

MINUTES OF THE MARCH 9, 2021, EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

The Executive Committee (“Committee”) of the Board of Regents (“Board”) of the Smithsonian Institution (“Smithsonian”) conducted a videoconference meeting on March 9, 2021. Participating were Board and Executive Committee Chair Steve Case, Vice Chair Dr. Risa J. Lavizzo-Mourey, and Committee member John Fahey.

Also present by invitation of the Committee were Secretary Lonnie Bunch, Counselor to the Chief Justice Jeffrey P. Minear, 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), General Counsel Judith Leonard, and Deputy Secretary and Chief Operating Officer Meroë Park.

CALL TO ORDER

Board and Executive Committee Chair Steve Case called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. and reviewed the agenda. He also welcomed John Fahey to his first Executive Committee meeting.

MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the draft minutes of the January 22, 2021, Committee meeting were approved without modification.

RECOGNITION OF FORMER REGENT

The Committee discussed and voted to recommend that the Board recognize former citizen Regent France A. Córdoba for her dedication and exceptional service to the Smithsonian. Dr. Córdoba served with distinction on the Board of Regents from September 2009 until March 2014 when she was appointed as the 14th director of the National Science Foundation. Upon motion duly made and seconded, the following motion was approved:

VOTED that the Executive Committee recommends that the Board of Regents confers the title of Regent Emerita on France A. Córdoba with deep gratitude for the outstanding service she provided, and will continue to provide, to the Board of Regents and the Smithsonian Institution.

REGENTS’ APRIL MEETING

Mr. Case then reviewed the preliminary agenda for the upcoming Regents’ meeting on April 12. Given the continued safety precautions in place due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the meeting will be conducted virtually. In addition to normal business items, the Secretary will lead strategic discussions on his vision, retrospective, and achievements to date; the status of reopening and vaccine distribution and programming; an update on the two new Smithsonian museums; and the progress of Virtual Smithsonian and One Smithsonian initiatives.

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY

The Secretary first briefed the Committee on Smithsonian appropriations for fiscal year 2021 and fiscal year 2022. On December 27, 2020, Congress passed, and the President signed the 2021 Consolidated Appropriations Act, which provided \$1,032.7 million for the Smithsonian Institution in fiscal year 2021. In September 2020, the Smithsonian submitted its fiscal year 2022 federal budget request to the Office of Management and Budget (“OMB”). The request totaled \$1,183.1 million, which includes \$893.1 million for Salaries and Expenses and \$290 million for Facilities Capital. Secretary Bunch reported the passback from OMB was favorable and prioritized funding for the Institution’s research and digital initiatives. He also noted the passback included \$49.8 million of unallocated funding, which the Institution expects to use for initial costs associated with the creation of two new Smithsonian museums.

The Secretary also updated the Committee on the Smithsonian’s ongoing response to the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) pandemic, specifically the Institution’s reopening status. As a public health precaution due to COVID-19, all Smithsonian museums and the National Zoo have been closed to the public since November 23. Outdoor gardens and exhibitions have remained open. The Secretary informed the Committee that the Smithsonian is preparing for the early stages of reopening—while also working within the guidelines set forth by local, state, and federal governments—that will allow the Institution to increase internal operations, resume public programs, and reopen the museums and the National Zoo.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Committee entered into an executive session at approximately 10:25 a.m. to discuss confidential business and personnel matters.

ADJOURNMENT

With no other business to consider, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 10:40 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Steve Case, Chair