

MINUTES OF THE JUNE 18, 2013, ADVANCEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING

The Advancement Committee (“the Committee”) of the Smithsonian Institution Board of Regents held a meeting on June 18, 2013, beginning at about 3:00 p.m. at the Smithsonian Institution Building in Washington, D.C. Participating were Committee Chair Alan G. Spoon and Committee members Barbara Barrett*, France A. Córdova*, Travis Engen, Sakurako Fisher, Adrienne Mars*, and Paul Neely. Campaign Steering Committee Co-chair David Rubenstein also participated. Staff present for all or part of the meeting included Chief of Staff to the Secretary Patricia Bartlett ;Director of Advancement and Philanthropic Giving Virginia B. Clark; National Zoological Park Associate Director of Advancement Lesli Creedon; General Inspector Scott Dahl; Deputy Director of Advancement Zully Dorr; Associate General Counsel Farleigh Earhart; National Museum of the American Indian Director Kevin Gover; Acting; National Zoological Park Director Dennis Kelly; Under Secretary for History, Art, and Culture Richard Kurin; Deputy Under Secretary for Finance and Administration John K. Lapiana; NMAI Associate Director for Advancement Cameron McGuire ; Under Secretary for Science Eva Pell; and Director of Leadership Gifts George Rogers.

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Spoon welcomed the Committee members. He called the meeting to order and reviewed the meeting agenda.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The draft minutes of the April 18, 2013, Committee meeting were approved without modification.

CAMPAIGN HIGHLIGHTS, ANALYSIS, AND CALENDAR

Campaign Steering Committee Update. Mr. Spoon briefed the Committee on the highlights of the May 22, 2013, campaign steering committee meeting. Over the course of two meetings, the steering committee reviewed and provided frank, constructive feedback on six units’ fundraising messages. These compelling “elevator speeches” are designed to position each unit’s case for support. The steering committee discussed the need for 100 percent unit advisory board participation prior to the conclusion of the national campaign, and 100 percent participation of the steering committee before the October 2014 public kickoff of the campaign. In addition, the steering committee reviewed draft case statements and priorities, as well as a regional events calendar. Mr. Spoon also reported that he and campaign co-chair Barbara Barrett met with the unit development directors. The steering committee will meet again on November 6, 2013, and May 13, 2014. A campaign celebration kickoff is scheduled for October 16–19, 2014.

* *participated by teleconference*

Fundraising Update. Ms. Clark provided the regular progress review on the campaign. To date, the campaign has raised nearly \$699 million, or about 47 percent of the fundraising goal. The goal for the campaign's October 2014 public launch is \$900 million. Approximately \$101 million has been raised toward the fiscal year 2013 "stretch" goal of \$220 million. Ms. Clark estimated that fiscal year 2013 fundraising efforts will result in about \$180–190 million in gifts and pledges.

Campaign Analysis. The goals of the campaign include supporting the strategic plan, increasing the Smithsonian's base of support, raising more money for endowments, and increasing overall fundraising. Since fiscal year 2011, the number of donors contributing \$25,000 to \$999,000 has increased by 29 percent; one third of these donors are new. Prior to fiscal year 2011, the Smithsonian raised about \$19 million for endowments each year. Since fiscal year 2011, an average of \$45 million has been raised each year. Since the campaign began, the number of donors giving \$1 million or more has increased from an average of 21 per year to 34 per year, of which about half are first-time donors to the Smithsonian. The number of return donors who have stepped up their giving to over \$1 million has increased from an average of 12 to 23 on an annual basis.

Overall campaign progress is on track, said Ms. Clark. Fundraising results vary by unit, and this is due to the different stages of programs across the Smithsonian. While we work closely with the units to strengthen fundraising and goal-setting efforts, said Ms. Dorr, some of the preliminary goals may still need to be revised. The Committee discussed the important role of the Smithsonian advisory boards in successful fundraising. It also agreed that a fast pace and strong momentum must be maintained in each of the units' fundraising efforts.

Ms. Clark reviewed the facility, programming, and position endowments for which large-capacity support is being sought. She also noted that fundraising cases will be developed in response to the Smithsonian's growing digitization and online initiatives, the Arts and Industries Building, and conservation efforts. Mr. Spoon noted that potential donors are most attracted to high-impact, forward-looking initiatives.

UNIT CASE PRESENTATIONS

Mr. Spoon emphasized that the Committee's frank input will benefit the units in their development of compelling campaign case statements. He asked National Zoological Park (NZN) Director Dennis Kelly to present the first case statement.

