

# MINUTES OF THE JUNE 13, 2022, MEETING OF THE BOARD OF REGENTS

## ATTENDANCE

This scheduled meeting of the Board of Regents (“Board”) of the Smithsonian Institution (“Smithsonian”) was held on Monday, June 13, 2022. The Board conducted morning, afternoon, and executive sessions at the National Museum of American History in Washington, D.C. Board and Executive Committee Chair Steve Case welcomed Regents and staff and called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. Participating were Regents:

Senator John Boozman  
Senator Catherine Cortez Masto  
Senator Patrick Leahy  
Representative Doris Matsui  
Representative Lucille Roybal-Allard  
Representative Adrian Smith  
Mr. Steve Case, Chair

Mr. John Fahey  
Mr. Roger W. Ferguson, Jr.  
Mr. Michael Govan  
Dr. Risa J. Lavizzo-Mourey, Vice Chair  
Mr. Michael M. Lynton  
Ms. Denise O’Leary  
Mr. Franklin D. Raines

Ms. Kathryn Hall, Investment Committee Chair  
Mr. Dennis Keller, Smithsonian National Board Chair  
Mrs. Christine Udvar-Hazy, Advancement Committee Chair

Chief Justice John G. Roberts, Jr., Vice President Kamala D. Harris, and Ambassador Barbara M. Barrett were unable to attend the meeting.

Smithsonian and Regent staff present by invitation of the Board were:

Lonnie G. Bunch III, Secretary  
Greg Bettwy, Chief of Staff to the Secretary  
Ngaire Blankenberg, Director of the National Museum of African Art<sup>1</sup>  
Christopher Browne, John and Adrienne Mars Director, National Air and Space Museum<sup>1</sup>  
Victor Castillo, Office of Representative Roybal-Allard  
Ronald Cortez, Under Secretary for Administration  
Trevor Dean, Office of Senator Cortez Masto  
Kate Forester, Deputy Chief of Staff to the Regents  
Mallory Gianola, Special Assistant to the Regents (recorder)  
Cathy Helm, Inspector General  
Toni-Marie Higgins, Office of Senator Boozman  
Becky Kobberod, Head of Digital Transformation<sup>2</sup>

Carol LeBlanc, President of Smithsonian Enterprises<sup>3</sup>  
Judith Leonard, General Counsel  
Jeremy Marcus, Office of Representative Matsui  
Julissa Marengo, Assistant Secretary for Communications and External Affairs and Chief Marketing Officer  
Kevin McDonald, Office of Senator Leahy  
Jeffrey P. Minear, Counselor to the Chief Justice  
Meroë Park, Deputy Secretary and Chief Operating Officer  
Robert J. Spiller, Assistant Secretary for Advancement  
Porter N. Wilkinson, Chief of Staff to the Regents  
Kevin Young, Andrew W. Mellon Director, National Museum of African American History and Culture<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Participated in the lunch program only

<sup>2</sup> Participated in the Virtual Smithsonian discussion only

<sup>3</sup> Participated in the Strategic Plan discussion only

## MORNING SESSION

### EXECUTIVE SESSION: NEW REGENT SEARCH

#### **New Regent Search**

The meeting of the Board of Regents began with an executive session. The Board was briefed on the status of the search process to identify and recruit a new citizen Regent to fill the vacancy when Steve Case's term expires in April 2023. The Governance and Nominating Committee is working to identify and evaluate potential candidates with expertise and characteristics that will complement the current Board.

### EXECUTIVE SESSION: REGENTS ONLY

#### **Regents-Only Executive Session**

The Board continued its deliberations in a Regents-only executive session to consider proposed amendments to the Bylaws of the Board of Regents to create a Chair Emeritus status and review the duties and responsibilities of the Strategy, Innovation, and Technology Committee.

### OPEN SESSION

#### **Welcome**

Smithsonian and Regent staff members entered the room and the meeting reconvened. Mr. Case called the open session to order at 10:05 a.m.

