

MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 13, 2011, EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

The Executive Committee (“the Committee”) of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution met on December 13, 2011, beginning at 11:00 a.m. at the Smithsonian Castle in Washington, D.C. Participating by telephone were Executive Committee and Board Chair Patricia Q. Stonesifer, Vice Chair Alan G. Spoon, and Committee member Robert P. Kogod. Also present by invitation of the Committee were Secretary G. Wayne Clough; Counselor to the Chief Justice Jeffrey Minear (by telephone); Chief of Staff to the Secretary Patricia Bartlett; Chief of Staff to the Regents John K. Lapiana; and General Counsel Judith Leonard.

Ms. Stonesifer called the meeting to order at 11:00 a.m.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 22, 2011, MEETINGS

The Committee approved the draft minutes of the November 22, 2011, meeting without comment.

REPORT OF THE CHAIR

Ms. Stonesifer reported that she expected to offer the position of Inspector General to a candidate very shortly. The selection was made in close consultation with, and input from, the Secretary, Audit and Review Committee Chair John McCarter, and Mr. Minear. Ms. Stonesifer, the Secretary, and Mr. Minear briefly discussed the skills and experience sets of the three final candidates.

Ms. Stonesifer then invited the Secretary to provide brief updates on the status of two other senior-level searches: President of Smithsonian Enterprises (SE) and Chief Information Officer. Both searches have progressed to the point where candidates are being identified for interview. Mr. Spoon will interview the SE finalists on behalf of the Regents. The Secretary also discussed the status of the search for a new director of the National Museum of American History, stressing that the search committee, chaired by Richard Kurin, the Under Secretary for History, Arts, and Culture, recognizes the increased importance of that directorship to the Smithsonian strategic plan and the national campaign.

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY

Pan Institutional Education Strategy. The Secretary noted that Assistant Secretary for Education and Access Claudine Brown provided the Strategic Planning and Programs Committee with an update on the education strategic planning effort at that committee’s December 5, 2011, meeting. He observed that the committee was pleased with the progress made on the plan since the committee’s May 2011 meeting, but added that the committee suggested that the draft presentation of the plan be shortened and more focused. The Secretary agreed with Ms. Stonesifer’s suggestion that the plan highlight the Smithsonian’s “big bets” in education. The Executive Committee asked that the final draft strategy be presented

to the Regents at their April 2012 meeting. The Secretary said that planning is under way for a retreat dedicated to identifying and articulating major educational initiatives. Ms. Stonesifer said that it was clear that the staff team has done a good job of identifying “how the Smithsonian does education,” and that the focus now needs to shift to the “big ‘whats’ the Smithsonian will do” with that experience. Ms. Stonesifer and Mr. Spoon agreed that the April presentation to the Board focus in depth on one education opportunity and show how an education initiative can also be used as a “platform” for increasing accessibility to Smithsonian assets.

Campus Master Plan. The Secretary stated that a “good going-forward strategy” now exists toward creating a campus master plan. The “campus” is currently understood to include the Arts and Industries Building, the Castle, the Quadrangle, the Enid A. Haupt Garden, the Freer and Sackler Galleries, the National Museum of African Art, and the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden. He noted that project leader Alison McNally presented the strategy to the Facilities and Strategic Planning and Programs committees at their December 7 and December 5, 2011, meetings, respectively.

The strategy currently envisions “short-term (next eight to 10 years)” and a “long-term (10 years plus)” views on the uses of these facilities to better support the strategic plan. The “wild card” in the planning is whether the Arts and Industries Building will house the Smithsonian American Latino Museum (and, if so, when). The Secretary said that the team is trying to design a strategy that that will include alternative uses for that building.

Mr. Kogod then described how the Facilities and Strategic Planning and Programs committees can provide coordinated oversight to the process during the master plan’s initial phases. He also suggested that the planning effort address the Arts and Industries Building issue by first identifying an outline of underground space that might be used for a Latino museum so that planners would have a “head start” on understanding the available footprint when the building’s programmatic use is known. Ms. Stonesifer asked that the Secretary prepare a diagram of the key actions, decision points, and timelines of the master campus planning process for the Executive Committee within the next 60 days. This action, she said, will provide for the Board’s seamless oversight of the plan.

Smithsonian American Latino Museum. Ms. Stonesifer reminded members that, at their last meeting, the Secretary was invited to propose an outreach strategy regarding the pending legislation that would establish the Smithsonian American Latino Museum. At this meeting, the Secretary discussed outreach initiatives that would seek to ensure that those legislators considering the legislation understood its possible impact on the Smithsonian and were particularly sensitive to the project’s need for Federal funding. This outreach will rely heavily on the advice and guidance of the congressional Regents and their staffs.

Before the executive session, the Secretary alerted the Committee to continuing negotiations with a corporate donor on a possible transfer of live animals to the National Zoo.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Committee then went into executive session to discuss the issues related to the Smithsonian Channel joint venture and a personnel matter.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Patty Stonesifer
Chair