

Date: _____ Approved: _____

THE VIRGINIA MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS
Government Affairs Committee Meeting Minutes
Held, pursuant to due notice, in the Pauley Center Second Floor Meeting Room
Wednesday, 17 February 2010, 3:30 pm

Presiding: Susan S. Goode, Chair
Secretary: Ms. Suzanne Broyles

There were present:

Susan S. Goode, Chair
Michael J. Schewel, Vice-Chair
Karen C. Abramson
Robert L. Burrus, Jr.
Mrs. Whitt W. Clement
Mrs. Beverly H. Diamonstein
Ms. Eva Teig Hardy
Mrs. Barbara-lyn B. Morris
Mrs. Stanley F. Pauley
Richard T. Riley
John R. Staelin
Dr. Joseph R. Vilseck, Jr.
Pamela Reynolds, Ex-Officio
Mrs. Suzanne T. Mastracco, Ex-Officio

By Invitation:

Alex Nyerges, Director
Ms. Carol Amato
Bill Axselle
David B. Bradley
Ms. Suzanne Broyles
Ms. Susan Ferrell
Ms. Joan W. Murphy
Robin Nicholson
William A. Royall, Jr.
Ms. Alexis Vaughn
Ms. Della Watkins

Absent:

Martin J. Barrington
James C. Cherry
Kenneth S. Johnson, Sr.
Dr. Benjamin J. Lambert III
Mrs. Gordon F Rainey, Jr.
Dr. Alvin J. Schexnider
Ranjit K. Sen
Jane Bassett Spilman

Gregory H. Wingfield
Thurston R. Moore, Ex-Officio
Richard G. Tilghman, Ex-Officio

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by the Chair, Susan Goode, at 3:40 pm.

II. MINUTES

Motion: proposed by Mrs. Morris, seconded by Mrs. Abramson that the Minutes of the last meeting of the Government Affairs Committee held on the 17th of November 2009 be approved as distributed on the 26th of January 2010.
Motion carried.

III. Comments by Alex Nyerges, Director

Alex Nyerges reported that the news of the day was that the Governor is recommending state employees take five furlough days in each year of the biennium to help balance the state budget. Mr. Nyerges said that he and President Reynolds do not believe this is the way to build morale for our employees who are working 50-60 hours a week toward the opening. This would be one half of a paycheck for employees. The Governor's budget included a 3% bonus for state employees in 2011. We know we have to do our part to fund the \$4 billion state budget deficit but we cannot compromise on our quality. He indicated that we are already looking at ways to save money.

IV. Recap of February 1 Activities

David Bradley reported the responses to the way things went on February 1 at the Government Officials Reception. He thanked those who attended and said it also produced an unexpected morale boost for employees who had not yet seen the new wing in such a finished state. The fact that the Governor and First Lady stayed a considerable amount of time was also a good indicator. The Lieutenant Governor and many of the senior Legislators attended. The VMFA Fellowship Recipients were recognized that night along with many of our statewide Partners. Alex Nyerges said that contractor Whiting-Turner should be credited for preparing the building quickly for the event.

V. Status of Budget Process and Calendar

David Bradley noted that yesterday was Crossover Day and the House and Senate each concluded their own legislation. He said that this coming Sunday the House Appropriations and the Senate Finance Committees will each report out their respective versions of the budget. March 3 is the last day for each house to act on the budget bill and revenue bills of the other house and appoint conferees by midnight. Mr. Bradley said that on March 13 the General Assembly will adjourn and this will most likely be the day the final action will be taken on the budget. He pointed out the two resolutions in the meeting folders; No. 65, designating March as Youth Art Month in Virginia and No. 141, Minds

Wide Open: Virginia Celebrates Women in the Arts, recognizing outstanding contributions by women to the arts and culture of the Commonwealth.

Bill Axelle reported that on February 1 key members of the House Appropriations Committee and the Senate Finance Committee were given a copy of the Chmura Economic Impact Report showing the economic and job impact of the VMFA expansion. He said a copy of the report is in the meeting folders. Mr. Axelle added that a membership card and letter listing all the statewide programs was sent to all the Legislative decision makers and leadership.

Carol Amato reviewed the history of the Museum's state general fund support and how we have managed all the budget reductions in state support over the years. She said this latest 5% cut will be the hardest because we have no other place to take the cut except for payroll. Alex Nyerges said we need to protect the investment in the new building for Virginians and provide a high level of service. He believes with more reorganizing and early retirement packages and opening events paid with private monies we can make things work. He noted that we cannot cut back on our responsibility of continuing statewide programs.

David Bradley reviewed parts of the Governor's recommendations for closing the budget gap. (The Committee was given the complete document released by the Governor's Office.) Mr. Bradley shared that Attorney General Ken Cuccinelli held his inaugural event here at VMFA and the Sunday after the Governor's inauguration, Governor McDonnell's out-of-town family members were given a tour of the galleries and the new wing.

VI. Adjournment

There being no further business, the Chair adjourned the meeting at 4:44 pm.

Suzanne Broyles
Secretary of the Museum