

MINUTES OF THE APRIL 9, 2012, STRATEGIC PLANNING AND PROGRAMS COMMITTEE MEETING

The Strategic Planning and Programs Committee (“the Committee”) of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution held a meeting on April 9, 2011, at 3:30 p.m. Participating were Committee Chair Shirley Ann Jackson and Committee members Judy S. Huret, John McCarter, Paul Neely, and Patty Stonesifer. Committee members Steve Case, Senator Jack Reed, and Alan Spoon were unable to participate.

Staff in attendance included Secretary G. Wayne Clough; Chief of Staff to the Secretary Patricia Bartlett; Assistant Secretary for Education and Access Claudine Brown; Educational Technology Specialist Peter Haydock; Under Secretary for Finance and Administration/Chief Financial Officer Al Horvath; Under Secretary for History, Art, and Culture Richard Kurin; Chief of Staff to the Regents John K. Lapiana; Under Secretary for Science Eva Pell; Liaison for Senator Jack Reed Moria Lenehan-Razzuri; and Deputy General Counsel Marsha Shaines.

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Stonesifer called the meeting to order on Dr. Jackson’s behalf. Dr. Jackson joined the meeting shortly after Dr. Pell’s presentation and assumed the Chair’s responsibilities.

The draft minutes of the December 5, 2011, Committee meeting were approved after a quorum was achieved.

REPORT OF THE UNDER SECRETARIES

Science: National Museum of Natural History Director Search. Dr. Pell began her report with an update on the search for a new director of the National Museum of Natural History. As chair of the search committee, she said that she plans to name a successor to current director, Cristián Samper, by August 1, 2012.

Science: Giant Magellan Telescope. Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory (SAO) Director Charles Alcock will discuss the Giant Magellan Telescope (GMT) initiative at the April 30, 2012, Regents’ meeting. Dr. Pell noted that the first of seven mirrors for the GMT has been fabricated, and the second is now being cast. Funding remains the initiative’s major concern: initiative partners South Korea and Australia have made a “national commitment” of \$700 million to \$750 million and the Smithsonian is expected to contribute approximately \$70 million, of which “a few million have been raised to date.” The overall total raised for the initiative is currently \$280 million. The initiative’s leaders hope to have all funding identified by 2013, which would allow construction of the telescope in Chile to commence. Ms. Stonesifer requested that Dr. Alcock brief the full Board on the competitive process (multiple teams are competing for National Science Foundation support) at the upcoming Regents’ meeting.

Dr. Pell stressed that the success of the GMT is critical for the SAO's continued ability to attract top scientists and remain at the cutting edge of astrophysical research. In response to Ms. Huret's question, she noted that the Smithsonian's proposed \$70 million contribution to the GMT initiative is included in the Smithsonian's national campaign overall goal.

History, Art, and Culture: National Museum of American History Director Search. Dr. Kurin briefed the Committee on the status of the search for a new director of the National Museum of American History (NMAH). He said that finalists will be submitted shortly to the Secretary for his consideration.

History, Art, and Culture: Hirshhorn Inflatable Structure. Dr. Kurin said that the Smithsonian was "getting to the end-game" in deciding whether to construct the proposed Hirshhorn Inflatable Structure. Responses to a request for proposals (RFP) for construction of the structure were priced higher than anticipated, consequently prompting the Smithsonian to explore less-costly alternative designs.

With regard to fundraising, Dr. Kurin said that staff are working with donors to "solidify" outstanding informal pledges of financial support for the project.

History, Art, and Culture: National Museum of the American Latino. Dr. Kurin noted that legislation to create a National Museum of the American Latino within the Smithsonian is still pending in Congress, and that an interested outside group has hired a lobbyist to promote passage of the legislation. In the meantime, the Smithsonian has been identifying projects and intellectual assets (including the hiring of seven or eight new curators) to enhance the Smithsonian's telling of the American Latino story. Ms. Lenehan-Razzuri observed that the Smithsonian must ensure that these efforts are communicated with the congressional sponsors of the pending legislation.

Dr. Kurin added that a similar, albeit it smaller, effort is being mounted to improve Asian and Pacific American studies across the Smithsonian with the support of Konrad Ng, director of the Asian Pacific American Programs.

History, Art, and Culture: State Department Agreement. Dr. Kurin noted that the Smithsonian recently signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the United States Department of State to promote cooperation between the Smithsonian and the State Department on a variety of educational outreach efforts, including designing mobile phone apps, offering international training, and executing cultural rescue efforts, such as the Smithsonian's rescue efforts after the 2010 Haitian earthquake. The MOU should serve to standardize many existing and future Smithsonian-State Department partnerships and will in no way, Dr. Kurin stressed, affect the Smithsonian's operational or programmatic independence. He said the State Department has assigned a full-time executive to the Smithsonian to identify and facilitate partnerships under the MOU.

