

MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 28, 2017, STRATEGY, INNOVATION, AND TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE TELECONFERENCE MEETING

The Strategy, Innovation, and Technology Committee (“Committee”) of the Board of Regents (“Board”) of the Smithsonian Institution (“Smithsonian”) held a teleconference meeting on September 28, 2017. Participating were Committee Chair Michael Lynton and Committee members Rod Adkins, Steve Case, Michael Govan, and Greg McAdoo.

Also present by invitation of the Committee were Secretary David Skorton, Chief of Staff to the Secretary Greg Bettwy, Acting Assistant Secretary for Education and Access Patricia Bartlett, Provost/Under Secretary for Museums and Research John Davis, Director of International Relations Molly Fannon, Deputy Chief of Staff to the Regents Kate Forester, Director of the Arts & Industries Building Rachel Goslins, Associate General Counsel Lauryn Guttenplan, Under Secretary for Finance and Administration/Chief Financial Officer Al Horvath, Office of the Provost Senior Program Officer Amy Marino, Acting Assistant Secretary for Communications and External Affairs Carolyn Martin, and Chief of Staff to the Regents Porter Wilkinson.

CALL TO ORDER

Committee Chair Michael Lynton called the meeting to order at 3:05 p.m. and reviewed the agenda.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MAY 8, 2017, COMMITTEE MEETING

Due to lack of quorum, the Committee did not vote on the approval of the minutes from the May 8, 2017, meeting. The minutes will be included in the December 12 meeting for approval.

INTRODUCTION OF THE PROVOST AND EXHIBITION CALENDAR

The Committee welcomed the new Provost, John Davis. Dr. Davis briefly shared his background as an art and architectural historian and noted that, as a provost at Smith College, he oversaw the science programs and considers himself a true advocate of sciences. He is looking forward to working with all units and disciplines across the Smithsonian, especially through the implementation of the strategic plan. Dr. Davis then gave an update on the upcoming exhibition calendar, which is designed to help senior management and the Regents allow for thoughtful planning.

WRITTEN REPORT FROM EDUCATION AND ACCESS

The Office of the Assistant Secretary for Education and Access provided a written report describing recent activities. Highlights from the report included (1) an update on the Secretary’s Youth Advisory Council, established in partnership with the D.C. Mayor’s Office in 2016, regarding an increase in membership for the upcoming year as a result of the first year’s success; (2) an update on the Youth Access Grants program, an internal competitive grants

program that to date has supported 45 planning, research, development, and 66 implementation projects through an endowment by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation; (3) recognition of the Smithsonian Center for Learning and Digital Access earning the Gold MUSE award in education and outreach at the 2017 American Alliance of Museums; and (4) recognition of the Smithsonian Science and Education Center receiving the 2017 Best App for Teaching & Learning for its Disaster Detector app from the American Association of School Librarians. Hearing no questions from the Committee regarding the written report, Mr. Lynton moved to the following agenda item.

UPDATE ON LONDON

Mr. Horvath gave an update on the progress of the London opportunity. Mr. Horvath reminded the Committee that the collaboration with the Victoria & Albert Museum (“V&A”) would be the Smithsonian’s first long-term programmatic presence outside of the United States and that it would broaden the Smithsonian’s reach. It would also be relatively low risk, he explained. The collaboration would not create a new Smithsonian museum and nor would it be reliant on new federally appropriated resources. The Smithsonian and V&A teams continue to negotiate the terms of the collaboration. The final binding agreement is expected to be completed in the first quarter of 2018.

STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLEMENTATION UPDATE

Next, Mr. Horvath provided an update on the implementation of the strategic plan for 2017-2022. Starting in mid-2017, Mr. Horvath has been working with a core team and seven individual goal teams (more than 120 individuals) to implement the strategic plan. Over the past several months, the teams have been working to engage leadership and staff of all levels, prioritize ideas, and identify key milestones. Mr. Horvath noted that several themes have emerged across goal teams—including accountability, agility, understanding audiences, improved budget and planning, enhanced digital capabilities, and strategic partnerships—and that specific actions and initiatives are starting to take shape.

Mr. Horvath further explained that the current implementation teams were tasked only with developing the tactical plan; different individuals will be charged with actually executing the plan over the coming years. Steve Case* stressed the importance of culture and accountability in successfully implementing the plan and encouraged the Secretary and his team to ensure that the correct individuals are in place to execute the new vision.

The timeline for next steps is: preliminary recommendations from each goal team by early October, a retreat of the core team to review recommendations in November, internal and public announcements of the plan by early December, and presentation of the full implementation plan to the Board in January.

*Due to a scheduling conflict, in accordance with the Committee charter, it was pre-determined that Mr. Case would replace Mr. Lynton as Chair for the remainder of the meeting at this point.

STRATEGIC PLAN FOCUS: WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM PARTNERSHIP

Director of the Office of International Relations Molly Fannon briefed the Committee on the World Economic Forum (“WEF”) partnership, a relationship that the Office of International Relations has been cultivating since January 2016. Ms. Fannon provided highlights of the partnership, which include opportunities for Smithsonian curating interactive spaces and branding at Davos and other WEF meetings. At the upcoming WEF Annual Meeting in Davos, the Smithsonian will provide a major exhibition and, in doing so, is the only outside organization aside from WEF branded in the official WEF space. As a result of last year’s involvement in Davos, Secretary Skorton and National Museum of African American History and Culture Director Lonnie Bunch have been invited to participate as speakers. Broadening awareness of our major global programs, increasing the relevance of our units to major global issues, building new relationships with partners and potential donors, and increased exposure to a new global audience are primary goals of this endeavor. Davos is just one element of the larger partnership with the WEF, which continues to grow.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION FOR THE ARTS AND INDUSTRIES BUILDING AND PEPPER GUIDES

Next, Director of the Arts and Industries Building (“AIB”) Rachel Goslins helped the Committee explore the idea of utilizing the building as a dynamic, multi-purpose space. The Future Project, as she has named the guiding principle behind the space, is a Smithsonian initiative to help the American public imagine the future from the personal to the global, with a focus on innovation and optimism. The project will be a multi-faceted effort that includes building-based public exhibits, convenings and conversations, digital outreach, and special initiatives to promote and support the innovation in storytelling across the Smithsonian. She hopes to convene an annual dialogue about optimism and the future to exemplify this idea.

Ms. Goslins also provided an update on the Pepper Project, a pilot project in partnership with the Office of the Chief Information Officer and SoftBank Robotics involving visitor-service oriented robots, which arose out of the Board’s April strategic meeting. The Arts and Industries Building will coordinate a pan-institutional group of pilot leads to establish training, programming, and best practices for the use of the robots.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

In Executive Session, the Committee discussed a potential opportunity to host a traveling exhibition.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 4:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mr. Michael M. Lynton, Chair