### REPORT OF THE CHAIR OF THE BOARD AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

#### **Departure and Recognition of SNB Chair Dennis Keller**

Mr. Case began his report by acknowledging Smithsonian National Board Chair Dennis Keller's last meeting. Mr. Keller joined the National Board in 2012 and has served as Chair since 2019. Mr. Case noted that Mr. Keller would remain involved as a National Board member and thanked him for his service and extraordinary dedication to the Smithsonian.

#### **Upcoming Events**

Mr. Case also highlighted upcoming events. The Board will host a dinner on October 23, honoring two former chairs—David Rubenstein and John McCarter—and Senator Leahy, who has served as a Congressional Regent since 2001. The Regents will also host the annual public forum virtually on December 13. The public forum will focus on site selection for the two new museums and provide an opportunity to introduce the new members of the Executive Committee.

#### **Executive Committee Approvals**

To conclude, Mr. Case noted that there were no motions approved by the Executive Committee on behalf of the Board since the April meeting.

## APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA

### Consent Agenda

The Consent Agenda (“Agenda”) was presented for the Board’s approval. Action items listed on the June 13, 2022, Agenda included: the approval of minutes from the April 11, 2022, Board meeting and gifts and naming recognition. Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Board voted to adopt the Agenda, constituting the approval of all action items listed therein.

**See attached Actions 2022.06.01** (*Minutes of the Board of Regents, Appendix A*).

## QUESTIONS ON WRITTEN COMMITTEE REPORTS

### Questions on Written Committee Reports

Mr. Case provided an opportunity for Regent committee chairs and Smithsonian staff to answer questions on the written reports distributed in advance of the meeting by the Advancement Committee; Facilities Committee; Governance and Nominating Committee; Smithsonian National Board; and Office of Government Relations.

### *Written Report of the Advancement Committee*

### Written Report of the Advancement Committee

The Advancement Committee held a meeting on April 20, 2022. During the meeting, the Committee received an update on fundraising for the two new museums and discussed Campaign planning progress. The Committee also reviewed notable gifts and grants and was briefed on the progress of fiscal year 2022 fundraising. As of February 28, 2022, the Smithsonian had raised \$127.4 million towards its \$230 million goal.

### *Written Report of the Facilities Committee*

### Written Report of the Facilities Committee

The Facilities Committee held a meeting on May 12, 2022. During the meeting, the Committee engaged in a strategic discussion on revitalization of the Historic Core and the developing program to address the space needs for the Smithsonian’s collections. The Committee also reviewed the progress of site selection for the new museums. The Committee had an opportunity to discuss the fiscal year 2024 capital budget, facilities resources, and major capital projects, including: National Air and Space Museum – Mall Building Revitalize Building Envelope and Infrastructure; National Air and Space Museum Integrated Bezos Learning Center (“BLC”); and Pod 6 Collections Storage Facility at the Museum Support Center.

### *Written Report of the Governance and Nominating Committee*

### Written Report of the Governance and Nominating Committee

The Governance and Nominating Committee conducted a meeting on May 10, 2022. During the meeting, the Committee voted to approve appointments and reappointments to Smithsonian advisory boards and recognition of a former Regent. The Governance and Nominating Committee also discussed the search for

a new citizen Regent to fill the vacancy when Steve Case’s term expires in April 2023.

### *Written Report of the Smithsonian National Board*

**Report of the Smithsonian National Board**

The Smithsonian National Board (“SNB”) held its spring meeting in person in Washington, D.C. from April 28 – 30, 2022. The meeting focused on new exhibitions around the Smithsonian and National Board members had an opportunity to meet new leadership from across the Institution. The weekend events took place in partnership with the Regional Council Summit and Annual Smithsonian Weekend.

### *Written Report of the Office of Government Relations*

**Report of the Office of Government Relations**

The Office of Government Relations (“OGR”) reported that the Smithsonian submitted its fiscal year 2023 budget request to Congress in April 2022. The request totals \$1.175 billion to fund essential operating expenses, priority program increases, and revitalization of the Institution’s physical infrastructure.

