

NOTES OF THE JUNE 8, 2010, 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 June 8, 2010, at 10:00 a.m. in the Smithsonian Castle in Washington, D.C. Participating were Committee Chair Representative Doris Matsui and Committee members France Córdova*, Judy Huret*, and Paul Neely. Staff in attendance included Secretary Wayne Clough; Chief of Staff to the Secretary Patricia Bartlett; Director of External Affairs Virginia Clark; Office of the Regents Program Officer Grace Jaeger; Under Secretary for History, Art, and Culture Richard Kurin; Chief of Staff to the Regents John K. Lapiana; Assistant to Representative Matsui Mara Lee; General Counsel Judith Leonard; Director of Communications Evelyn Lieberman; Assistant to Senator Leahy Kevin McDonald*; Assistant to Senator Dodd Colin McGinnis*; and Deputy General Counsel Marsha S. Shaines.

The Chair called the meeting to order and noted a quorum had not been established. She said the minutes of the September 14, 2009, meeting would be circulated electronically to members for approval.

Report of the Chair

Ms. Matsui outlined the objectives of the meeting and noted the two major topics on the agenda: the International Museum Professional Education Program and the needs analysis of the national campaign.

Five Regents committees are meeting on June 8 and 9, 2010, to consider various aspects of the national campaign. In addition to this committee, the Investment Committee will be discussing funding options, the Advancement Committee will be conducting a comprehensive review of the campaign planning to date, the Finance Committee will review funding and overall budget projections, and the Executive Committee will discuss the campaign schedule and the role of the Regents over the next six months. It appears likely that the Board of Regents will be asked to approve a “campaign architecture” at either its September 2010 or January 2011 meeting.

At its January 2010 meeting, the Board endorsed the overarching principles of the International Museum Professional Education Program (IMPEP) and approved continuing discussions with the Abu Dhabi Authority for Culture and Heritage (ADACH). Ms. Matsui said Dr. Kurin would present an update on progress to date and request guidance on establishing the pilot, as well as discuss another aspect of the program: assisting in the preservation of cultural assets of countries after disasters, such as the recent earthquake in Haiti.

International Museum Professional Education Program: Haiti

Board Chair Patricia Stonesifer had previously recommended combining the entirety of the Institution’s international museum training efforts under one umbrella. Following that

** participated by teleconference*

recommendation, thought was given to how a program to assist countries after disasters could be established under the IMPEP. Dr. Kurin began his presentation by discussing efforts the Smithsonian has put forth in response to the disaster in Haiti.

Soon after the earthquake, the Smithsonian began to assess what could be done to assist Haiti in the recovery and preservation of important cultural assets. Prior to this time, neither the U.S. government nor other organizations have been involved in such work. After Hurricane Katrina, the Smithsonian gathered objects for its collections but was not involved in a program to help save artifacts. In response to the crisis in Haiti, the Smithsonian, with the support of Secretary Clough, has coordinated to provide assistance with several organizations, including the Office of the First Lady Michelle Obama; Haitian President René Préval and the First Lady Elizabeth Préval; the U.S. Departments of State and Defense; the U.S. Embassy in Haiti; and the U.S. Mission to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, among others.

The goals of this initiative are to collect cultural materials from the rubble, preserve them, and develop a training program with the Haitians so that they will be able to take care of their cultural materials in the future. As of June 1, 2010, a [Smithsonian?] team has rented a building, contracted a staff, signed an agreement with the Haitian government, and established a coalition of registrars, conservators, and curators from the Smithsonian and other cultural organizations who will mentor the Haitians until November 2011, the end-date for the program. A fiscal agent has been hired to take of logistics and procurement and many private and public organizations, including the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities, have contributed funds and set up grants.

The Smithsonian has been aided in its efforts by Patrick Delatour, Haitian Minister of Tourism and President Préval's appointee to head Haiti's post-earthquake reconstruction. Minister Delatour, who co-curated the Haiti program at the 2004 Smithsonian Folklife Festival, also is a former Smithsonian Fellow. The President and First Lady of Haiti have expressed their gratitude that there is an entity that values their culture and wants to preserve it. Several media stories were generated about the efforts.

Ms. Matsui commented that this shows how far-reaching the Smithsonian's influence is and how valuable its assets are. She wants the Congress and the country to know of such programs and asked that Dr. Kurin relay the story at the next Regents meeting.