History, Art, and Culture: Thomas Jefferson. Dr. Clough noted that two exhibitions of

continuing interest to the Committee on Thomas Jefferson—*Jefferson’s Bible* and *Paradox of Liberty: Jefferson’s Monticello*—have been open to the public for months. Both have been well-received by visitors and scholars and neither has generated notable adverse or negative publicity.

EDUCATION STRATEGIC PLANNING

Dr. Jackson noted that both the Executive Committee and the Secretary asked the Committee to provide guidance to Assistant Secretary for Education and Access Claudine Brown on her proposed presentation on pan-institutional education at the next full Board meeting.

Dr. Clough first provided an overview of the pan-institutional framework for education and access, highlighting areas he believes the Smithsonian is uniquely positioned to provide content, access, and engagement leadership. The Smithsonian is now at a point, he said, where it can create platforms and specific activities that increase its educational outreach to “millions, instead of thousands,” of Americans.

He then described three settings for education (a fourth, higher education, will be addressed in the future): (1) exhibitions and programs; (2) K–12 supplemental offerings; and (3) open digital access or the “21st Museum: Anytime/Anywhere.” [A copy of the draft framework is attached.] He stressed that there were “bleeding boundaries” between these settings and that may initiatives would reach multiple audiences.

Ms. Brown’s Board presentation will highlight three “signature” education and access projects. Each will demonstrate the unique role and impact of Smithsonian content, its brand and reach, and its ability to convene and engage learners of all ages in anywhere and anytime.

The first project is **Americans All**, planned in collaboration with the American Experience Consortium. Ms. Brown said that the “Americans All” staff is committed to working with young learners and community groups to create citizen engagement projects that foster learning in all age groups. The project is particularly important and timely in light of rapidly changing national demographics and will be launched in conjunction with the development of the *Americans All* exhibition at the NMAH.

The second project, **Waterways**, will complement a pan-institutional initiative of the same name, and is designed to promote citizen engagement with the rivers and watersheds in their communities. Ms. Brown outlined the development of the project from an Anacostia Community Museum exhibition proposal on urban rivers to a major Smithsonian-wide initiative.

For each project, Ms. Brown emphasized, the Smithsonian is working closely with outside partners, such as New America Media (“Americans All”), and the Nature Conservancy and the National Park Service (“Waterways”).

Mr. Haydock then discussed how these initiatives, combined with content and engaged access,

can be “illuminated” by **My-SI**, a participant access system currently under development. He explained that My-SI will deliver educational content and provide a participatory platform for learners and enthusiasts through a single point of access to all Smithsonian educational programs and resources. Mr. Haydock noted that My-SI will be able to deliver games, curriculum, webinars, and other media, as well as track user preferences. The system will present the Smithsonian with “tremendous opportunities” for data gathering, he said, and will facilitate multiple citizen science and history projects.

Mr. McCarter said that the “Waterways” concept was “fabulous,” and discussed successful citizen scientist initiatives across the country. Mr. Stonesifer recalled that the Committee had asked staff to identify “what the Smithsonian can be best at” and that she believes that “Americans All” and “Waterways” could meet that threshold. She also agreed with a concern expressed by Mr. Neely, who said that better articulation is needed about how the Smithsonian will differentiate offerings for diverse audiences. The Committee encouraged Ms. Brown and her team to next identify “products” that advance the Smithsonian as the “national resource” for understanding “Waterways” and making the concept of “‘Americans All’ come to life.”

CAMPUS MASTER PLANNING

Dr. Jackson noted that since 2010, staff have been considering possible uses of the Arts and Industries Building (AIB) as a headquarters for Smithsonian education outreach. She reminded the Committee that pending legislation in Congress calls for the AIB to be designated as the home of a proposed Smithsonian Museum of the American Latino. As part of that proposed legislation, the Regents would be directed to prepare a “plan of action” on, among other things, funding and constructing an underground annex to the building.

Mr. Horvath noted that the proposed designation of the AIB, along with the mandate to create a plan, has prompted a more formal and comprehensive approach to not only the use of the AIB as a museum, but also to higher and better uses of facilities adjacent to it: the Castle, the Quadrangle, the Freer and Sackler Galleries, the Hirshhorn, and the National Museum of African Art.

He noted that a retreat was conducted in fall 2011, at which a diverse set of Smithsonian staff reached a consensus that, while the ultimate disposition of the building was being contemplated by Congress, the Smithsonian should use the AIB for educational purposes as soon as is practicable. The building should not sit “idle” any longer than necessary, he said.

