



2010

Seattle
Aquarium
Results

2010 SEATTLE AQUARIUM RESULTS

1. KEY METRICS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

a. Transition

- i. On January 26, 2010 Parks Superintendent Tim Gallagher and Seattle - Aquarium Society leadership signed the twenty-year formal Operations and Management Agreement under which the Seattle Aquarium Society will Operate the Aquarium.
- ii. A "Transition Implementation Team" of Board members, City and Society Staff carried out a six-month detailed program to make possible all the necessary logistical, legal, procedural and communications actions for the successful transition.
- iii. On July 1, 2010, Acting Parks Superintendent Christopher Williams turned over a symbolic key to the Aquarium to CEO Robert W. Davidson and Board President Dan M. Guy III. From that day forward the Aquarium began operating as a nonprofit institution.
- iv. 21 City/Parks Staff transitioned to the Aquarium in 2010.
- v. In December we published a special Transition Report documenting the decade-long transition process and its significance.

b. Attendance

- i. 791,842 visitors came to the Aquarium, led by 357,000 standard ticket guests and 151,000 member visits, and 37,000 student visits. In addition, we issued 18,910 outreach tickets to underserved communities.
- ii. We held over 80 evening events, attended by more than 18,000 guests. Some clients included: The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Luly Yang, Microsoft, Boeing and Wells Fargo. The Aquarium also became one of the region's premier wedding venues.
- iii. The Café and Gift Store produced net income of \$832,000 in support of the Aquarium.
- iv. Community Support: In an uncertain economic climate we were fortunate to meet our fundraising goals for the year.
 - General operating fundraising (including special events Splash! & Otter Open) and Annual Fund raised \$927K vs. goal of \$819K.

- Shaping our 21st Century Aquarium project, including transition expenses, marine mammal Capital investment, and master/strategic planning raised \$1.1 million. A \$500,000 gift was secured from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation for master/strategic planning.
- Grant/Program Funding: Total amount raised - \$1.1 million. Continued success funding Beach Naturalist and Citizen Science. Included is \$212K from the National Science Foundation to extend funding of our COSEE partnership with the University of Washington.

c. Financial Results

- The Seattle Aquarium Society completed its first fiscal year integrating the results of the Society as well as the former City revenues and expenses. Total revenues were \$9,375,000 against expenses from July 1 to December 31, 2010 of \$9,039,000. An overall surplus of \$336,000 is expected for the year.
- Unrestricted operations finished at (\$185,000) primarily due to a 5% reduction in gate attendance as well as one-time expenses related to establishing necessary Human Resource, Accounting and Information Technology capabilities in advance of the transition effective date of 7/1/10.
- The cash position of the Aquarium remains strong at \$6,222,000 overall. This figure breaks down into approximately \$4,600,000 in New Currents Principal repayment reserve, \$1,200,000 unrestricted operational reserve and \$422,000 in other restricted accounts reserve.
- NOTE: Adding the City of Seattle's Aquarium revenue and expense for the first six months of 2010 to the above picture would show overall institutional pro forma results of \$13.2 million in revenue; \$14 million expense and a net of (\$846,000).

d. Program Impact

- 46,215 students attended class experiences at the Aquarium; 14,327 in formal classes, 31,888 in self-guided visits.
- 34,944 participated in low-tide beach experiences with our volunteer Beach Naturalists.
- Over 800 guests attended our 4th Sound Conversations lecture series featuring Philippe Cousteau, Dr. Brady Barr and Dr. Rick Keil.
- 30 Scientists attended the Aquarium's 4th Cow Shark Conservation Workshop.
- Two scientific papers were published:

- **Larson, S.** and R. Anderson. 2010. Fecal Hormones Measured within Giant Pacific Octopuses *Enteroctopus dofleini*. **Journal of Aquatic Animal Health**. 22:152–157.
- **Larson, S.,** J. Christiansen, D. Griffing, J. Ashe, D. Lowry and K. Andrews. 2010. Relatedness and polyandry of sixgill sharks, *Hexanchus griseus*, in an urban estuary. **Conservation Genetics**. 10.1007/s10592-010-0174-9.

d. **The Future**

- We initiated a Planning process, led by the Board Strategic Planning Committee and sought input in many meetings with Board members, volunteers and stakeholders.
- We participated in key Waterfront efforts:
 - Promoted the construction of a deep- bore tunnel to replace the Alaskan Way Viaduct;
 - Participated in Waterfront Planning Committee actions leading to selection of James Corner Field Operations to head the Waterfront Design Team and Tetra Tech, Inc. to lead the Elliott Bay Seawall team. Participated in both processes to articulate the Aquarium’s role on the Waterfront and to assure proper consideration of Aquarium interests in future planning.
- We joined with five leading regional institutions of informal science education to develop a joint action plan to more effectively represent our interests and STEM programming (Woodland Park Zoo, Pacific Science Center, Museum of Flight, Burke Museum, Islandwood, KCTS).

