

## **MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 14, 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 September 14, 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\*, Senator Chris Dodd, Judy Huret\*, and Paul Neely. Staff in attendance included Secretary G. Wayne Clough; Chief of Staff to the Secretary Patricia Bartlett; Smithsonian Leadership Development Program Participant (Office of the Regents) Michelle Delaney; Office of the Regents Program Officer Grace Jaeger (recorder); Under Secretary for History, Art, and Culture Richard Kurin\*; Assistant to Representative Matsui Kari Lacosta; Chief of Staff to the Regents John K. Lapiana; Assistant to Representative Matsui Mara Lee; General Counsel Judith Leonard; Director of Communications and Public Affairs Evelyn Lieberman; Assistant to Senator Leahy Kevin McDonald\*; and Assistant to Senator Dodd Colin McGinnis\*.

The Chair called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

### **STRATEGIC PLAN**

Ms. Matsui noted that it has been one year since the Committee recommended sending the Smithsonian’s strategic plan to the full Board for approval. Stating that he will give a full report to the Regents at the January 31, 2011, Board meeting, Secretary Clough provided an update on many of the actions that had been undertaken in support the strategic plan. The Secretary reported that he and his staff have been engaged with museum and unit directors across the Institution. His office is developing two “snapshot” looks at the progress of several of the plan’s big initiatives. The proposed reorganization of the Smithsonian, which is based on the strategic plan, has been approved by the Office of Management and Budget and is awaiting approval from two oversight committees on Capitol Hill. Reorganization of the goal-setting and budget processes at the Smithsonian is under way and planning for the national campaign is continuing. The four consortia have been established and directors have been named for each. The directors are developing creative ways for Smithsonian units and outside entities to collaborate. A \$10 million grant was received to fund the consortia and cross-disciplinary initiatives. The consortia directors have issued a call for project proposals that support the strategic plan. The Secretary also has convened “idea fairs” to support the collaboration and interaction of different units.

One of the major themes of the strategic plan is “broadening access.” Secretary Clough considers education to be the central component of this theme. Rural and economically depressed areas especially need assistance from the Smithsonian. He has been involved in discussions with U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan, particularly with regard to the Department of Education’s Rural Education Summit; the Smithsonian was the “content provider” for the summer 2010 conference. The National Science Resources Center received a \$25 million grant from the Department of Education’s Innovation Grants program, an extremely

\* *participated by teleconference*

competitive program. The Institution received a \$2.5 million grant from the Pearson Institute for 20 very successful workshops held during the summer of 2010 using mobile technologies in and around the Smithsonian. Social media is used extensively at the Smithsonian with over 300 accounts to date.

Some of the capital projects under way that support the strategic plan's Grand Challenges include the National Zoological Park's Elephant Trail, the National Air and Space Museum's Udvar-Hazy Center Phase II, and the Arts and Industries Building renovation.

Senator Dodd and other members complimented the Secretary and his team on a thoughtful, forward-thinking plan and its execution.

## **INTERNATIONAL MUSEUM PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAM**

### **Abu Dhabi**

Dr. Kurin provided an update of events since the Committee's June 2010 discussion of the International Museum Professional Education Program, Abu Dhabi pilot. The Office of General Counsel worked with outside counsel Covington and Burling to further develop the draft term sheet. Additional protections for the Smithsonian were added with regard to program content, program admissions, choice of academic partners, academic freedom, and labor laws. Negotiations with the Abu Dhabi Authority for Culture and Heritage (ADACH) are expected to begin in October 2010 and will continue for several months. Preliminary results are expected in January 2011, when approval will be sought from the Regents. Dr. Kurin also has briefed Congressional and U.S. Department of State officials. In answer to a question raised by Mr. McDonald, Dr. Kurin said that no decision has been made as to the use of appropriated funds for the program.

Discussion followed on details of the draft term sheet. Members agreed it was more comprehensive than earlier versions and that it is now more favorable to the Smithsonian. Ms. Matsui congratulated Dr. Kurin and his team on their work to get the program, which began with an April 2009 feasibility study, to this stage. She said she looks forward to another progress report.

### **Singapore**

Dr. Kurin reported on early efforts to develop a similar program in Singapore, where officials have given early indications of interest in developing a regional hub for museum and cultural preservation training. The country is building its cultural economy, including developing museums and other venues for artistic performances and historical presentations. Dr. Kurin and National Museum of Natural History Associate Director Elizabeth Duggal traveled to Singapore and met with officials from the Economic Development Board, the National Heritage Board, and the Tourism Board. Both Singapore and Abu Dhabi are modern city-states with emerging global presences but the business model for their museum education programs differ. The Abu Dhabi government would fund its program while program support in Singapore would come from the government, tuition, and deals with other governments. The next step would most likely be a feasibility study.

