

## MINUTES OF THE MAY 8, 2018, ADVANCEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING

The Advancement Committee (“Committee”) of the Board of Regents (“Board”) of the Smithsonian Institution (“Smithsonian”) held a meeting on May 8, 2018, at the National Museum of Natural History in Washington, DC. Participating were Committee Chair Christine Udvar-Hazy and Committee members Allan Holt; Dennis Keller; John W. McCarter, Jr.;<sup>1</sup> Frank Raines, and David Rubenstein.

Present by invitation of the Committee were Secretary David Skorton, Chief of Staff to the Secretary Greg Bettwy, Campaign Director Cynthia Brandt-Stover, Under Secretary for Museums and Research/Provost John Davis, Deputy Director of Advancement Zully Dorr, Associate General Counsel Farleigh Earhart, Deputy Chief of Staff to the Regents Kate Forester, Special Assistant to the Regents Mallory Gianola (recorder), Inspector General Cathy Helm, Sant Director of the National Museum of Natural History Kirk Johnson,<sup>2</sup> Associate Director for Development Sandra Lovinguth,<sup>2</sup> Assistant Secretary for Advancement Robert Spiller, Exhibits Developer Siobhan Starrs,<sup>2</sup> and Chief of Staff to the Regents Porter Wilkinson.

### CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME

Committee Chair Christine Udvar-Hazy called the meeting to order at approximately 2:03 p.m. and reviewed the agenda items for discussion. Ms. Udvar-Hazy welcomed the Advancement Committee and shared a brief story that displayed the cultural and civic ideals of the Smithsonian. An American flag from the Smithsonian’s collection traveled to Islay, an island off the west coast of Scotland, in a show of gratitude for the honor and respect its citizens showed American servicemen during World War I. The flag, which was hand-sewn by four Islay women and one man, will be displayed at the Museum of Islay Life to mark the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the event, and tell the poignant story of patriotism. Ms. Udvar-Hazy thanked the Secretary and Dr. Richard Kurin for the Institution’s involvement in honoring the occasion.

### APPROVAL OF MARCH 2, 2018, MEETING MINUTES

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the draft minutes of the March 2, 2018, Committee meeting were approved without modification.

### SECRETARY’S UPDATE

Secretary Skorton updated the Committee on the state of the Smithsonian and reported on relevant activities and initiatives.

The Secretary thanked Regent and Committee member John McCarter and the Advancement team for their involvement with the People>Passion>Purpose event in Chicago. The evening at the Shedd Aquarium featured remarks by the Secretary and representatives from the Marine Global Earth Observatory and the Forest Global Earth Observatory.

<sup>1</sup>*Participated by telephone*

<sup>2</sup>*Participated in the Deep Time discussion only*

Secretary Skorton updated the Committee on the legislation introduced by Representative Carolyn Maloney of New York in 2017 that would create a new Smithsonian museum dedicated to women's history. Regardless of the outcome of this legislation, the Smithsonian is committed to amplifying women's voices through the Smithsonian American Women's History Initiative ("SAWHI"), a five-year, pan-Institutional initiative to examine, explore, and interpret all facets of American women's history. The Secretary shared that the Institution has been hosting a series of regional outreach and stewardship events to speak to audiences in cities nationwide to garner support for the initiative.

Under Secretary for Museums and Research/Provost John Davis briefed the Committee on the progress of SAWHI. In April, the Office of the Provost received 19 proposals for curatorial positions relating to women's history. Dr. Davis announced that funds from the Smithsonian's Collections Care Initiative have been allocated to support projects and collections for SAWHI. He also shared that three committees were created to focus on the following areas: curation, digital strategy, and education.

Lastly, Secretary Skorton informed the Committee that he is planning a leadership retreat that will take place at the end of May, during which Smithsonian senior leadership and unit directors will participate in facilitated meetings about the implementation of the strategic plan and pan-Institutional priorities.

## **2018 FUNDRAISING PROGRESS AND REVIEW OF GIFTS**

Deputy Director of Advancement Zully Dorr provided the Committee with a summary of the Smithsonian's progress towards the 2018 fundraising goal. As of April 30, 2018, the Smithsonian had raised approximately \$130.1 million toward its \$200 million annual goal. Ms. Dorr highlighted two significant gifts in support of collections for the National Museum of Natural History, including a gift to acquire a red topaz mineral specimen and a gift to support the acquisition of one of the most complete horse fossils in the field of paleontology.

