



## MEMORANDUM

Submittal Date: March 11, 2021  
To: Town Council  
Through: Roger T. Hernstadt, Town Manager  
From: Alison Giesen, Director - Culture, Parks and Recreation  
Re: Cultural Resources Monthly Report, February 2021 Activities

**Items for Council direction for this report: NONE**

**Mound House & Newton Beach Park Educational Programming-** The Mound House Museum re-opened on October 6, 2020. New museum hours, Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday 9am to 4pm. Kayak tours and beachwalks are still being offered as well as outside tours and programs. Masks required for all staff and patrons and CDC guidelines and social distancing followed at all times. For more information on program offerings visit our website at [www.moundhouse.org](http://www.moundhouse.org). Public restrooms are now open 8:30am to 4:30pm daily.

**Facilities Update- Mound House, 216 Connecticut Street & Newton Beach Park**

- ADA assessments reviewed for all facilities. Staff working on compliance recommendations. Ongoing.
- Landscape improvements at Newton Beach Park and Mound House (TDC Funds). Ongoing.
- Quotes for AC upgrade for Mound House Museum received and work scheduled to be completed in March (Capital Project).
- Landscape trimming at Newton Beach Park - thinning out vegetation for more visibility to Gulf of Mexico and Cottage and to lessen areas that are not easily visible. Completed.
- Newton Beach Park grounds and public restrooms are open to the public from sunrise to sunset seven days a week. Team members from BASE patrol the site up to 10 times daily. Staff from public works are on site 7 days a week collecting trash and recycling and checking the public restrooms to make sure all is clean and safe. Janitorial staff clean the restrooms daily after the restrooms have closed and ensure all doors are locked and secured. New windows, door locking mechanism, and restroom equipment, along with requirement of janitorial staff cleaning after doors are locked have eliminated vandalism and damage to public restrooms after hours.
- New mulch ordered for all of Newton Beach Park.
- New trash can lids at Newton Beach Park being researched that close all the way to prevent animals from getting into the trash at night.
- Two new grapefruit trees planted at Mound House.

**Culture and Environmental Learning Center Advisory Board (CELCAB)**

- Next meeting scheduled for March 25, 2021 at 3pm.

**Other/ Educational Programming/ Marketing**

- Mound House will be participating in the Museums for All initiative- for more information visit <https://museums4all.org/for-museums/>

- The Town is preparing a submission to the Florida League of Cities Annual Municipal Achievement Awards that recognizes innovations and excellence in municipal government. The submission will be in the environmental stewardship category that “focuses on city programs that promote conservation, improve and protect environmental conditions, and/or provide environmental education and outreach programs within your city.” Our topic is the Mound House’s Kayak Tours and Beach Walks. Deadline for this submission is April 15 and we should know the results sometime this summer.
- Staff working on Volunteer Appreciation gift for Mound House volunteers- April is volunteer appreciation month.
- Director planning membership appreciation event late 2021 -POST COVID-19.
- Director working with Local PBS Station- WGCU on sponsorship packet to create a documentary on the Calusa Indians of Southwest Florida to document a collaborative archaeological project that will take place at Mound House late summer 2021 with University of Florida, University of Georgia, Florida Public Archaeology Network, Florida Museum of Natural History, and many others. Sponsorship packet completed.
- Working with contractor, Super Science Florida on Summer Camp 2021 at Mound House and Newton Beach Park with smaller group size, more supervision and CDC guidelines in place for all camp sessions. Registration to open late April early May.
- Working with Edison Sailing Camp to host sailing camp at Mound House for one week in June.
- New kayak tours developed for season 2021- beginner and advanced kayak tours.
- ZOOM lecture series for members scheduled for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of each month- January – June at 5:30pm.
- ZOOM volunteer training session scheduled January – June. Guest lecturers.
- TDC Grant application completed.
- New Digital Marketing Campaign launched in November as part of Arts and Attractions grant funding.
- Mound House Website redesign completed! Visit [www.moundhouse.org](http://www.moundhouse.org)
- Working with contractor (paid for by the FoMH with matching Arts and Attractions grant funds) to send weekly press release out about Mound House programs.
- Pursuing funds for Q Media Productions to create an audio cell phone interpretive tour to include audio descriptive tours for people with low to or no vision and a kid’s tour. Proposal received cost is \$32,000 for project.
- Staff working on Accreditation from the Florida Society for Ethical Ecotourism. Ongoing.
- Continuing the completion of goals as set forth by the Strategic Plans for both Newton Beach Park and Mound House. Ongoing.
- Designing of new t-shirts for FMB and Mound House for resale in Museum Store- securing a new design company. New designs in process.
- Working with University of Georgia on 3-d scanning of artifacts from Mound Key archaeological excavations for museum educational programs.
- Reordering of items for museum store and researching new items to sell for season.
- Sponsorship package being developed. (Short Term goal in Strategic Plan)
- Researched Accreditation by the American Alliance of Museums (Long Term goal in Strategic Plan)
- Monthly volunteer ZOOM Social meetings – the 1<sup>st</sup> Friday of every month.
- Underground Exhibit Stabilization Project- University of Florida and University of Georgia agreed to the collaborative project. Tentative date – August 2021. Collaborating with other organizations and creating a list of educational opportunities. See above PBS Documentary
- Developing new adult and family programs for Mound House and Newton Beach Park for 2021 - Post COVID-19 pandemic.
- Created program calendar for March 2021.
- Membership renewal requests sent out and new memberships processed.
- New membership data base loaded on new website- working with webmaster on training staff how to enter new memberships.

- Working to develop programs (post COVID-19 pandemic) around publication of the new Mound House guidebook, *The Crown Jewel of Fort Myers Beach; The Mound House*, and around “100 Years of Celebrating the Mound House.”
- Constant Contact monthly newsletters created and sent out to members and to volunteers.
- Education Manager submitted National Association of Interpretation Certified Interpretive Trainer final project for review and certification and received certification!
- Museum Educator and Environmental Education Manager certified with CPR and first aid.
- Staff scheduling an annual safety class for all volunteers who assist with kayaking programs.
- Museum Educator registered for National Association for Interpretation Interpretive Guide virtual certification. Class starts in January and runs through February 2021. Completed course with a score of 98!
- Director reached out to a local Museum Exhibit design firm to request quote on upgrade for AV and Audio system for Archaeological exhibit. Contractor scheduled a site visit to gather more information for the project estimate (Capital Project.) Secured one quote- director has reached out to 2 other exhibit companies for quotes.
- Advertising part-time Museum Interpreter position for Newton Beach Park and Mound House programming. This position is a result of increased education programming for Newton Beach Park as stated in the Strategic Plan approved by Town Council January 28, 2019 and a part time educator only being able to work 8 hours a week instead of 24 hours previously scheduled.
- Staff working to plan volunteer trainings for 2021/ 2022 – field trips for education and speaker series.
- Educational staff planning a safety training for all volunteers who assist staff with kayaking programs April 2<sup>nd</sup> and April 9<sup>th</sup> – training will be located at the FMB community pool. CPR and first aid certification will be required for all kayaking volunteers.