## **ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN PROGRAM**

Ms. Matsui reported that she has been working with Dr. Kurin and approximately 40 others on the future of the Smithsonian Asian Pacific American Program. Key contributors include Irene Hirano, former director of the Japanese-American Museum in Los Angeles, California; Konrad Ng, professor at the University of Hawaii and recent acting director of the program; and Jack Tchen, director of New York University's Asian Pacific American Studies Program. Their work, supported by the contributions of other participants in planning meetings, is helping to define what the Smithsonian would like to achieve with the program and how the program aligns with and advances the strategic plan. The meeting materials contained recommendations to the Secretary on the future of the program, including the key recommendation that a strong program director be appointed by January 1, 2011, to ensure that its momentum is maintained. The group also recommends changing the program's name to the Asian Pacific American Center to more accurately reflect its mission and goals, as well as to strengthen its visibility across the Institution.

Dr. Kurin noted that Asians comprise a significant portion of the world's population and that there are over 15 million Asian Pacific Americans. He commented on the strong economic and creative power of Asia. With only one part-time curatorial position, the Smithsonian has very little expertise in Asian Pacific heritage and culture; the center presents an opportunity to work on an underrepresented culture. Rather than a museum, the center would offer a new type of program that uses the expertise, knowledge, and content/collections of other well-respected institutions but without the responsibilities and expenses of a new Smithsonian museum. The Committee agreed that a strong leader is necessary to tap into underlying philanthropic support. Two other recommendations include establishing a national advisory board and creating a funding pool, similar to the Smithsonian Latino Pool (which receives \$1 million annually from Congress). Discussion followed among Committee members.

## **THE SMITHSONIAN ASSOCIATES**

Ms. Matsui provided background information about The Smithsonian Associates (TSA), noting that the Committee has been monitoring two key issues: making TSA more financially viable and replacing the Corcoran Gallery of Art with George Mason University (GMU) as the degree-granting partner in the Masters in Decorative Arts program. She provided the following details:

- TSA has about 35,000 household members, most of whom are in the Washington, D.C., area. Approximately 102,000 participants have attended Washington, D.C.–based events in fiscal year 2010 to date.
- Besides the catalog offerings, TSA conducts the annual Smithsonian Kite Festival, the Summer Camp for Kids, and the Discovery Theater.
- TSA projects gross revenues of \$6.1 million in fiscal year 2010 and a \$1.5 million deficit.
- TSA receives no Federal appropriations, and has approximately 54 staff members and 167 volunteers and interns.

Dr. Kurin discussed the Masters in Decorative Arts program. While it continues to do well in terms of students and program quality, the Corcoran has not proven to be a good partner as the Smithsonian has done the majority of the work. GMU, which has faculty and resources that

better align with the Smithsonian, has agreed to take over the program. The change in partners will strengthen the program academically and increase funding through GMU's "executive" level tuition structure. Although the Corcoran will not offer the degree after the program moves to GMU, current students in the program will be able to receive their degree from either the Corcoran or GMU. Dr. Kurin emphasized that the Corcoran and the Smithsonian want to ensure fairness for all students and that the Smithsonian will not make statements harmful to the Corcoran. A press release will be issued shortly.

TSA is developing plans to achieve long-term, sustainable fiscal self-sufficiency and to better align TSA educational offerings with Smithsonian strengths and priorities. Dr. Kurin said this review process is beneficial and includes consideration of TSA's membership base, its successful summer camp, projected revenue increase from the GMU partnership, and the consolidation of expenses and staff. He noted that TSA provides a successful educational program for the Washington, D.C., area and expressed his hope that TSA can better utilize its resources and become more incorporated into the Smithsonian.

#### **HAITI CULTURAL PROJECT**

Dr. Kurin reported on the Smithsonian's Haiti Cultural Recovery Project, which has been fully operational since June 2010 under an agreement with the Haitian Government. The Institution has rented a secure, 7,500 square-foot building in Port-au-Prince which operates as a Cultural Recovery Center. It has a Haitian contract staff of 14 led by a former Smithsonian Folklife Festival coordinator and a conservator retired from the National Museum of African Art.

#### **MICHELLE DELANEY**

Ms. Matsui introduced Michelle Delaney, curator of photography at the National Museum of American History and recently appointed director of the Understanding the American Experience consortium. Ms. Delaney is also participating in the Smithsonian Leadership Development Program and has begun a rotation with the Office of the Regents, helping to staff the Committee.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

The Chair thanked the Committee members and staff for their participation. The meeting was adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Doris Matsui, Chair