

Date: _____ Approved: _____

THE VIRGINIA MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS
Minutes of the Art and Audience Committee Meeting
Held, pursuant to due notice, Theater Level Conference Suite Room #1
Thursday, 12 December 2013, 9:00 am

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

There were present:

Ms. Susan S. Goode, Acting Chair
Karen C. Abramson
Mary Anne Carlson
Margaret Irby Clement
Michael M. Connors
Thomas F. Farrell II, Co-Chair
Richard B. Gilliam
Margaret N. Gottwald
Ms. Nancy H. Gottwald
Frederica P. Gray
Terrell Luck Harrigan
Dr. Elizabeth F. Harris
Keith R. Kisse
Charles Levine
Charles H. Seilheimer, Jr.
Dr. Lindley T. Smith
William A. Royall, Jr., Ex-Officio

By Invitation:

Alex Nyerges, Director
Stephen D. Bonadies
Ms. Suzanne Broyles
Dr. Lee Anne Chesterfield
Cynthia Kerr Fralin
Robin Nicholson
Cameron O'Brion

Absent:

James W. McGlothlin, Co-Chair
Dr. Monroe E. Harris, Jr.
Marlene A. Malek
Dr. Claude G. Perkins
Satya Rangarajan

I. Call to Order

Acting Chair, Susan S. Goode, called the meeting to order at 9:00 am and welcomed the group. Ms. Goode introduced new Trustee, Charles Levine of Williamsburg and said we are delighted to have him join us today.

II. Minutes

Motion: proposed and seconded that the minutes of the last meeting of the Art and Audience Committee held on the 18th of September 2013 be approved as distributed on the 22nd of November 2013. Motion carried.

III. Review of Two New Major Exhibition Proposals for 2016 & 2017 – Robin Nicholson

Robin Nicholson, Deputy Director for Art and Education, reviewed two new major exhibition proposals saying that it is highly important to keep these confidential as no announcements have been made yet. He added that this Committee is the first to hear of these future exhibition plans. This review is for Committee members to express their thoughts on the proposed exhibition program and give staff permission to go ahead with this exhibition plan which is a key part of our mission and creates a great sense of energy at the museum.

Mr. Nicholson explained that planning for a major exhibition starts with a positioning meeting that brings all our marketing, design, and development people together to create a framework for advertising and getting potential donors enthused about the exhibition. Mr. Nicholson said he works closely with the stakeholders of each exhibition to pull everything together.

The Deputy Director presented a chart of the past three years of exhibition activity showing that we had a large buildup of exhibitions at first when we used the new exhibition space and now have a less dense exhibition schedule. He went on to say that internally created exhibitions are needed and each curator is now tasked with creating an exhibition. In doing so we must be aware of what appeals to the public, such as knowing that scholarly exhibitions may not draw large crowds but are still needed to draw different audiences.

Robin Nicholson remarked that we had an interesting challenge with the *Picasso* exhibition, a most recognized name, and now we are planning a major exhibition of another very well known artist that cannot be announced just yet. Fifty-five works on paper will be included. He showed slides of the drawings in the show saying that since we will be the only venue for this exhibition excitement will increase.

Mr. Nicholson went on to discuss a second major exhibition proposal from an ongoing archeological sight. This one will bring major world treasures to the museum. He described this exhibition as spectacular in grandeur and scale and again, VMFA will be the only exhibition venue. He explained that we are taking a very imaginative approach and there is a huge educational segment to this exhibition. He noted that most visitors will never get to travel to its country of origin which will add to the allure. The Committee had questions and comments and indicated their support of these future exhibitions.

IV. Campus Plan – Stephen Bonadies

Stephen Bonadies, Deputy Director of Collections and Facilities Management, gave a review of the Project for Public Spaces that he first presented to the Committee in December of 2012. He noted that the goals for the Project for Public Spaces are to:

- Create a plan that builds VMFA as a destination
- Support partnerships with community stakeholders
- Develop a program of uses relevant to the Museum

- Identify short-term, lower cost improvements

Mr. Bonadies discussed the initial areas of focus for the plan which will improve seating, include new landscape elements to add color, and the addition of shade structures to enhance usage of outdoor spaces. After questions were answered, the following motion was proposed.

Motion: proposed by Mr. Royall and seconded by Mr. Farrell that based upon the findings of the Project for Public Spaces study, the Art & Audience Committee recommends that the Board of Trustees endorse the multi-year conceptual plan to improve the museum's campus. Yearly priorities for implementation will be articulated as part of the museum's ongoing budgeting process. Motion carried.

V. **Other Business/Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:00 am by Acting Chair, Susan S. Goode.

Suzanne Broyles
Secretary of the Museum