Ms. Huret asked about a policy for future situations. Dr. Kurin noted that the Chilean government had already approached him for assistance in the aftermath of its earthquake. He explained that a policy could be established with a possible tiered approach, depending upon the capacity of the country itself to do the work. Some countries would need more assistance than others. He noted that such a program would be a good fit with the Grand Challenge of Valuing World Cultures. Ms. Huret said that a protocol would be necessary so that it didn't appear the Smithsonian was favoring certain countries.

International Museum Professional Education Program: Abu Dhabi Pilot

Dr. Kurin noted that work had progressed on the IMPEP Abu Dhabi pilot program. Secretary Clough visited Abu Dhabi and met with government officials as well as representatives of New York University, which has an ongoing program there. He assembled a working group within the Smithsonian of representatives from the Office of Human Resources, the Office of Contracting, the Office of Protection Services, and the Office of the Comptroller, among others, to discuss logistical concerns and a group of curators and directors who already provide museum training. His team has developed a draft term sheet in conjunction with the Office of General Counsel, which has hired outside counsel with expertise in the Middle East. Dr. Kurin and Government Relations Director Nell Payne have begun to brief key Congressional committees. They hope to receive feedback which can be brought back to the Committee and the full Board.

Dr. Kurin then directed members to the draft term sheet, emphasizing the following:

- Guidance will be necessary from the outside legal firm, the Secretary, the Committee, and the Board during the negotiations with ADACH.
- There will be upfront costs of approximately \$100–200,000. If a contract is signed with ADACH, those costs will be reimbursed; if not, the Smithsonian will have to cover them.
- The non-binding term sheet will provide a critical roadmap to a contract.
- If the term sheet is signed with ADACH, the Smithsonian will likely provide some interim training right away since the need for training is so urgent in Abu Dhabi. The ADACH is proceeding with building museums whether or not a contract is signed with the Smithsonian. Should a contract not be signed, the Smithsonian will be paid for the interim training it provides. This type of training is already being provided in many other countries.
- The Smithsonian's position on issue of access to the program is clear. As stated in the term sheet, the Smithsonian will not discriminate against anyone applying; however, if accepted into the program, a student must gain access to the country. Abu Dhabi doesn't have diplomatic relations with Israel and, should an Israeli be admitted to the program, the Smithsonian would ask for assistance from ADACH. This is the same arrangement New York University has with Abu Dhabi. If a student still cannot gain access to the country, the Smithsonian could provide instruction through other avenues (online, in Washington, D.C., etc.).

Ms. Matsui noted that the last point is still the biggest hurdle. Since the political situation in the Middle East is always changing, security is a big consideration. She noted that the Smithsonian is unlike universities or other organizations that operate in Abu Dhabi since it represents and is funded by the Federal government. Mr. McGinnis noted that Senator Dodd is concerned with the access issue, as well as the scale of the project. He acknowledged that the money is attractive but that he's not sure the scope of the project is consistent with the strategic plan. Mr. McDonald said Senator Leahy also has problems

with the access issue and is mindful of the negative press which could result if a student is denied access.

Ms. Matsui asked about training programs the Smithsonian could provide in other countries. Dr. Kurin said that other areas, such as Singapore, South Africa, and Latin America, are under consideration but that none have the resources Abu Dhabi has. The revenues generated by the program in Abu Dhabi could provide for programs in other countries. Other countries have organizations and museums that are interested in providing the training should the Smithsonian not participate. Secretary Clough explained that the Smithsonian is doing other small projects in the Middle East and elsewhere and that the ADACH is anxious to begin the project, with or without the Smithsonian. Mr. Neely noted that if the program is not working out because of lack of educational freedom, access, or other issues, there is a termination provision in the term sheet. He also emphasized that there are many positive aspects to the program and that the training would provide a modern, scientific approach to the world. He also noted that it could help mitigate problems in the Middle East, albeit in a small way.

Dr. Córdova said the upfront cost estimate is low, based on her experience when Purdue University almost established a presence in Dubai. She said the decision will require considerable thought because the Smithsonian will in effect be “selling” its brand and representing the values of the United States. She would like further backing from the U.S. Department of State. Dr. Kurin said that they had met several times with State Department representatives and that they are behind and enthusiastic about the program.

Dr. Kurin discussed the proposed fees. ADACH would provide an upfront payment of \$50 million and a management fee of \$5 million each year. All expenses, such as housing, offices, and salaries, would be covered by ADACH and revenues would be shared within the Smithsonian.

