

Virginia Museum of Fine Arts  
Minutes of the Campaign Committee Meeting  
Tuesday, March 19, 2024, 11:00am  
Claiborne Robertson Room

There were present:

Lynette Allston, Trustee President, Ex-officio  
Cindy Conner, *Virtual (personal)*  
Anne Noland Edwards  
Jil Harris

Absent:

Martha Glasser

By Invitation:

Alex Nyerges, Director and Chief Executive Officer  
Candy Banks  
Carol Ann Bischoff  
Kathryn Blessing  
Sarah Burgess  
David Cary  
Jasmonn Coleman  
Stephanie Cooperstein  
Kristine Craig  
Betty Crutcher  
Bonnie Devlin, Washburn & McGoldrick  
Birch Douglass  
Erin Elder  
Celeste Fetta  
Mary Frediani  
Courtney Freeman  
Gretchen Friday  
Tom Gutenberger  
Jill Bussey Harris, Co-Chair  
Monroe Harris, Co-Chair  
Jan Hatchette  
Marie Hawthorne  
Peter Huber  
Ukay Jackson  
Bev Jennings  
Adam Kane, Office of the Attorney General  
Jim Klaus  
Jen Merritt  
Karen McGill  
Stacy Newport  
Caroline Nichols  
Jay Olander, VMFA Foundation President  
Lizzie Oliver

John Staelin, Co-Chair  
Michael Taylor  
Lilo Ukrop  
May Wells

## I. CALL TO ORDER AND MINUTES APPROVAL

President Lynette Allston called the meeting to order at 11:07am.

**Motion:** Proposed by Ms. Allston and seconded by Ms. Anne Noland Edwards to approve the minutes of the June 13, 2023 Campaign Committee meeting as distributed.  
Motion carried.

## II. WELCOME

Co-Chair Monroe Harris welcomed committee members and other guests to the meeting. He reviewed the agenda, thanked everyone for their support of the campaign, and noted the exciting times ahead.

## III. CAMPAIGN AND EXPANSION UPDATE

VMFA Director and Chief Executive Officer Alex Nyerges provided a summary of the pillars of the campaign – people, places, programs – and the impact that fundraising will have on each. Mr. Nyerges noted how the permanent collection has grown over the last 10 years and how the expansion will complement the growth as well as provide a second major exhibition space and an event space to seat up to 500. He then reviewed the construction timeline, culminating in the grand opening in 2028. He discussed the original campaign goal of \$365 million, an estimate of the revised expansion and renovation costs, an outline of the funding received, including the Commonwealth of Virginia’s generous support, and the funding needed to complete the project.

Mr. Nyerges reported that bids have been received for the Cheek Theater renovations. The theater is now closed renovation and will reopen in September 2024.

Tom Gutenberger, VMFA Chief Development Officer and Deputy Director for Advancement reported that more than \$290 million has been raised toward the original \$365 million goal for the campaign. He noted that \$105 million of that goal is for endowments for education and statewide, exhibitions, and conservation. He reviewed a list of the spaces, positions, and endowments that have been named thus far in the campaign.

## IV. CAMPAIGN CONSULTANT REPORT

Campaign Consultant Bonnie Devlin of Washburn & McGoldrick gave her analysis of the progress of VMFA’s campaign. She complimented the museum on the success to date. Ms. Devlin reported that the museum has good reasons to extend the campaign. She noted that with the help of the museum’s dedicated volunteers and supporters, she fully expects that the revised goals will be achieved.

Committee member Jim Klaus asked if the additional support needed will be expected to come from new donors, or donors that have already made a campaign commitment. Ms. Devlin responded that both will be prospects for the additional support. Mr. Gutenberger noted that one of the goals of the campaign is to broaden the museum's reach across the Commonwealth and with the help of the regional volunteers throughout the state, good progress is being made on introducing new campaign prospects to the museum. He further noted that work is being done to secure major gifts from corporations and foundations as well.

V. EDUCATION PRESENTATION

Celeste Fetta

Celeste Fetta, VMFA's Joan P. Brock Director of Education and Assistant Deputy Director for Art and Education presented on the wide variety of education and statewide programs that the department provides each year. She shared statistics on the fiscal year-to-date (July-January) impact of educational programs: 1,800 programs offered, 115,426 served plus 340,994 through the website. Ms. Fetta also reported on the success of the recent symposium *Picturing the Black Racial Imaginary* in conjunction with the *Dawond Bey: Elegy* exhibition (2,168 attendees) and *ChinaFest* (12,800 attendees). Information was also shared on the Interactive Gallery-Family Lounge, teen programs, Distance Learning programs, *VMFA on the Road*, the museum's traveling art mobile, statewide exhibitions, and Visual Arts/Art History fellowships.

VI. OTHER BUSINESS

John Staelin

Campaign Committee Co-Chair John Staelin noted that as an institution under the Department of Education, the museum is fully committed to the programs Ms. Fetta described. He shared that there are many naming opportunities in the campaign for spaces, programs, endowments, or sponsorships that will support education. He also thanked Anne Noland Edwards for a successful regional luncheon she recently organized, Tiff and Kelly Armstrong for their efforts with Cheek Theater fundraising, the members of the Foundation Board's Advancement Committee for their help with membership efforts, and all other volunteers and supporters for their efforts. Mr. Staelin closed by recapping the next steps in the campaign and expansion progress.

VII. ADJOURN

Lynette Allston

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn the meeting was made, seconded and approved by the committee at 12:15pm.

Recorded by: Karen McGill  
Executive Administrator