

## **MINUTES OF THE JUNE 8, 2009, 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, 2009, beginning at 10:02 a.m. in the Smithsonian Castle in Washington, D.C. Participating were Committee Chair Representative Doris Matsui and members Senator Chris Dodd\*; Phillip Frost\*; Judy Huret\*; Paul Neely; and Board of Regents Chair Patty Stonesifer. In attendance were Secretary Wayne Clough; Chief of Staff to the Secretary Patricia Bartlett; Associate General Counsel Rachelle V. Browne; National Museum of Natural History Associate Director Elizabeth Duggal; 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; Press Secretary to Congresswoman Matsui Mara N. Lee; General Counsel Judith Leonard; Director of Communications Evelyn Lieberman; Assistant to Senator Leahy Kevin McDonald\*; Assistant to Senator Dodd Colin McGinnis; Office of Policy and Analysis Director Carole Neves; and Deputy General Counsel Marsha S. Shaines.

The Chair called the meeting to order. She asked if there were any questions or comments on the minutes from the January 12, 2009, meeting. There were none and the minutes were approved.

### **Report of the Chair**

Chair Matsui began by welcoming the new members of the Committee, W. Clark Bunting (unable to attend), Judy Huret, and Paul Neely, giving brief biographical sketches of each. She noted that the Committee had looked to members of the advisory boards and that these three new members have a great deal of experience and dedication to the Smithsonian.

She gave a status report on three high-level employment searches. The Zoo has hired Isaacson, Miller (who consulted on the search for a new Secretary) to assist in the search for a new director after the departure of John Berry. A draft vacancy announcement has been circulated to the search committee and intense recruitment will begin shortly. The search firm Spencer Stuart was retained to assist in the search for a permanent Under Secretary for Science. Seven candidates were recently interviewed and a short list of candidates will be sent to the Secretary by July. The search firm Phillips Oppenheim was retained to assist in finding a replacement for Paul Thompson, Director, Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum, who is leaving this summer.

### **Update on the Arts and Industries Building**

Dr. Clough said that events are evolving with the building, some of which are programmatic and thus fall under the purview of this committee. \$4.6 million of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funding will be used for work on the roof and roof supports,

*\* present by teleconference*

mechanical systems, lead pipe replacement, etc. Awards will be let by June 15, 2009, in compliance with ARRA guidelines.

Work on the windows, walls, and interior is scheduled for fiscal years 2011 and 2012. An historic structures report which sets preservation standards and establishes a period of historic significance to guide design will be completed in August. Secretary Clough and other SI management have been meeting regularly with the National Capital Planning Commission which will have to approve designs to update it on progress.

Programmatically, a pan-Institutional committee of 15, chaired by National Museum of American History Curator David Allison, has been charged with preparing a report on possible uses of the building. Committee members have traveled to sites around the country to find ideas and review best practices. The committee has used staff and outside stakeholder input in its work and will issue its report at the end of June. A plan will then be prepared for the eventual use of the building.

Dr. Clough and Office of Government Relations staff have been in conversations with Senator Dianne Feinstein (D-CA) and her staff regarding the Legacy Fund. Senator Feinstein has agreed to revise the language of the Fund to make the \$30 million appropriated in fiscal years 2008 and 2009 available in fiscal year 2010 pursuant to new terms, under which the fund would focus on the Arts and Industries Building, and all private donations to that building's renovation and reopening would qualify as matching funds. Ms. Matsui said that the use of the building needs to be part of the strategic plan and focus on the diversity of the American experience.

### **International Centers for Museum Leadership and Excellence**

Ms. Matsui introduced Dr. Kurin and Ms. Duggal who provided a presentation on the proposed International Centers for Museum Leadership and Excellence. They are looking for guidance and direction from the Committee on the next steps and to identify issues which need to be addressed. Ms. Matsui will provide a report on the discussions at the full Regents' meeting on June 22, 2009.

Dr. Clough began the discussion by noting that the primary service mission of the Smithsonian is to the United States but that it has a responsibility to other countries around the world to educate them about America. The SI is currently in about 90 countries, mostly involved in the sciences and there are researchers from around the world working at SI sites in the U.S.

He said that while the project has potential, he knows that agreements of this type need to be carefully constructed. Some aspects of this project made it seem worth exploring: the global point of view, the education aspect, and formalizing what is already being done at SI informally.

Dr. Kurin and Ms. Duggal led the discussion by noting that the Smithsonian is the leading worldwide provider of professional training in the museological fields and that it has

unrivaled depth and breadth of expertise in all museum fields and functions. Numerous training activities already exist at SI (internships, scholarships, SI-managed degree programs, etc.) but they lack coordination and scale. There is a great demand for museum training, especially in emerging world regions.

