

MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 24, 2020, STRATEGY, INNOVATION, AND TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE MEETING

The Strategy, Innovation, and Technology Committee (“Committee”) of the Board of Regents (“Board”) of the Smithsonian Institution (“Smithsonian”) held a videoconference meeting on September 24, 2020. Participating were Committee Chair Michael Lynton and Committee members Representative Doris Matsui, Steve Case, Michael Govan, Risa J. Lavizzo-Mourey, and Greg McAdoo.

Also present by invitation of the Committee were Secretary Lonnie Bunch, Senior Advisor to the Director of the National Museum of American History Felicia Bell, Chief of Staff to the Secretary Greg Bettwy, Acting Under Secretary for Science and Research Roger Brissenden, Chief Information Officer Deron Burba, Senior Advisor for Strategy and Implementation Tasha Coleman, Curator of Latinx Studies at the National Museum of African American History and Culture Ariana Curtis, Deputy Chief of Staff to the Regents Kate Forester, Special Assistant to the Regents Mallory Gianola (recorder), Senior Advisor for Strategy and Implementation Erin Golightly, Chief of Staff to the Deputy Secretary and Chief Operating Officer Ginny Gomez, Acting Under Secretary for Museums and Culture Kevin Gover, Deputy General Counsel Lauryn Guttenplan, Inspector General Cathy Helm, Assistant Secretary for Communications and External Affairs and Chief Marketing Officer Julissa Marengo, Under Secretary for Administration Mike McCarthy, Deputy Secretary and Chief Operating Officer Meroë Park, Acting Under Secretary for Education Ruki Neuhold-Ravikumar, Director of the Office of Government Relations Vernon Simms, Assistant Secretary for Advancement Rob Spiller, and Chief of Staff to the Regents Porter Wilkinson.

CALL TO ORDER

Committee Chair Michael Lynton called the meeting to order at 2:02 p.m. and reviewed the agenda.

REVIEW OF THE JUNE 25, 2020, COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the draft minutes of the June 25, 2020, Committee meeting were approved without modification.

RACE, COMMUNITY, AND OUR SHARED FUTURE INITIATIVE

Secretary Bunch briefed the Committee on the Race, Community, and Our Shared Future (“RCOSF”) Initiative, which will transform the Institution’s approach to “One Smithsonian” public programming by engaging Smithsonian content experts across organizations and disciplines to create an impactful Smithsonian presence in communities around the nation.

Senior Advisor to the Director of the National Museum of American History Felicia Bell and Curator of Latinx Studies at the National Museum of African American History and Culture Ariana Curtis, lead content experts for the RCOSF Initiative, led a discussion on the six thematic pillars that will encompass the content and programming: Race, Policy, and Ethics; Race and Wellness; Race and Wealth; Race and Place; Race, Arts, and Aesthetics; and Race Beyond the US. While initial content and programming will begin with a focus on the African American experience, the initiative will expand to include other experiences and perspectives.

Senior Advisors for Strategy and Implementation Tasha Coleman and Erin Golightly reviewed the digital strategy. The core of the RCOSF Initiative will be a dynamic, highly interactive, and all-inclusive virtual platform, made up of a website and app, which will offer audiences an e-centered and personalized engagement experience. Ms. Coleman highlighted some of the key digital offerings that will be available on the platform, such as allowing the public to engage and connect with program participants, providing up-to-date information on RCOSF events, breaking news features, and directly providing tools and resources for public use. The Committee also discussed marketing outreach, program planning efforts, and potential obstacles to digital transformation.

Next, Acting Under Secretary for Museums and Culture Kevin Gover outlined the core leadership team that will oversee the strategic efforts of the RCOSF initiative across Smithsonian units. Mr. Gover explained that this team will focus on executive guidance and support, content, strategy and implementation, advancement, and marketing.

To conclude, the Committee was briefed on efforts the Smithsonian is taking to internally foster diversity and inclusiveness. Deputy Secretary and Chief Operating Officer Meroë Park shared that the Smithsonian is seeking to hire a head diversity officer. This role will serve on the senior leadership team, reporting to the Secretary and Deputy Secretary, and will be instrumental in conceptualizing and executing an Institution-wide diversity, equity, access, and inclusion strategy. Deputy Secretary Park highlighted some of the key responsibilities and expectations for the position and sought the Committee's feedback on recruitment efforts.

EXHIBITION CALENDAR AND PUBLIC PROGRAMMING

Acting Under Secretary for Museums and Culture Kevin Gover reviewed the exhibition calendar, which consisted primarily of long-planned exhibition openings that were slated for opening pre-closure and are expected to occur, should the Smithsonian's re-opening timeline continue to progress.

The Committee was briefed on the SD603 review of a graphic included in the Smithsonian's "Talking About Race Portal." The SD603 review process is the Smithsonian's internal review process for exhibitions. Following public scrutiny, the graphic titled, "Aspects and Assumptions of Whiteness and White Culture in the United States," was reviewed and ultimately removed from the website of the National Museum of African American History and Culture. After

Careful consideration and listening to public sentiment, it was determined that the graphic did not contribute to productive conversations about race as intended.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Committee entered into an executive session at approximately 3:23 p.m. to discuss a proposed candidate for Committee membership.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to consider, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 3:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mr. Michael M. Lynton, Chair