## **REVIEW OF GIFTS**

Ms. Dorr presented one gift and one administrative motion for the establishment of a quasi-endowment, both requiring approval by the Committee. She noted that the proposed creation of a quasi-endowment requires an exception to applicable Smithsonian policies as set forth by the Board of Regents. Standard policy states that new endowments be established only for amounts of \$50,000 or more. Ms. Dorr pointed out that although the quasi-endowment currently is below the policy threshold, the museum will continue to receive planned gifts and other unrestricted revenue, and the establishment of a quasi-endowment will help secure the museum's financial future.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the following actions were approved for recommendation to the Board of Regents:

**VOTED** that the Advancement Committee recommends that the Board of Regents recognizes the generosity of Land O'Lakes, Inc. and accepts the terms of the sponsorship agreement.

**VOTED** that the Advancement Committee recommends that the Board of Regents creates a quasi-endowment to support the mission of the National Museum of African American History and Culture. Further, the Board authorizes the transfer of the funds identified for this purpose.

## **ADVANCEMENT UPDATE**

Assistant Secretary for Advancement Robert Spiller shared his priorities for fundraising following the close of the Smithsonian Campaign, which include the revitalization of the National Air and Space Museum, the endowment of the National Museum of African American History and Culture, the Smithsonian Women's History Initiative, and the Giant Magellan Telescope. The Office of Advancement is also hosting regional Campaign celebration events, following the Campaign celebration weekend, which took place in April, in Washington, D.C. Committee members shared their individual advancement experiences at other organizations and discussed strategies for the post-Campaign period at the Smithsonian.

Mr. Spiller updated the Committee on the progress of the post-Campaign working groups chaired by Under Secretary for Museums and Research/Provost John Davis and Under Secretary for Finance and Administration/Chief Operating Officer Albert Horvath. Mr. Spiller shared preliminary findings from the workgroups, which focused on the funding structure for advancement and the definition of roles and responsibilities for advancement between the central organization and the unit operations. A plan summarizing the findings and recommendations of the working groups as well as a plan for moving forward is expected to be presented to the full Board at the October meeting.

The Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory is working with a group of international partners to build the first of a new generation of the world's largest and most powerful telescopes. Mr. Spiller noted that in addition to being the largest optical telescope in the world, the endeavor is also among the largest privately-funded scientific initiatives to date. The Committee discussed advancement strategies for the Giant Magellan Telescope ("GMT"), including the status of current fundraising efforts and advancement activity plans for the future.

## **NATIONAL MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY BRIEFING**

As part of an effort to increase interaction between unit advancement offices across the Smithsonian and the Committee, the Committee Chair proposed that as part of each meeting, when schedule and agenda permit, the Committee be briefed on the fundraising efforts units are undertaking. As often as possible, a museum director or staff member will participate in the Committee meeting so that the Committee can learn about that museum and its fundraising program, or the committee will hold a meeting at a museum. The May 8,

Committee meeting featured the inaugural conversation with the Sant Director of the National Museum of Natural History Kirk Johnson.

Dr. Johnson provided a brief background and history of the museum. Within the mission of the Smithsonian, the mission of the National Museum of Natural History (“NMNH”) is “understanding the natural world and our place in it.” Dr. Johnson shared the museum’s progress towards the milestones outlined in the NMNH 2016-2020 strategic plan: (i) preserving more than 128 million scientific specimens and artifacts that tell Earth’s story, (ii) conduct research to continually expand the boundaries of knowledge, and (iii) deepen people’s understanding of and interest in science, the natural and cultural world, and the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The museum plans to raise approximately \$100 million over the course of the strategic plan, with support focusing on the scientific core of NMNH and the public-facing exhibits. The Committee discussed the biggest challenges for NMNH and how to poise the museum for the future.

Next, Dr. Johnson briefed the Committee on the museum’s priorities, including the status of the *Deep Time* project. *Deep Time* will open in 2019 in the Fossil Hall, completely renovated for the first time since the museum’s 1910 debut. The exhibition will tell the story of Earth’s 4.6-billion-year history. Following the meeting, Committee members had an opportunity to participate in a hard-hat tour of the *Deep Time* exhibition hall, led by exhibit developer Siobhan Starrs.

## ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 3:57 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine Udvar-Hazy, Chair