Ms. Matsui asked what commitment Dr. Kurin needs to proceed. He said that he should have feedback from the Congressional committees shortly and that he needs to receive an agreement to proceed from the Board of Regents at its June 21, 2010, meeting. He hopes to have a signed term sheet with ADACH by September 2010.

Committee members agreed to proceed and thanked Dr. Kurin for the well-developed materials.

Decorative Arts Program

Dr. Kurin presented the Smithsonian’s plan for continuing Master’s Degree program in the History of Decorative Arts, a five-year-old partnership between The Smithsonian Associates (TSA) and the Corcoran College of Art and Design. Because of financial difficulties, the future of the college is in doubt. In order to keep the program going, TSA proposes to end the agreement with the Corcoran and partner with George Mason University, which has expressed interest in such a partnership. Dr. Kurin said he plans on notifying the Corcoran of the termination by the end of June 2010.

Smithsonian Redesign

Secretary Clough provided an update on the review of processes and organization structure, now referred to as “Smithsonian Redesign.” McKinsey and Company was engaged to review certain business processes at the Smithsonian and to look at its organizational structure to suggest changes so that the structure can best support the strategic plan. Phases 1 and 2 of the contract are complete and McKinsey has proposed a revised organizational chart (included in the meeting materials).

Secretary Clough explained that the current organizational chart does not include education or the strategic plan’s four Grand Challenges. The proposed structure will be better aligned with the strategic plan and will better position the Smithsonian for the future. Changes include simplifying the reporting structure of the Under Secretaries, particularly that of the Under Secretary for History, Art, and Culture, to whom a large number of units currently report; identifying the Grand Challenges; creating an Office of the Assistant Secretary for Education and Access that will absorb five units; and renaming the Office of External Affairs as “Advancement.” The proposal will need to be approved by the Office of Management and Budget and the oversight committees in Congress. Ms. Matsui proposed bringing this to the next Regents meeting on June 21, 2010.

National Campaign Needs Assessment

Secretary Clough then turned to the last major topic of the meeting, the needs analysis of the national campaign. As background, he explained that the Smithsonian has been successful in fund raising in the past but that it needs to improve and build an estimated donor base of 12–15,000. The goals of the national campaign are to raise funds, increase the donor base, and create a philanthropic post-campaign base.

The units were asked to identify their needs. The compiled list was pared down to needs totaling \$1.5 billion, the goal of the campaign. Of that, \$250 million is needed for the National Museum of African American History and Culture (NMAACH). Unit and research center needs make up 85 percent of the total with 15 percent for Smithsonian-wide needs, such as education, digitization, and restoration of the Arts and Industries Building (AIB). Broken down by each Grand Challenge, the percentages of needs are: Understanding the American Experience (49 percent), Understanding and Sustaining a Biodiverse Planet (21 percent), Valuing World Cultures (12 percent), and Unlocking the Mysteries of the Universe (7 percent). (Unlocking the Mysteries of the Universe does not require as many raised funds as the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory receives much of its funding from contracts and grants.) Broken down by priorities, the percentages of needs are: capital projects (33 percent) e.g., NMAACH and AIB; broadening access (26 percent), e.g., exhibits, public programs, outreach, Web and social media, and digitization; and research (17 percent), e.g., endowed curators, researchers, and fellows.

Of the total identified needs, 44 percent (\$660 million) will go toward endowments. An emphasis will be put on planned giving, much of which can be directed toward endowments.

Discussion ensued on the needs package as well as the campaign timeline.

Asian Pacific American Program

Dr. Kurin reported that he has convened several meetings about the future of the Asian Pacific American Program since the retirement of former director Franklin Odo. Dr. Konrad Ng has agreed to serve as interim director. With the help of Irene Hirano and Jack Tchen, Dr. Ng will develop a mission statement and goals for the program. Although there will not be a museum or museum collection, but Dr. Ng and his colleagues will look at engaging other institutions already involved in Asian Pacific American programs and/or studies. Ms. Matsui asked Dr. Kurin to spearhead efforts to formalize the program with a target date of 2012. A search will begin for a permanent director once the selection criteria are identified.

Adjournment

The Chair thanked the Committee members and staff for their participation. The meeting was then adjourned at 12:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Doris Matsui, Chair