2. **DEPARTMENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

a. **Development**

- Secured \$500,000 from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to support master/strategic planning
- Splash! exceeded goal with the infusion of \$80,000 support from O’Brien Auto Group for Fund-a-Need.
- \$150,000 secured from the Norcliffe Foundation to support transition and capital investment in Pier 60.
- Unrestricted Giving: In 2010, the Aquarium received \$1,791,161 in unrestricted gifts from 1,203 donors (this included individuals, corporations & foundations & includes all unrestricted monies including Splash & Otter).
- Program Restricted Giving: In 2010, the Aquarium received \$1,127,574 in restricted program gifts from 61 donors.

b. **Education**

- i. Established strong national leadership role in building capacity for climate change awareness in staff and visitors'.
 - Partnered with Ocean Change Education Aquarium Network, NW Zoo and Aquarium Alliance, UW Climate Impacts Group and UW School of Museology to host a Climate Change 101 workshop attended by 50 Staff from Aquarium and local partner institutions.
 - Piloted and evaluated climate change messaging to the public in our exhibits.
 - Presented climate change/ocean acidification outreach sessions at 2010 AZA National Conference.
 - Continue to work with other regional institutions to further development climate change messaging.
- ii. Continued to upgrade and expand education programming.
 - Expanded marine/ocean science education programming to five additional regional school districts and one additional tribal school in Western Washington.
 - Initiated Teachers Advisory Committee to help shape our education programming.
 - Led the initiative to increase customer service and effective communication with teachers through improved registration system technology (Galaxy Resource Management).
 - Provided a renewed Educator Open House to over 300 teachers.
 - Expanded programs for young families (Toddler Time) to reach 2600 adults/children.
 - Provided Marine Summer Camp experiences for over 2000 children.
 - Provided education programs to 2466 students, 528 adults Western Washington through NOAA-funded Ocean Science programs.
 - Reached 300 students in nine high schools with field-based inquiry science through the Citizen Science program.
- iii. Strengthened the volunteer program with new, technology-based training program.
 - Continued development of successful E-Learning training marine biology modules.
- iv. Increased reach to on-site visitors with expanded interpretive program offerings.
 - Developed piloted and evaluated climate change messaging to public in our exhibits.
 - Developed and provided additional interpretive in Pacific Coral Reef exhibit.
- v. Expanded conservation education community outreach.
 - Provided informal science education to the public on 10 Puget Sound beaches with 180 Beach Naturalist volunteers making 34,944 contacts with beachgoers.

- 81 Cedar River Salmon Journey volunteers reached over 7300 local citizens with salmon conservation field experiences.
 - Mentored 7 students from diverse ethnic backgrounds through the Summer High School Intern/Mentor Program funded by NASA.
 - Hosted 750 guests from the Latino community at an Aquarium Family Night.
 - COSEE co-sponsored Sound Conversations lecture series which showcased COSEE Private Investigator and UW Oceanography professor, Rick Keil, Ph.D.
 - Expanded Seafood Watch Program partners to 17 restaurants and stores with addition of six new partners and distributed 250,000 Seafood Watch cards printed in English and Spanish.
- vi. Secured new funding of \$300,000 for conservation-education programs listed above with strong support from the Development Department.

c. Facilities

- i. Developed and implemented a new preventative maintenance system for the Aquarium.
- ii. Assumed direct facilities maintenance function for the Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation.

d. Finance & Administration

- i. Coordinated the development of a 12-month Gantt chart as our guide for transition deliverables, and partnered with the transition team to effectively communicate issues with staff.
- ii. Organized necessary HR, accounting, IT to effect a smooth transition to nonprofit management.
- iii. With HR department, jointly facilitated conversations about transition with labor unions.
- iv. Re-budgeted the combined organization in June 2010.
- v. Completed 2009 audit and tax returns.
- vi. Coordinated combined budget for the institution in Fall 2010.
- vii. Invited Clark Nuber PS in early for preliminary 2010 audit work on new combined entity.

e. Human Resources

- i. Developed and successfully met a complete array of HR goals for the July 1st transition date through a cooperative effort between SEAS, Aquarium and Parks Department staff.
- ii. Executed a major communications program for Aquarium City employees answering inquiries about transition issues including 6 all staff meetings, a series of 7 FAQs and posting of many documents on a shared-staff website. 19

out of 72 City employees accepted offers of employment on July 1st. 2 City employees accepted employment offers in December.