The other “big idea” from the retreat, Mr. Horvath said, was to view the south side of the Mall—from the Hirshhorn to the Freer Gallery of Art—as a “campus.” In building a 20-to-30-year “roadmap” for the campus, Mr. Horvath said, his facilities team will ask, among other questions, “whether there should there be a ‘front door’ to the Smithsonian” and, if so, whether that “front door” should be the Castle. While the Castle is impressive on the outside, he said, the experience indoors is “fairly mediocre.” Mr. Horvath said that he would keep the Committee apprised of the planning process.

EXHIBITION CALENDAR

Dr. Kurin presented the planned exhibition calendar for the Committee's information and review. The pan-institutional calendar was developed to assist the Committee's ability to identify potentially sensitive and/or controversial exhibitions at an early stage, as well as to provide context for exhibitions with regard to the strategic plan.

Dr. Kurin directed the Committee's attention to three exhibitions of art by Ai Weiwei, the dissident Chinese artist. Two of the three are being presented by the Hirshhorn and the third by the Arthur M. Sackler Gallery. Dr. Kurin said the artist has been invited to the opening of the Hirshhorn's major retrospective of his work in October 2012. In the event he is unable to attend, the Hirshhorn plans to conduct a panel discussion with the artist participating over the internet.

ADJOURNMENT

Dr. Jackson thanked the Committee members and staff for their participation. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 5:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Shirley Ann Jackson, Chair



Framework for Smithsonian Education

April 2012

G. W. Clough

Smithsonian RESEARCH informs:

Exhibitions and Programs/

Learning Settings

Context:

- Monopoly because of museums and collections.
- Longevity and deep experience.
- Core to our mission.
- Based on curatorial research and collections.
- Curators decide what will be shown and how it will be presented.
- Based on physical visit to museum.
- Digital complement/website can be developed.
- Physical visitation unlikely to increase significantly over present levels.

Assets:

- Smithsonian museums & research centers
- Centers for ethnic studies
- Opportunities for multi-disciplinary approaches to scholarship
- Living and object-based collections
- SITES-traveling exhibitions
- Affiliates-participatory museum members

Audiences:

- Wide age demographic, families, school trips.
- Tendency towards college educated, white.

Funding and support:

- Federal and private.
- Curatorial staff, conservators, researchers.
- Educators, public programmers
- Docents/volunteers.

Change trends:

- Digital complements to physical exhibitions.
- More engagement built into physical exhibitions.
- Use of re-enactors/performers.

Supplemental K-12 Offerings/

Formal Learning Settings

Context:

- Essentially an expectation of the Smithsonian all museums.
- Competitive market place.
- Built around teachers' and students' needs.
- Driven by national and state standards.
- Grade & curriculum based learning tools.
- Standardized testing.
- May be shaped by regional considerations.
- Delivered by a variety of means (booklets, kits) and digitally.

Assets:

- Smithsonian brand.
- National Sciences Resources Center.
- Smithsonian Center for Education and Museum Studies.
- Museum and Research Center based interactive education centers.
- Museum exhibitions.
- Collections.
- Gates Youth Access Grants.

Audiences:

- Teachers.
- School districts.
- Home schoolers.

Funding and support:

- Federal, private, competitive grants.
- Museum staff, SCEMS and NSRC staff.

Change trends:

- Addressing standards by tagging all content
- Learner-centered education where museum and libraries are key resources
- Measuring the impact of programs
- Significant upside for offerings using digital technology.
- Active learning-developing habits of mind
- Distance learning-bringing experts to diverse Audiences

Open Digital Access (The 21st Museum)

Anytime/Anywhere

Context:

- Uncharted waters/evolving practice
- Technology rapidly creating new opportunities.
- Use of digital collections growing rapidly.
- Opportunity for leadership.
- Not clear where it reports; personnel pool within present resources thin to non-existent.
- Can reach any demographic nationally and globally.
- Huge upside potential.

Assets:

- Collections (13% digitized).
- Smithsonian Channel plus tablet version.
- Smithsonian Magazine – digital version.
- Encyclopedia of Life, etc.
- Web based materials from museums, education centers.
- Gates Youth Access Grants.

Audiences:

- Enthusiasts.
- Life long learners.
- Digital natives.
- Anyone, anytime.

Funding and support:

- Limited federal, sporadic private.
- Thin bench in OIT, museums, research centers and Castle.
- Few generalists who understand pan-institutional concepts.
- Upside potential for digital volunteers/help from enthusiasts.
- Potential for partnerships large.

Change trends:

- 5 billion cell phones in use and growing.
- 500,000 apps for iPhones/iPads and growing.
- New generations of digital natives.