The proposal is to establish International Centers for Museum Leadership and Excellence in several regions of the world, potentially Latin America, east Asia, Africa, and the Middle East. These centers would provide a more formal education role for the Smithsonian and take advantage of a worldwide need and demand for museum professionals. The pilot center would be located in Abu Dhabi given the great expansion of museums in the Middle East at this time. If successful, additional centers would be established in other world regions.

The Center would offer cutting-edge, best practices professional training and grant credit, certificates and degrees. It would enhance the reputation of the Smithsonian and generate new revenue streams for the Smithsonian.

Smithsonian staff have been working on several projects over the past two years (at Abu Dhabi's expense), with the Abu Dhabi Authority for Culture and Heritage (ADACH), the government agency overseeing cultural assets. Abu Dhabi is investing billions of dollars in museums and its cultural and educational infrastructure as part of its "Economic Vision 2030." Museums and institutions currently active in the United Arab Emirates include: the Guggenheim Museum, the Louvre, Purdue University, New York University, Harvard Medical School, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and others.

A feasibility study was conducted by a Smithsonian team with support from Booz Allen Hamilton to assess the market for professional training and consider designs that could fill the training gap and build capacity for the future. Across the region from Egypt to India, nearly 100 new museums will open by 2018 and to accommodate this growth, a minimum of 14,000 professionals will need training and continuing education during the next eight years. The Center would offer instruction in a broad range of museum areas from research and curation to visitor services in a variety of formats: workshops, undergraduate degrees, graduate training, etc.

The Center would be based in downtown Abu Dhabi with ADACH proving the local legal and administrative authority. ADACH would provide all funding; potential revenues to the Smithsonian include: upfront mobilization payment, annual management fee, and salary reimbursement for participating Smithsonian staff plus replacement costs. The Smithsonian would participate in the Center with final governance and structure to be determined. Smithsonian staff would serve as adjunct faculty and research fellows onsite and as on-line distance learning instructors and as managers in Washington, D.C.

In the next few months SI staff and Booz Allen Hamilton will continue to further develop the proposal and provide an overall assessment of risks and benefits for the Smithsonian. They plan to meet again with ADACH in July if the Regents approve proceeding with the project.

Discussion followed among committee members who posed several questions and issues which will need to be addressed before moving forward. Ms. Matsui noted that this project could be a great opportunity but that the risks must be identified and explored. She said that if the Smithsonian proceeds, it signifies that the U.S. government stands behind it and that we can address questions that might be raised in Congress. Various issues will need to be discussed with the Departments of State and Justice.

Dr. Kurin noted that the overall program would be quite consistent with U.S. cultural diplomacy interests in general, and that the pilot center in Abu Dhabi was discussed with the U.S. Ambassador to the UAE and would be in accord with President Obama's speech in Cairo urging greater U.S. engagement in the Muslim world through cultural, educational and scientific engagement.

Ms. Huret emphasized the importance of clarifying the Smithsonian's role: as lead institution, partner, or provider and the implications of each role should problems arise. She also raised the importance of maintaining the Smithsonian's integrity and mission. Mr. Neely asked if other institutions had been approached to learn about successes and failures and pitfalls to avoid. Dr. Frost suggested having someone from ADACH come to Washington to discuss the project. Ms. Stonesifer noted that the interests of the federal government need to be considered and that the Smithsonian has to move forward in accord with those interests and determine its correct role to take whether that is as a co-owner, consultant, or a scholarly partner. She suggested that Dr. Kurin and Ms. Duggal prepare a consultative and information gathering plan including compiling a list of entities to consult including the White House, the Departments of State and Justice, universities with similar programs, etc.

Ms. Matsui reiterated the importance of ensuring the U.S. government feels the project is in its best interests. Since this is a complicated issue, she suggested the committee meet again in a few weeks and that she will provide a progress report at the Regents' June 22, 2009, meeting.

### **Update on the Strategic Planning Process**

Dr. Clough said that the phases I (information gathering) and II (scenario planning) have been completed and that phase III (plan writing) is underway and will be done in-house largely by Dr. Neves and her staff. Dr. Clough shared the draft vision statement and core mission themes at an all-directors meeting and received good feedback. They both will be revised, shortened, and made more concise. He discussed the cascading elements of the plan from mission down to performance indicators noting that the units will be responsible for preparing unit strategic plans and include elements in each employee's performance plan. Clarifying the Smithsonian "brand" will be a challenge and having a strategic plan will help to address it. The goal is to complete the plan by the September 21, 2009, Regents' meeting.

Discussion followed by committee members on the five draft themes which Dr. Clough said would probably change. It was agreed that they could be more inspirational and Dr. Neves

said that an outside writer may be hired to fine-tune the style of the paper. Members suggested including themes about SI values, and American pride and American humanity. Dr. Clough said that the final phase, phase IV (implementation) would take about a full year.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting was then adjourned at 12:00 noon.

Respectfully submitted,  
Doris Matsui, Chair