

MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 10, 2024, EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

The Executive Committee (“Committee”) of the Board of Regents (“Board”) of the Smithsonian Institution (“Smithsonian”) conducted a meeting on December 10, 2024. Participating were Vice Chair Barbara M. Barrett and Committee member Franklin Raines. Participating were Board and Executive Committee Chair Risa J. Lavizzo-Mourey, Vice Chair Barbara M. Barrett, and Committee member Franklin Raines.

Also present by invitation of the Committee were Secretary Lonnie Bunch; Counselor to the Chief Justice Robert M. Dow, Jr.; Chief of Staff to the Secretary Greg Bettwy; Deputy Chief of Staff to the Regents Kate Forester; Special Assistant to the Regents Mallory Gianola (recorder); Chief Legal Officer Jennifer McIntyre; Deputy Secretary and Chief Operating Officer Meroë Park; and Counselor and Chief of Staff to the Regents Porter Wilkinson.

CALL TO ORDER

Board and Executive Committee Chair Risa J. Lavizzo-Mourey called the meeting to order at 11:00 a.m. and reviewed the agenda.

MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Committee approved the draft minutes of the October 17, 2024, meeting.

STEVEN F. UDVAR-HAZY CENTER EXPANSION

The Committee discussed the proposed expansion project at the National Air and Space Museum Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Center in Chantilly, Virginia, and reviewed the projected financial strategy to fund operating costs following the expansion. Dr. Lavizzo-Mourey noted that the Board discussed the proposed 44,000 sq ft extension, which would initially be funded with private philanthropy, at its meeting on October 28, 2024. The Regents asked that Smithsonian management develop a plan for funding ongoing operating costs after construction is complete. To address the immediate funding needs, management proposed implementing a collaborative financial strategy involving contributions from multiple sources, including the Central Trust, over five years. The Executive Committee was asked to approve the Udvar-Hazy Center expansion funding strategy on behalf of the Board to accommodate the projected timeline for the capital project before the next meeting of the Board of Regents.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the following motion was approved:

VOTED that the Executive Committee, on behalf of the Board of Regents pursuant to Board Bylaw 3.01, approves proceeding with the proposed financial strategy to fund operating costs for the National Air and Space Museum Udvar-Hazy Center Expansion with contributions from multiple Trust sources.

REGENTS' PUBLIC FORUM

Next, Dr. Lavizzo-Mourey shared the viewing and engagement metrics from the Regents' public forum, which was held on October 28, 2024, following the Board meeting. The public forum was streamed live on the Smithsonian website and provided an opportunity to introduce the new members of the Executive Committee. The public forum also focused on key matters at the Smithsonian, including the new museums, the Giant Pandas, America250 celebration, Smithsonian science and research, and artificial intelligence (AI). The Committee discussed ways to engage more viewers at future forums.

JANUARY 2025 BOARD MEETING

Dr. Lavizzo-Mourey then led a discussion on the upcoming meeting of the Board of Regents to be held on January 27, 2024. Dr. Lavizzo-Mourey noted that although topics are being finalized, the January meeting agenda will likely include the following items: (1) the annual compensation review for the Secretary and senior executives, (2) proposed recommendations for 2025 committee chairmanships and membership, (3) the annual report on workplace culture, and (4) key matters at the Smithsonian, including the Smithsonian's Trust and Federal budget, and site selection for the new museums.

SMITHSONIAN TROPICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE TRIP

Dr. Lavizzo-Mourey also reminded the Committee that the Board of Regents has been invited to join the Smithsonian National Board ("SNB") when it meets at the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute ("STRI") in Panama January 2025. The Office of the Regents is also exploring additional opportunities for Regents to travel to STRI in the future.

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY

The Secretary updated the Committee on the state of the Smithsonian. He first briefed the Committee on his trip to the Republic of Angola as part of President Biden's official visit to celebrate the transformation and deepening of the U.S.-Angola relationship. The trip marked the first visit ever by a sitting U.S. president to Angola, and the first visit of a U.S. president to sub-Saharan Africa since 2015. Secretary Bunch noted that while much of the delegation's work was focused on economic development, there were key historical and cultural moments that underscored the Smithsonian's importance in cultural diplomacy. The itinerary included visits to several museums, including the National Museum of Slavery in Angola's capital.

The Secretary then updated the Committee on Congressional relations. He first briefed the Committee on site selection for the National Museum of the American Latino and the Smithsonian American Women's History Museum. The Secretary shared that the National Defense Authorization Act did not include the bipartisan legislation that would permit the Smithsonian to build the two museums on the National Mall. Secretary Bunch also informed the Committee that on December 3, the Senate passed the bill that would establish a commission to study the potential transfer of the Weitzman National Museum of American Jewish History to the Smithsonian Institution.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Committee moved into an executive session at approximately 11:54 a.m. to discuss confidential personnel and business matters.

ADJOURNMENT

With no other business to consider the meeting was adjourned at approximately 12:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Risa J. Lavizzo-Mourey, Chair