National Zoological Park and the Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute. Mr. Kelly presented the case for support of the NZN and the Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute (SCBI).

The NZN campaign will help endow positions, support and revitalize facilities and exhibits, advance programming, and protect the Zoo's treasures. Mr. Kelly estimated that the Zoo will achieve about 30 percent of its campaign goal by the end of fiscal year 2013.

Mr. Kelly noted program sponsorship opportunities. Some NZP programs, such as saving the pandas program, already have benefited from successful fundraising. Mr. Kelly cited the work of several world-renowned Zoo scientists, and said that endowed positions will better leverage the resources of talented staff. With regard to space or facility sponsorship opportunities, he said that one quarter of the Zoo's campaign will be dedicated to "Marvelous Migrations." The Zoo's bird exhibit will be revitalized to tell the story of migration through avian species; the project will be funded through Federal and private funding. The revitalized and rebranded American Trail tells America's conservation success stories, and the campaign will support the addition of new species to that exhibit. Next year will be the Zoo's 125th anniversary, which the Zoo will commemorate with the opening of a strategically located, five-year exhibition on the bison, the very first animal in the Zoo's collection.

Zoo programs, said Mr. Kelly, bring together NZP's research and exhibits. Naming opportunities will be offered for such programs as saving Asian elephants and facilities at SCBI's academic center. Campaign donors, he said, can see their gifts "come to life" by funding breeding programs that support endangered "treasures" such as the Asian one-horned rhinoceros.

Mr. Kelly then asked the Committee to comment on the NZP campaign case. Ms. Fisher suggested strengthening the "people" piece of the campaign statement to better communicate the world-renowned expertise found on the Zoo's staff, adding that "without great people you are not going to have a great Zoo."

Committee members agreed that the Zoo must engage support outside of the D.C. area, and discussed the challenges of doing so. The importance of digital communications, such as video streams and mobile apps, was discussed. Mr. Kelly noted that the Zoo, which is backed by Federal bandwidth, has more cams than any zoological institution in the world.

Mr. Kelly discussed the combined resources of the Smithsonian Conservation Council, which includes the Zoo, the National Museum of Natural History, the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center, and the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute. He said the campaign must highlight the Smithsonian's unique status as the single most comprehensive conservation organization amongst its peers.

Mr. Neely said the case must explain how the Zoo's living exhibits relate to the important research conducted by NZP scientists, as well as the Zoo's leadership position in the scientific community. Mr. Kelly said the case will make clear that each Zoo and SCBI exhibit is connected with NZP research. Mr. Kelly also said that Washington, D.C., and Geneva, Switzerland, host the highest concentration of professionals working in the field of conservation. The Committee commented on the importance of this fact, and its critical relationship to the campaign case.

Mr. Engen noted that the case includes buildings, people, and projects, but does not address habitats, an essential element of conservation and a viable donation category.

Mr. Spoon said that people want to join “world-class, leading-scale winners.” The Zoo is unique in its resources and position in the world of conservation science, he said, and can offer donors the means to support the premier organization in its field. The Zoo’s location in one of the two world centers for conservation, he added, offers “density” and “interaction,” both of which are compelling reasons to invest in the National Zoo.

National Museum of the American Indian. Mr. Spoon asked National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI) Director Kevin Gover to present the museum’s campaign case. Mr. Gover introduced NMAI Associate Director for Advancement Cameron McGuire.

Established in 1989 by an Act of Congress, the NMAI is unique in its relationships with Native Americans, collection of historic and contemporary Native objects, pan-tribal scholarship capabilities, and the resources of the Smithsonian educational brand. Mr. Gover discussed the NMAI’s relationship with the Smithsonian strategic plan, and the Grand Challenges “Understanding the American Experience” and “Valuing World Cultures.”

Research-based education and creating a national narrative are key priorities for the museum. The NMAI campaign will support initiatives that further accurate and authentic understanding of Native American history, culture, and knowledge, and the global impact of Native American achievements and contributions. The museum’s top campaign priorities include launching a national education initiative, exhibitions and revitalizing permanent gallery space, and endowing positions and programs. Mr. Gover discussed specific initiatives, including the launch of a portal that will provide access to the largest collection of scholarly material on Native Americans on the web. The resources, he said, also will inform classroom materials.

