

MINUTES OF THE AUGUST 9, 2022, EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

The Executive Committee (“Committee”) of the Board of Regents (“Board”) of the Smithsonian Institution (“Smithsonian”) conducted a videoconference meeting on August 9, 2022.

Participating were Board and Executive Committee Chair Steve Case, Vice Chair Risa J. Lavizzo-Mourey, and Committee member John Fahey.

Also present by invitation of the Committee were 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 1:00 p.m. and reviewed the agenda.

MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the draft minutes of the July 7, 2022, Committee meeting were approved without modification.

RECOGNITION OF VERNON SIMMS

Mr. Case presented a motion of recognition for Vernon Simms, former Director of the Office of Government Relations. Mr. Simms joined the Smithsonian in March 2020 and was responsible for promoting and strengthening the Smithsonian’s relationship with Congress, the executive branch, and federal, state, and local governments. The Committee expressed its heartfelt condolences in response to his passing on July 16, 2022.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Executive Committee approved the following motion for recommendation to the Board of Regents:

VOTED that the Executive Committee recommends that the Board of Regents expresses its profound appreciation to the memory of Vernon Simms, Director of the Office of Government Relations, an esteemed colleague, and true friend of the Smithsonian Institution, and extends its heartfelt sympathies to his wife Linda; his children Erin, Candice, and Kyle; his four grandchildren, and extended family.

RECOGNITION OF SMITHSONIAN NATIONAL BOARD CHAIR

Mr. Case then led the Committee’s discussion of recognition for Smithsonian National Board Chair Dennis Keller, noting that his term as chair will conclude on September 30, 2022. The Committee acknowledged Mr. Keller’s service to the Smithsonian and the Board of Regents and endorsed the proposed commendation to be presented at the Smithsonian National Board’s October meeting.

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY

In the absence of the Secretary, Deputy Secretary and Chief Operating Officer Meroë Park and Chief of Staff to the Secretary Greg Bettwy provided an update on the state of the Smithsonian.

The Deputy Secretary informed the Committee that on July 11, the digital marketing platform WordFly notified the Institution of a ransomware attack. Names and email addresses connected with the National Zoo and Conservation Biology Institute were impacted by the incident. WordFly and the forensic experts assisting with the incident worked with the attackers and believe the exported information was deleted. Although not considered personally identifiable information (“PII”) the Smithsonian posted a notice to its website about the incident and notified affected individuals.

The Deputy Secretary also updated the Committee on the Institution’s operating status. The Smithsonian has been operating under its traditional schedule with all but two Smithsonian museums open seven days a week since May 30. As part of the COVID Way Ahead Plan, the Smithsonian aggregates CDC COVID-19 Community Level data for relevant counties to determine Smithsonian Regional Levels. Units with operations in each Smithsonian region are expected to enact or rescind mitigation measures as soon as feasible following a change in Smithsonian Regional Level. The Deputy Secretary noted increasing Regional Levels for COVID-19 and shared that any changes in operating status would be socialized in advance.

Deputy Secretary Park then briefed the Committee on recent consultations with various stakeholders in the selection of sites for the two new museums. The Committee discussed the impact of the establishing legislation requiring approval from the site owners for the use of land or structure for sites under the administrative jurisdiction of another Federal agency or entity. The Smithsonian is continuing engagement with Congress and other stakeholders.

The Committee was also briefed on the progress towards the fiscal year 2022 fundraising goal of \$230 million. Mr. Bettwy noted that the fiscal year will close on September 30. The Board is expected to receive an update summarizing the fiscal year 2022 fundraising efforts at its October meeting.

Mr. Bettwy also acknowledged the recent passing of Representative Jackie Walorski (R-IN), one of the Smithsonian American Women’s History Museum Advisory Council members appointed by Congress. The Smithsonian will work with the House of Representatives to appoint a new advisory council member to fill the vacant seat.

ADJOURNMENT

With no other business to consider and no request for an executive session, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 1:31 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Steve Case, Chair