

MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 21, 2012, EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

The Executive Committee (“the Committee”) of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution met on September 21, 2012. Participating were Executive Committee and Board Chair France A. Córdoba, Vice Chair Patricia Q. Stonesifer, and Committee member Shirley Ann Jackson.

Also present by invitation of the Committee were Secretary G. Wayne Clough, Counselor to the Chief Justice Jeffrey P. Minear, Chief of Staff to the Secretary Patricia Bartlett, Chief of Staff to the Regents John K. Lapiana, and Director of Communications and External Affairs Evelyn Lieberman.

CALL TO ORDER AND REPORT OF THE CHAIR

Dr. Córdoba called the meeting to order at approximately 11:00 a.m. and noted that the agenda contained one action item, a potential loan from a Regent to the National Museum of African American History and Culture.

Agenda Review. The Committee then reviewed the current draft agenda for the October 15, 2012, Board of Regents meeting. Dr. Córdoba explained that the draft reflected input from the Committee’s September 5, 2012, review. In particular, the draft now included a stand-alone branding presentation, and the planned director’s report was postponed to a future date. In its place, two senior curators at the National Museum of American History (NMAH) will present on the Smithsonian’s Presidential election-related collections.

Because the meeting will be held in the NMAH Hall of Musical Instruments, the Committee accepted a suggestion that the day open with a recital by talented area high school students on Stradivarius violins from the Smithsonian’s collections.

The Committee also agreed to express the Board’s appreciation for the work done by congressional Regent Liaisons throughout the year and invite the group to the October 14, 2012, Regents’ dinner at the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden. The dinner coincides with the museum’s opening of the Ai Weiwei exhibition *According to What?*

CONSIDERATION OF A REGENT LOAN OF AN OBJECT TO A SMITHSONIAN MUSEUM

The Committee next considered a proposed loan of a copy of the Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution signed by Abraham Lincoln from Regent David Rubenstein to the National Museum of African American History and Culture for exhibition and research purposes.

Dr. Córdoba noted that Regent policy requires that the Executive Committee approve any loans of objects by Regents to the Smithsonian. The last time the Committee was asked to take such an action was when Mr. Rubenstein loaned his copy of the Emancipation Proclamation to the National Museum of American History.

Ms. Leonard said that the Office of General Counsel is unaware of any facts suggesting that Mr. Rubenstein would receive an improper advantage from this loan. She said that the loan would be subject to the museum's standard incoming loan agreement with minor revisions to the standard terms. Her office reviewed the proposed loan and recommended Executive Committee approval.

Following brief discussion, the Committee approved the following motion:

VOTED that, pursuant to the Board of Regents Ethics Guidelines, the Executive Committee approves the proposed loan by Regent David Rubenstein of the Thirteenth Amendment, signed by Abraham Lincoln and owned by Mr. Rubenstein, to the National Museum of African American History and Culture.

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY

Turning to Dr. Clough for the Report of the Secretary, Dr. Córdova observed that a tremendous amount of activity had occurred since the Committee's last meeting on September 5, 2012. Dr. Clough began his report with an update on the medical condition of a senior staff member and reported that the panda cub born at the National Zoological Park was in good condition. [*POST-MEETING NOTE*: The cub died on September 23, 2012.]

Branding. Dr. Clough noted that the Smithsonian's national advertising campaign was launched on September 20, 2012, with print ads scheduled to appear in national magazines such as *People* and outdoor signage in Washington, D.C., New York City, Los Angeles, and Chicago. He complimented the staff team that created the new *Seriously Amazing* website. The Committee briefly discussed the media coverage of the launch.

Smithsonian Channel Update. Dr. Clough described very early discussions between the Smithsonian and Showtime Networks over the Smithsonian's equity interest in the Smithsonian Channel. He said that, were Showtime to make an offer to purchase some of the interest, the Finance Committee and the Board would determine the appropriate response.

Coptic Bible Documentary. Dr. Clough provided an overview of the recently publicized research on a scrap of Fourth Century A.D. parchment possibly indicating that Jesus may have been married. Although the Smithsonian was not directly involved in the discovery and research, the Smithsonian Channel was scheduled to air a documentary on the subject on September 30, 2012. *Smithsonian* magazine published an article on the topic. Dr. Clough said that a Smithsonian curatorial team is reviewing the documentary to ensure it meets Smithsonian standards. [*POST-MEETING NOTE*: Airing of the documentary was subsequently postponed to allow for further authentication of the parchment.]

Jefferson Bible. Dr. Clough provided an update on research related to Thomas Jefferson and the recently exhibited Jefferson Bible. He added that the Smithsonian would coordinate the research with the Thomas Jefferson Foundation at Monticello. [*NOTE*: At the Smithsonian's request, the research is being treated as administratively confidential and will be publically

announced after its completion. These minutes will be updated accordingly.]

Smithsonian Journeys. Dr. Clough alerted the Committee to travel opportunities being explored by Smithsonian Journeys to Myanmar. He said that the country, which has recently opened its borders to travelers from the West, is the “new travel hot spot” and that there are no prohibitions against travel to that country. John Kress, the director of the Biodiversity Consortium, has been conducting research in Myanmar for many years, he added. Dr. Clough said that he expected that the congressional Liaisons would be notified of any Myanmar travel plans.

Continuing Resolution Update. Dr. Clough reported that a six-month Continuing Resolution (CR) is nearing passage. He expects that the CR will be voted on before the Congress recesses later in September.

National Museum of African American History and Culture. Dr. Clough thanked Ms. Stonesifer for agreeing to join the Advisory Council of the National Museum of African American History and Culture. He added that Ms. Stonesifer would be particularly helpful in energizing private fundraising by the Council and museum staff for construction of the museum’s National Mall facility.

New Regent Nomination. Regent Nominee Barbara Barrett met with the House Administration Committee on September 20, 2012. Dr. Clough said that reports of the meeting were extremely positive and that he anticipated that the Congress would move on her nomination after the election recess.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Committee then conducted an executive session to discuss refinements to the annual Secretary performance review process.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 12:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

France A. Córdova
Chair