

MINUTES OF THE MARCH 2, 2022, FACILITIES COMMITTEE MEETING

The Facilities Committee (“Committee”) of the Board of Regents (“Board”) of the Smithsonian Institution (“Smithsonian”) conducted a videoconference meeting on March 2, 2022.

Participating were Committee Chair John Fahey and Committee members Representative Adrian Smith; Michael Govan; Dennis Keller; John W. McCarter, Jr.; and Mitchell N. Schear.

Also present by invitation of the Committee were Director of Smithsonian Facilities Nancy Bechtol; Chief of Staff to the Secretary Greg Bettwy; Associate General Counsel Craig Blackwell; Acting Chief Sustainability Officer Pierre Comizzoli; Under Secretary for Administration Ron Cortez; Deputy Chief of Staff to the Regents Kate Forester; Special Assistant to the Regents Mallory Gianola (recorder); Under Secretary for Museums and Culture Kevin Gover; Senior Advisor to the Deputy Secretary Doug Hall; Elizabeth MacMillan Director of the National Museum of American History Anthea Hartig; Inspector General Cathy Helm; Director of the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center Anson “Tuck” Hines; Chief Financial Officer Janice Lambert; Senior Adviser to Senator Leahy Kevin McDonald; Program Management Specialist for Smithsonian Facilities Tiffany Myers; Deputy Secretary and Chief Operating Officer Meroë Park; Acting Director for the Office of Planning, Design, and Construction Derek Ross; Director of the Office of Government Relations Vernon Simms; Assistant Secretary for Advancement Rob Spiller; Chief of Staff to the Regents Porter Wilkinson; and Andrew W. Mellon Director of the National Museum of African American History and Culture Kevin Young.

CALL TO ORDER

Committee Chair John Fahey called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. and reviewed the agenda. Mr. Fahey also welcomed Under Secretary for Administration Ron Cortez to his first meeting of the Facilities Committee.

APPROVAL OF THE NOVEMBER 16, 2021, COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the minutes of the November 16, 2021, Committee meeting were approved without modification.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Director of Smithsonian Facilities Nancy Bechtol led a strategic discussion on the Smithsonian’s efforts to address climate change. The discussion focused on master planning, climate change reporting and tracking, and policies that will move the Smithsonian forward in its progress toward addressing the Institution’s risks associated with climate change. The discussion also included three presentations that focused on the protection of the Institution’s core assets, the national collections, and the sustainable operation of facilities and programs.

First, Director of the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center Tuck Hines shared the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center’s (“SERC”) goal of building a net-zero carbon emissions campus by 2025. Efforts to achieve the sustainability goal include broadening climate

change research and awareness, committing to energy efficiency on the SERC campus, ensuring building renovations and new construction are net-zero, and investing in renewable energy.

Next, Elizabeth MacMillan Director of the National Museum of American History Anthea Hartig detailed efforts by the National Museum of American History (“NMAH”) to increase the resiliency of collections in exhibits and storage areas. The NMAH Facilities Master Plan, which was developed in 2018, addresses ways to mitigate risks related to flood dangers and potential flood scenarios in order to protect the national history collections. Some of the mitigation efforts include stormwater retention on site, rainwater re-use in the building, automatic flood gates, and relocating collections items to the Pod 6 Collections Storage Facility at the Museum Support Center.

To conclude the discussion on climate change, Andrew W. Mellon Director of the National Museum of African American History and Culture Kevin Young shared his experience managing and operating a sustainably designed building. The National Museum of African American History and Culture (“NMAAHC”) opened in November 2016. As the newest Smithsonian museum and the first LEED Gold building on the National Mall, NMAAHC has provided valuable knowledge about sustainable construction, facility operation practices, and sustainable preservation and conservatorship of a major museum collection. Mr. Young highlighted the design strategy, sustainability initiatives, and lessons learned.

DETAILED UPDATE ON NEW MUSEUMS SITE EVALUATION STUDY

Under Secretary for Administration Ron Cortez updated the Committee on the status of site selection for the two new Smithsonian museums: National Museum of the American Latino and Smithsonian American Women’s History Museum. The locations for the two museums are to be determined by the Board of Regents not later than two years after enactment of the bill – December 2022. Mr. Cortez reminded the Committee that Smithsonian leadership and the Regents are working hard to comply with the statutory deadline and noted the Committee’s discussion would serve as a preview to the larger discussion and site visits planned for the full Board in April. The Committee first reviewed a list of sites that are being evaluated by the architectural engineering firm Ayers Saint Gross. Potential sites are being evaluated based on location, cost factors, existing site condition, transportation and access, environmental conditions, and acquisition potential. Among the sites to be toured by the Regents in April, potential locations include unbuilt sites, sites with historic buildings, and sites with buildings that could be demolished. Mr. Cortez also briefed the Committee on a feasibility study to critically assess the Arts and Industries Building (“AIB”) as a potential location for one of the museums. Mr. Cortez informed the Committee that all of the options provided in the AIB feasibility study would require some modifications to suit a new museum. Current next steps for site selection include completing research for programs, conducting outreach meetings, previewing the sites with the Board of Regents, and consultation with key stakeholders and external review entities.

FACILITIES RESOURCES

The Committee had an opportunity to ask questions related to the read-ahead information provided on facilities resources. The Committee received read-ahead information on the Facilities Capital Program and funding for fiscal years 2021 through 2023. In fiscal year 2021, the Smithsonian received \$214.5 million in capital funds. The Smithsonian requested \$230 million in federal appropriations for facilities capital for fiscal year 2022, including an initial \$7.6 million for construction of the Pod 6 collections storage facility. For fiscal year 2023, the Smithsonian requested \$265 million in federal appropriations for facilities capital, which includes the final \$23 million for the National Air and Space Museum revitalization.

The Committee also received read-ahead information on the Facilities Maintenance Program and funding for fiscal years 2021 through 2023. In fiscal year 2021, the Smithsonian received \$115.3 million for the maintenance program, to continue addressing the Institution's deferred maintenance backlog. The Institution requested \$116.9 million in facilities maintenance for fiscal year 2022 and \$119.3 million in facilities maintenance for fiscal year 2023.

MAJOR CAPITAL PROJECT UPDATES

The Committee also had an opportunity to ask questions about the read-ahead information provided on the Smithsonian's major capital projects, specifically the revitalization of the building envelope and infrastructure at the National Air and Space Museum on the National Mall; planning of the National Air and Space Museum Integrated Bezos Learning Center ("BLC"); and revitalization of the Sculpture Garden at the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Committee then moved into an executive session at approximately 2:34 p.m. to discuss confidential business matters.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 3:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
John Fahey, Chair