**Smithsonian Legislation**

In addition, OGR reported on Congressional hearings and Smithsonian related legislation. On June 8, 2022, Secretary Bunch testified at a hearing entitled “Fiscal Year 2023 Budget Request for the Arts and Humanities” before the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies. OGR is tracking H.R.3525, Commission to Study the Potential Creation of a National Museum of Asian Pacific American History and Culture Act, which was introduced by Representative Grace Meng (D-NY) on May 25, 2021. The bill establishes a commission to study the potential creation of a National Museum of Asian Pacific American History and Culture.

**Congressional Engagement**

The Office of Government Relations continues its congressional engagement, hosting and participating in a number of programs and events. Most notably, on April 7, OGR and the National Postal Museum arranged for two of the rarest items from Jackie Robinson's rookie season to be shown in the U.S. Capitol's Lincoln Room to celebrate the historic 75th anniversary of Jackie Robinson's 1947 debut at Ebbets Field as the first African American to play Major League Baseball since the nineteenth century.

## **REPORT OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE**

**Report of the Finance Committee**

Chair of the Finance Committee Roger Ferguson gave the Committee’s report and presented two action items for the Board’s consideration: (i) the fiscal year 2023 Endowment Payout, and (ii) the fiscal year 2024 federal budget priorities.

**Fiscal Year 2023  
Endowment Payout**

Mr. Ferguson presented the fiscal year 2023 Endowment Payout recommendation. The Smithsonian’s historical policy is to pay out five percent of the trailing average market value per share over the previous five years in order to support programs and activities. In the past, the Regents have also approved an additional annual payout of up to one percent to support advancement activity. Mr. Ferguson noted the projected payout to support programmatic activity for fiscal year 2023 is \$93 million and the projected payout to fund advancement activities is estimated at \$4 million. Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Board approved a five percent payout from the Smithsonian Endowment in fiscal year 2023 to support programmatic activity. Further, the Board approved up to an additional 0.50 percent payout from eligible Smithsonian Endowment funds in fiscal year 2023 to support advancement activity.

**See attached Actions 2022.06.02** (*Minutes of the Board of Regents, Appendix A*).

**Fiscal Year 2024 Federal  
Budget Priorities**

Mr. Ferguson also presented the fiscal year 2024 federal budget priorities, noting that the fiscal year 2024 budget request is due to the Office of Management and Budget (“OMB”) in September. He reviewed the Institution’s priorities for building the fiscal year 2024 federal budget, which include: salaries and expenses; strategic priorities and program increases, including funding required for the two new Smithsonian museums; and facilities maintenance and security, research and museum program infrastructure, and major capital projects. Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Board approved the fiscal year 2024 federal budget priorities proposed by the Secretary

**See attached Actions 2022.06.03** (*Minutes of the Board of Regents, Appendix A*).

## REPORT OF THE STRATEGY, INNOVATION, AND TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE

**Report of the Strategy,  
Innovation, and  
Technology Committee**

Chair of the Strategy, Innovation, and Technology Committee Michael Lynton delivered the Committee’s report and presented one action item for the Board’s consideration: the deaccession of Benin Bronzes to Nigeria. Mr. Lynton presented the Committee’s recommendation to the Board that 29 of the artworks in the National Museum of African Art collection be transferred to the Nigerian National Commission of Museums and Monuments. It was noted that the return of the bronzes follows the Smithsonian’s new policy of ethical returns. The Regents are responsible for approving the deaccession due to the value of the collection pursuant to Smithsonian Directive 600, *Collections Management*. Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Board approved the proposed deaccession.

