

Date: _____

Approved: _____

THE VIRGINIA MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS
Minutes of the Trustee Orientation
Tuesday, 15 October 2013, 8:30 am
Claiborne Robertson Room

Presiding: William A. Royall, Jr.
Secretary: Ms. Suzanne Broyles

There were present:

William A. Royall, Jr., President
Karen C. Abramson
Mary Anne Carlson
Margaret N. Gottwald
John H. Hager
Terrell Luck Harrigan
Dr. Elizabeth F. Harris
Dr. Monroe E. Harris, Jr.
Dr. Claude G. Perkins
Satya Rangarajan
Michael J. Schewel
Dr. Shantaram K. Talegaonkar

By Invitation:

Alex Nyerges, Director
Stephen D. Bonadies
Ms. Suzanne Broyles
Dr. Lee Anne Chesterfield
Ms. Laura Keller
Robin Nicholson
Cameron O'Brion
Ms. Jayne Shaw
Ms. Fern Spencer

I. WELCOME AND MORNING SESSION

President Bill Royall welcomed the group and thanked them for attending. He hoped that all Trustees would try to get to an orientation as serving on the VMFA Board of Trustees is an incredible life-changing opportunity and includes access to behind the scenes experiences such as today's activities. He indicated that the board members are really a part of the history of this wonderful institution.

Director Alex Nyerges spoke about VMFA's mission and strategic plan saying the museum was created by the General Assembly in 1934 and is here for all Virginians.

Sylvia Yount, Chief Curator and Louise B. and J. Harwood Cochrane Curator of American Art took the group into the American Art Mid Century gallery. She focused on a few paintings and explained the different approaches to collection building.

Robin Nicholson gave an overview of exhibitions and took the group through the special exhibition galleries where the *Hollywood Costume* show was being installed. Doug Fisher,

Head of Exhibition Design and Production, shared interesting stories about many of the costumes.

The Trustees then visited the VMFA library where Head Librarian, Lee Vivarette, spoke about the history of the library, its operations and services including the rare book room.

Educators Courtney Morano and Karen Getty demonstrated touch tours for the visually impaired for the group allowing them to touch two pre-approved art objects, the sarcophagus and mosaic, with gloved hands.

Stephen Bonadies, Deputy Director for Collections and Facilities Management, spoke about the care and management of the buildings and museum grounds including electrical, housekeeping, security and capital and maintenance reserve projects. He then covered the care, management and presentation of the collection and special exhibitions including conservation, registration, image resources, exhibition design and production and information technology.

VMFA Counsel, Cameron O’Brion spoke about the importance of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and fielded questions.

Cathy Turner, Head of Food Services and Special Events gave a tour of the main VMFA kitchen giving information on the VMFA Enterprise Operations along the way.

Head Registrar, Mary Sullivan, and Mr. Bonadies took the group through one of the art storage rooms showing how art not on public display is stored and ending with a tour of the new conservation studios.

II. AFTERNOON SESSION

During lunch the Trustees heard a presentation from Fern Spencer, Chief Financial Officer of the museum and the VMFA Foundation. Ms. Spencer spoke about the relationship between the two entities and explained the finance and budget side of things.

After lunch the group toured the VMFA Studio School building on Grove Avenue with Mary Holland, Director of the Studio Class Programs. The building houses studios for photography, printmaking, painting and drawing. They saw adult classes in session and enjoyed the show in the Studio School Gallery.

David Bradley, Director of Government Relations, walked the group over to The Pauley Center sharing the interesting history of that building over the years. He then gave a government relations overview explaining that the Commonwealth owns the building, the land, the art, and employs the majority of the staff. Mr. Bradley said we are legally represented by the office of the Attorney General. He reviewed the administration’s budget process, spoke about grants, the city of Richmond, and the diplomatic community.

Jayne Shaw, acting Deputy Director of Advancement, introduced her staff members who explained their development and membership functions to the Trustees.

Director, Alex Nyerges, thanked the staff for their hard work on the Trustee Orientation. He invited the Trustees to come to VMFA on a Thursday evening to enjoy the jazz and on Friday nights for the happy hours. President Bill Royall remarked that this was a really great day for Trustees and said he was very pleased with the orientation experience. Those present agreed. Mr. Royall stated that VMFA is a very dynamic museum and asked Trustees to pass along any ideas they may have on how to enhance the visitor's experience. There being no further business, the orientation meeting was adjourned.

Suzanne Broyles
Secretary of the Museum