- iii. Executed all benefit contracts and established a new benefit package and communicated it to all staff members.
- iv. Selected and implemented new ADP Payroll System on July 1st.
- v. Hired a Payroll/Benefits/HR Coordinator,

f. Life Sciences

- i. Life science staff managed three AZA studbooks: Sea otters, Puffins and the Lined seahorse to help assure the genetic diversity of captive populations.
- ii. Dr. Tom Sullivan of the Animal Eye Clinic in collaboration with Seattle Aquarium veterinarians successfully completed the first bilateral cataract surgery ever performed on a Northern Fur Seal.
- iii. Through the Aquarium's Hawaii research surveys, we developed strong working relationships with the State of Hawaii Division of Aquatic Resources which manages animal collections and is the regulating body for our collecting activity there. We also solidified a position on the short list for US Fish and Wildlife coral seizures, and have been the recipient of many coral specimens confiscated by the federal authorities.
- iv. We continued to improve the Aquarium's live coral exhibits continued to improve throughout the year. In 2010, we transferred nine species of captive-reared coral to five different aquariums. In all, eleven facilities have now received rare coral from the Seattle Aquarium.
- v. The Aquarium partnered with Phillip Levin, PhD., Program Manager at NOAA Fisheries Science Center to successfully secure an EPA grant giving the aquarium \$60,000 for interpretation of the Puget Sound watershed and identification of deliverables for a healthy Puget Sound by 2020.
- vi. Our efforts to encourage breeding of the Northern Fur Seal population resulted in our Northern Fur Seal successfully breeding with a female at the New England Aquarium.
- vii. Completed year six of our Washington State reef fish surveys.
- viii. Completed year two of our Hawaii reef fish research surveys.
- ix. Partnered with U.S. Geological Survey on observations of wild sea otter activity as part of "Coastal ecosystem responses to influences from land and sea" - a three year study of sea otters and their changing environment.
- x. Participated with Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife in the annual Puget Sound harbor seal health assessments.
- xi. Completed and increased the scope of our Seattle Aquarium Rockfish abundance and diversity research surveys in Washington State in collaboration

with the Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium as well as the Oregon Coast Aquarium.

- xii. Participated in the annual Washington State Sea otter census with a consortium of federal and state agencies and Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium.
- xiii. Established membership in the American Academy of Underwater Sciences, attended the annual conference, and began revamping our in-house dive program to become compliant with and begin to lead AAUS regulations and the aquarium community.
- xiv. Defined and identified membership for our Dive Control Board to establish a governing body responsible for managing safe diving practices in our operations.
- xv. Brought all staff field divers up to a minimum of Rescue Diver certification level.
- xvi. Our dive safety officers attended the Association of Diving Program Administrators annual meeting and forged new professional partnerships.
- xvii. Initiated scientific program development and support relationship with DiveXtras, UTD and Georgia Aquarium.
- xviii. Opened discussions with Woodland Park Zoo regarding changes in the Aquarium veterinary program.

g. Marketing

- i. Supported attendance of 791,000 in challenging marketplace.
- ii. Produced series of internal and external publications communicating the transition issues, progress and impacts.
- iii. Successful planning and execution of 3rd year of the award-winning "Let Leonard In" advertising campaign, including short duration exhibit in the aquarium. Conducted an on-line involvement for Leonard that generated more than 50,000 email votes from the community.
- iv. Partnered with Seafair Pirates to engage community in summer months and support toy drive for holiday activity.
- v. Successfully produced the most successful season yet of Sound Conversations Lecture series.
- vi. Produced gate-driving day-time events, Hawaii Weekend, Octopus Week, Spring Break, World Ocean Day, Halloween.
- vii.** Supported major upgrade in Splash! event theme, décor and audio/visual presentation adding to guest experience and spending.