**See attached Actions 2022.06.04** (*Minutes of the Board of Regents, Appendix A*).

## UPDATE ON THE SMITHSONIAN CAMPAIGN FOR OUR SHARED FUTURE

### Smithsonian Campaign for Our Shared Future

Chair of the Advancement Committee Christine Udvar-Hazy, Secretary Bunch, and Assistant Secretary for Advancement Rob Spiller updated the Board on Campaign planning progress. The discussion focused on Campaign messaging and pillars, the timeline leading toward Campaign announcements and events, the proposed Campaign volunteer leadership structure, and progress and plans for identifying, recruiting, and appointing additional volunteer leadership. The campaign is based on four pillars that are intended to capture both Smithsonian-wide priorities and unit-specific priorities, identified as: Illuminating Our Nation’s Past, Opening Pathways to New Knowledge, Advancing Sustainability and Discovery, and Powering Creativity and Innovation. The Campaign will launch in two phases. The first phase—the focus phase—will run from 2022 to late 2024. The second, comprehensive phase will run from 2024-2026. The latter part of this phase will serve as a lead-in to the nation’s 250th anniversary. The Board will be asked to consider the Campaign budget and leadership structure as planning continues.

## STRATEGIC DISCUSSION ON NEW SMITHSONIAN MUSEUMS

### Strategic Discussion on New Smithsonian Museums

Mr. Case then introduced the strategic discussion on the two new Smithsonian museums: National Museum of the American Latino (“NMAL”) and the Smithsonian American Women’s History Museum (“SAWHM”). The discussion focused on leadership, fundraising strategies, and the progress of site selection since the April Regents’ meeting.

### New Museums Leadership and Events

To begin, the Secretary shared an update on advisory boards, fundraising, the Molina Family Latino Gallery opening, and director searches. The Smithsonian is actively engaged in an executive search for a permanent director to lead the Smithsonian American Women’s History Museum and expects to announce the selection of a founding director later this year. Jorge Zamanillo began his role as the founding director of the Smithsonian’s National Museum of the American Latino on May 2. The Secretary also reminded the Board that on June 18, 2022, the National Museum of the American Latino will open the 4,500-square-foot Molina Family Latino Gallery at the National Museum of American History. The Latino Gallery’s inaugural exhibition, *iPresente! A Latino History of the United States*, will provide an introduction to critical concepts, moments, and biographies that highlight the historical and cultural legacy of U.S. Latinas and Latinos.

### New Museums Site Selection

Next, Under Secretary for Administration Ron Cortez briefed the Board on the progress of site selection for the two new museums. The location for each museum is to be determined by the Regents no later than December 2022. Since the passage of the legislation, the Smithsonian has undertaken an extensive site-selection analysis and thorough review of more than 25 sites. The four sites now under further consideration are: Arts and Industries Building, Northwest Capitol

site, South Monument site, and Tidal Basin site. Mr. Cortez informed the Board that each site will be further evaluated by the Smithsonian and the architecture engineering firm Ayers Saint Gross based on location, existing site conditions, transportation, environmental factors, costs, and acquisition potential. The Board is expected to continue discussion on site selection at the October meeting.

**New Museums  
Communications and  
Outreach**

To conclude, Assistant Secretary for Communications and External Affairs and Chief Marketing Officer Julissa Marengo briefly reviewed communications and public engagement focused on site selection for the two new museums. In addition to conducting surveys and focus groups with local and national stakeholders, the Smithsonian consulted with civic groups, government leaders, artists, and educators. The legislation establishing the two museums also calls for the consultation of the National Capital Planning Commission, the Commission of Fine Arts, House and Senate congressional committees and the Architect of the Capitol. On June 22, the four focus sites will be announced publicly. The Board and Smithsonian management are committed to ensuring a transparent, inclusive, and thorough site selection process.

Following the strategic discussion on the new Smithsonian museums, the Board adjourned to the luncheon program at approximately 11:31 a.m.

## **LUNCH: CONVERSATION WITH NEW SMITHSONIAN DIRECTORS**

**Luncheon Program:  
Conversation with New  
Smithsonian Directors**

During lunch, Regents had an opportunity to meet and converse with three of the Smithsonian's new directors: Ngaire Blankenberg, Director of the National Museum of African Art; Christopher Browne, Director of the National Air and Space Museum; and Kevin Young, Andrew W. Mellon Director of the National Museum of African American History and Culture. As each of these individuals began their directorship during a period of remote work, the program focused on each director's vision for their respective museum and highlighted the rich and varied work conducted at the Smithsonian.

