Parks & Rec, with various environmental groups. Does DPR (Laura Thielen), Mayor, etc. even acknowledge that TOC started STC? Maybe they do not even know and need to be informed of STC history.

Get interviews on HPR. Talk about our history with STC and how we got things started. Article for newspaper? More people will listen to HPR than read.

2022 - Eleven Decades of Keeping Hawai'i Clean, Green and Beautiful!

Social Media Committee – First meeting schedule 10/26/21 from 1-2 pm. Mimi will send out email of ideas before meeting. Anyone welcome to add to it. Committee should address: What is overall picture? Goal to raise money but also get new members. Suspect a lot of TOC Instagram followers are not members. Working to raise TOC's Facebook and Instagram presence. Asking everyone on Board to join Instagram and follow TOC. Does not take much time.

We have a lot of accounts. Do all branches have accounts? Ideas on posting and getting items posted at branch level. Do not have to do the same things but we should at least know what we are up to. Will be posting TOC's history in chronological order.

Majesty III - Scott spoke with Doug Peebles, photographer for first two books. Is interested in doing it again. Need to add production costs for photography and text as first 2 books look dated and trees have physically changed since that time.

Why are we doing this? To let public know about Exceptional Tree (ET) program which is unique to the country. Brings TOC's primary mission back into public focus. Chance for TOC to take over as keeper of the Exceptional Trees. Legislation is totally loose. ACT 105 just established idea. Responsibility then thrown on individual counties and having advisory committees. As far as bookkeeping, nothing is written down. TOC stepping into a vacuum. Be public resource since we are only group keeping track of ETs. Myles working on revised ET list. Book could be huge public service and could raise money depending on production costs.

Would it include new trees or same trees? How do we decide which trees go in the book? Majesty II only listed about 150 trees. Current list is about 1,500 exceptional trees so list has expanded a lot since earlier books. Majesty III should have listing of every official ET. Decide how to break out the photography and text. First 2 books were strangely selective. Doug Peebles said TOC committee gave him list of what to photograph for first 2 books so he is unsure of how they made decision on which trees to include.

Will people buy book? Bought by visitors, realtors as housewarming gift, anyone with interest in trees.

Joan reached out to Bess Press. Made list of size, number of pages, photos, etc. and what we want. To get cost estimate they need more information. Director of Publishing will get back to us if interested.

Scott spoke with Mutual Publishing and Watermark Publishers. They are both interested. \$15 cost to produce if everything camera ready. If it's \$30 or \$40 per book, get someone to underwrite it. Would be self-published so TOC would need to come up with money. First two Majesty books got donors for funding.

Scott will put together a plan to present to the board. Idea of getting a grant needs to be discussed at board meeting. Scott will also write up conceptual plan as documentation of success of ET program to solicit grants from corporations to pay for out-of-pocket costs.

Majesty II was published in celebration of TOC's 80th anniversary. Majesty III could be published in celebration of TOC's 110th anniversary.

It has fallen on TOC to keep running tab of ETs and where they are located. In 2019, when County of Hawai'i was trying to figure out ETs, they came to TOC to confirm where the trees were and the GPS location in order to verify the trees.

Jonathan tried to use info from Majesty books to confirm Chinese Banyan trees in Hilo were exceptionalized. County does not recognize them. Their records are tied up in archives inaccessible due to Covid. They require actual info when county council approved their exceptionalization. Only place it would exist in State Archives. Maybe Doug Peebles has info on instructions he received regarding those trees.

Submitted by Jackie Wah