The bottom line, said Mr. Gover, is that “no matter who you are, no matter where you are from, no matter what you do, you will find something about yourself in our museums and the scholarship we produce.”

Mr. Neely asked for specific examples of how one can discover things about oneself in the NMAI museums. Ms. Fisher suggested the case statement begin with a clearer explanation of the museum’s global scope and “hemispheric” vision. Mr. Spoon said one of the museum’s assets is the different stories it tells, and suggested that the case statement would be strengthened by emphasizing that NMAI is the platform to tell the whole story of Native Americans in the Western Hemisphere. Who are the likely donors, he asked, who might sponsor these stories? Mr. Gover said interested parties include specific tribes and foundations, many of whom have not been approached for funding since the museum’s inception.

FUNDRAISING STRATEGY FOR THE GIANT MAGELLAN TELESCOPE

Dr. Pell introduced Dr. Alcock, who shared with the Committee the fundraising strategy for the Giant Magellan Telescope (GMT). Fundraising \$80 million for the Smithsonian’s 10 percent use of the GMT is the single campaign goal for the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory (SAO).

SAO is the premier observatory in the world, but will only remain so if it retains access to the instruments of the future. The Giant Magellan Telescope will revolutionize our view and understanding of the universe and allow SAO scientists to pursue answers to questions about dark matter, dark energy, the formation of the stars and planets, and countless other mysteries about our universe. SAO will be one of 10 members of an international partnership to build and use the telescope.

Direct funding for 10 percent of an instrument presents some challenges in the ability of recognize very generous donors. The GMT telescope partnership does not offer high level recognition for large gifts or naming opportunities. Based on this, Dr. Alcock has worked with Dr. Pell and the Office of Advancement to create ways to connect a benefactor to the scientific research that would take place at SAO in association with the telescope itself. Dr. Alcock presented an example of research centers and institutes that would developed around areas of work. The example focused on a center for Black Hole research that could be funded at a specific amount and named in honor of the donor. The name recognition would be associated with the center, its programs and publications, and the naming would be in effect for a specific period of time. Within that center there would also be opportunities to fund term named positions for scientists and fellows.

Mr. Spoon requested that we verify that it would be permissible to name federally funded positions, and Dr. Alcock and Ms. Dorr assured him that it is. Ms. Fisher clarified that money donated to one of the centers or to a specific position would go entirely towards the telescope and not alleviate budgetary considerations, which Mr. Alcock confirmed.

The Committee agreed that there is a need for more tangible recognition opportunities for donors to the GMT. They expressed the desire to see SAO's preeminence in the fields of astronomy and astrophysics emphasized when the campaign case statement is created. They also suggested a campaign case statement include success stories of what SAO has been able to accomplish in the past with shared ownership of equipment, similar to what will be done with the GMT.

REVIEW OF PENDING GIFTS

Ms. Clark presented two proposed actions for the Committee's consideration. The Committee expressed its appreciation for the generosity of the donors. The following motions were approved:

VOTED that the Advancement Committee recommends the recognition by the Board of Regents of the Thomas W. Haas Foundation to the National Air and Space Museum and names the Phoebe Waterman Haas Public Observatory in perpetuity.

VOTED that the Advancement Committee recommends the recognition by the Board of Regents of S.C. Johnson & Son, Inc. to the National Museum of American History and names the SC Johnson Conference Center for 20 years.

\$1 MILLION PLUS STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

Ms. Clark discussed a proposed program to recognize donors and introduced George Rogers, the Director of Leadership Gifts who will be working on developing elements of the program, to the Committee.

This stewardship program would be for individual donors who have given cumulatively \$1 million or more. The goal of the program is to offer unique and different ways to keep current donors engaged with the Smithsonian so that they provide continued, and hopefully increased, support.

The Committee was enthusiastic about the potential of the concierge idea, but agreed that the program as described was quite similar to the James Smithson Society. They suggested emphasizing the potential for access to specialized and personal opportunities such as concierge service and reducing annual gatherings and events to every other year, with travel opportunities offered the years in between. Mr. Engen and Ms. Fisher asserted the potential of aligning this program with the Office of Advancement's growing regional program, which would steward these donors and help build out SI's regional presence. Mr. Neely noted that it needs to be made clear that individuals who make gifts through family foundations would be included in this group.

The Committee did not agree on any of the potential names for the stewardship program that were presented, and asked for more suggestions.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further discussion or a request for executive session, Mr. Spoon adjourned the meeting at approximately 5:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Alan G. Spoon
Chair