## **AFTERNOON SESSION**

Board Chair Steve Case called the afternoon session to order at approximately 1:00 p.m. and reviewed the remainder of the Board's business agenda.

## **STRATEGIC REPORT OF THE SECRETARY**

**Strategic Report of the  
Secretary**

To begin the Board's afternoon session Secretary Bunch provided an update on the state of the Smithsonian. The Secretary's update focused on the recent unveiling of the first image of the supermassive black hole at the center of the Milky Way galaxy, the Institution's non-fungible token pilot program, the DC Music Festival, and the Smithsonian's operating status.

**Unveiling Our Galaxy's Black Hole**

The Secretary began by updating the Board on the unveiling of the first image of the black hole at the center of our Milky Way galaxy. On May 13, scientists at the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory (“SAO”), in collaboration with hundreds of scientists across the world, unveiled the image providing the first direct visual evidence that the center of Earth’s galaxy is definitively a supermassive black hole. Secretary Bunch informed the Board that the scientific development was picked up by over 800 news outlets across North America and media reports showed that the story and image reached at least 2.2 billion readers. The Board concurred that this was a wonderful example of harnessing Smithsonian expertise to elevate science in the global discourse, further advancing one of the Strategic Focus Areas.

**NFT Pilot Program**

Next, the Secretary provided an update on the non-fungible token (“NFT”) pilot program. In early 2021, the Smithsonian set up two working groups to explore NFTs: one focused on NFTs as collection items and a second focused on the revenue generating potential of NFTs. Secretary Bunch informed the Board that following recommendations from the working groups, the Smithsonian launched a pilot program and entered into the NFT market. The pilot program began in spring 2022 and will go through December 2022, with the creation of five to ten NFTs based on assets or moments unique to the Smithsonian. The pilot will measure the revenue produced, costs incurred, energy consumed, and resources required for production of each NFT concept. In addition, it will assess brand impact and general feedback from the public and key internal and external stakeholders. The Secretary will update the Board on the results at the conclusion of the NFT pilot program.

**Smithsonian Operations and DC Music Festival**

Secretary Bunch concluded his report by briefing the Regents on Smithsonian operations and impacts to operating status. As of May 30, the Smithsonian returned to its traditional schedule with all but two museums open seven days a week. The National Air and Space Museum on the National Mall remains closed for renovations until the fall. The Arts and Industries Building, temporarily open through July 6, will maintain a reduced schedule. The Secretary informed the Board that due to road closures for the Something in the Water music festival, the Smithsonian will close the National Museum of the American Indian and the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden June 17 through June 19. All other museums on the National Mall will remain open to the public with regular operating hours. However, some entrances to the museums will be temporarily closed because of fencing and street closures associated with the festival.

## **VIRTUAL SMITHSONIAN: ACCELERATING PROGRESS ON DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION**

**Virtual Smithsonian: Accelerating Progress on Digital Transformation**

Becky Kobberod, Head of the Smithsonian’s Office of Digital Transformation then led a strategic discussion with the Board on the Institution’s digital transformation strategy. The discussion focused on the vision for the new Office of Digital Transformation and the Smithsonian’s path forward to increase its digital presence and impact. Ms. Kobberod shared the external and internal focus



areas identified for digital transformation. Externally the Institution will focus on building a Smithsonian digital ecosystem, delivering a connected and seamless audience experience, and solidifying the Smithsonian as a trusted source for knowledge and understanding. The internal focus areas identified for digital transformation will leverage people, operations, platforms, and resources and prioritize efforts to build a digital-first Virtual Smithsonian while representing disciplines across the arts, sciences, history, culture, technology, and design.

Ms. Kobberod reminded the Board that nurturing a digital institutional culture has already begun, as the Smithsonian has worked to digitize its collections and launch Open Access to make them accessible to the public; piloted new technology, including The Searchable Museum at the National Museum of African American History and Culture to advance accessibility, scholarship, education, and audience engagement; and launched the beginning plans to build two new museums, which will initially launch virtually while the physical structures are being planned. The Board also reviewed the projected milestones for digital transformation at the Smithsonian over the next year.

## STRATEGIC DISCUSSION: STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

### Strategic Discussion: Strategic Plan Implementation

To conclude the open session, the Board received an update on the progress of strategic plan implementation efforts. Secretary Bunch and Deputy Secretary and Chief Operating Officer Meroë Park outlined how the Smithsonian is advancing the 25 institutional initiatives and supporting, measuring, and tracking progress on the overarching goal to shape Our Shared Future within and outside of the Smithsonian. Since the Board's last update, the Strategic Plan Implementation Team ("StratTeam") has identified co-leads and developed snapshots for the initiatives, welcomed the inaugural participants in the StratTeam Rotation Program, and developed a strategic implementation tracking tool. Additionally, the team is preparing a Smithsonian-wide update on initiative progress.

As part of the discussion, the Board was briefed on a sample initiative snapshot. Assistant Secretary for Advancement Rob Spiller and President of Smithsonian Enterprises Carol LeBlanc previewed the Smithsonian's efforts to develop and implement a universal membership model that integrates and improves the audience experience. Phase one of the initiative will launch in summer 2022 and will integrate separate programs of the Office of Advancement and Smithsonian Enterprises to unify the national membership model. Phase two will further build a more connected Smithsonian membership community and will be implemented in 2023.

## EXECUTIVE SESSION

### Executive Session: Regents and Secretary

The Board moved into an executive session at approximately 2:14 p.m. to discuss business and personnel matters, including personnel searches.

**Executive Session:  
"Gatekeeper" Reports**

The Board concluded the June 13, 2022, meeting with an opportunity to hear from each of the Smithsonian's Gatekeepers, including the Secretary, Under Secretary for Administration, General Counsel, and Inspector General.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at approximately 2:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lonnie G. Bunch, III  
Secretary

## APPENDIX A: ACTIONS OF THE JUNE 13, 2022, MEETING OF THE BOARD OF REGENTS

**VOTED** that the Board of Regents adopts the Consent Agenda, which constitutes the approval of all action items listed therein. [2022.06.01]

**VOTED** that the Board of Regents approves the minutes of the April 11, 2022, meeting of the Board of Regents.

**VOTED** that the Board of Regents approves the proposed slate of candidates for appointment or reappointment to eight (8) Smithsonian Institution Advisory Boards.

**VOTED** that the Board of Regents recognizes the generosity of T-Mobile USA, Inc. to the National Museum of Natural History and accepts the terms of the sponsorship agreement.

**VOTED** that the Board of Regents creates a quasi-endowment for the benefit of the National Museum of Asian Art to support the acquisition of works of art for its permanent collection. Further, the Board of Regents authorizes the transfer of the funds identified for this purpose.

**VOTED** that the Board of Regents approves a 5 percent payout from the Smithsonian Endowment in fiscal year 2023 to support programmatic activity. The Board further approves up to a 0.5 percent payout from the Smithsonian Endowment in fiscal year 2023 to support advancement activity. The payout shall be calculated based on the trailing 20-quarter average market value of the Smithsonian Endowment Fund. [2022.06.02]

**VOTED** that the Board of Regents approves the fiscal year 2024 federal budget priorities proposed by the Secretary. [2022.06.03]

**VOTED** that the Board of Regents approves the Secretary's request to deaccession twenty-nine (29) Benin Kingdom court style artworks in the collection of the National Museum of African Art and transfer title and return the artworks to Nigeria's National Commission for Museums and Monuments as the representative of the Federal Government of Nigeria. [2022.06.04]