

Virginia Museum of Fine Arts
DRAFT - Minutes of the Resources and Visitor Experience Committee
Wednesday, 16 March 2016, 8:30 am
Norfolk Waterside Marriott
Chesapeake Room

There were present:

Tyler Bishop, Co-Chair
W. Birch Douglass III, Co-Chair
Kenneth Dye
Karen C. Abramson
Anne L. Battle
Cynthia Kerr Fralin
Margaret N. Gottwald
Terrell Luck Harrigan
Sara O'Keefe
Michele Petersen
Charles H. Seilheimer, Jr.
John Staelin
Dr. Shantaram Talegaonkar

By Invitation:

Dr. Lee Anne Chesterfield
Jody Green
Claudia E. Keenan

Absent:

Mary Anne Carlson
Dr. Monroe E. Harris
Barbara Noble Howard
H. Eugene Lockhart
Dr. Claude G. Perkins
Pamela C. Reynolds
Mary Gray Shockey

I. CALL TO ORDER

Tyler Bishop, Co-Chair, called the meeting to order at 8:39 AM.

II. MINUTES

W. Birch Douglass, III, Co-Chair, reviewed the minutes from the December 9th, 2015 Resources and Visitor Experience Meeting.

Motion: proposed by Mr. Seilheimer, and seconded by Ms. O’Keefe, to approve the minutes of the December 9th, 2015 Resources & Visitor Experience Meeting as distributed. Motion carried.

III. ADVANCEMENT REPORT

Ms. Keenan provided a rundown of the Advancement totals for FY 2016, noting that all numbers for these reports went through January 31st, 2016. So far, VMFA has raised \$2.7 million against a goal of \$4.5 million for unrestricted giving while the Museum has raised \$4.6 million for restricted giving against a goal of \$1.5 million. A large portion of this derives from a \$1.5 million grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation to support the Center for Advanced Study in Art Conservation at VMFA. This grant, for which the museum applied following a successful visit from the Mellon Foundation’s President, Mariët Westermann will advance a number of goals in the 2020 Strategic Plan.

Next, Ms. Keenan noted that Development recently targeted Dual Family memberships for growth as 65% of those enrolled at this level had lapsed. More than 31,000 emails were sent encouraging lapsed members to renew; Ms. Keenan noted that 600 renewals occurred due to this offer, which amounted to a 2% return rate. In the following weeks, Development will follow up with 50 selected Dual Family members with surveys and additional phone calls. Ms. Keenan noted that mailings would also be sent out to those who did not renew via email. Mr. John Staelin inquired as to why this was so successful, and Ms. Keenan noted that the Museum was offering benefits, such as a discount to see *Rodin: Evolution of a Genius*. Ms. Keenan also believed that many simply did not know that their memberships had lapsed. Mr. Ken Dye questioned whether or not VMFA had tested this against a non-discount, and Ms. Keenan noted that the Museum had not but would know more after the surveys. In response to several questions from Dr. Shantaram Talegaonkar, Ms. Keenan noted that her division would provide a zip code breakdown of out-of-town memberships and the results of the surveys from the lapsed memberships.

IV. CHANGE CAPITAL

Ms. Keenan reported that as of February 29th, VMFA had raised \$4.8 million in support of the Change Capital initiative and has \$650,000 left outstanding. As meetings continue to be scheduled, roughly \$14 million in solicitations remain, with about \$10 million of this representing one solicitation for a single donor. Ms. Keenan also thanked all of those on the committee who have already met with Development and who have contributed to the Museum. Additionally, she noted should anyone have any questions, they are more than welcome to contact her or her division.

V. RODIN SALES REPORT

Ms. Keenan provided a summary of *Rodin: Evolution of a Genius*, noting that the numbers in the reports reviewed by committee members reflect *Rodin* before it closed on March 13, 2016. *Rodin* made all of its income and attendance goals. With an attendance goal of 82,743, *Rodin*’s actual attendance was 87,564, and with a ticket revenue goal of \$452,450, *Rodin*’s actual ticket revenue was approximately \$456,663.

In response to questions from Mr. Dye, Ms. Keenan noted that VMFA sets its goals in a number of ways, including secondary data (comparable institutions), regression models, holiday schedules, time of year, and

type of exhibition. Furthermore, she noted that despite VMFA being closed for several days straight due to inclement weather, the exhibition did make all of its goals.

Additionally, VMFA saw an unusually large spike in the last two weeks of the exhibition that were unprecedented in previous exhibitions. Ms. Keenan reported that for week 16, *Rodin* exceeded the projected attendance goal of 3,936 with an actual attendance of 7,484, and that for week 17, the exhibition exceeded the projected attendance goal of 6,797 with an actual attendance of 11,535.

In response to questions from Mr. Charlie Seilheimer and Dr. Talegaonkar, Ms. Keenan noted that with regards to membership and ticket sales, *Rodin* performed better in certain discounted areas, including the senior discount, which meant that per capita income wasn't as high. She also stated that VMFA's membership hovers consistently in the 32,000 – 36,000 range, but the Museum expects a spike in membership with upcoming exhibitions. Lastly, Ms. Keenan noted that she would send information to provide context regarding the size of VMFA's membership in relation to peer institutions.

VI. GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

Ms. Keenan next provided a summary of recent General Assembly sessions, noting that VMFA received funding from the Commonwealth for 3 out of 4 special projects. The 3 projects that will receive funding include the Robinson House, the West Wing HVAC, and the Conservation laboratory equipment. The ArtMobile did not receive additional funding, but we did receive the donation of the Virginia Civil War Commission's "History Mobile," which will be retrofitted to serve as VMFA's ArtMobile. Co-Chair Mr. Tyler Bishop noted that the General Assembly works on two year budget cycles and that the ArtMobile would not even be available to VMFA until after the next budget cycle anyway.

VII. STRATEGIC PLAN

Lastly, Ms. Keenan began a review of the four main goals of the Strategic Plan and reviewed upcoming exhibitions and likely audiences for these exhibitions. She primarily focused on the goal of Audience Development targeted at African American and family visitors. Ms. Keenan noted that new hire Paula Saylor-Robinson, Director of Audience Development, would be focusing on the attendance of the African American community for VMFA's upcoming *Kehinde Wiley* exhibition. At the close of the meeting, Ms. Keenan noted that she would continue this report at the next committee meeting.

VIII. OTHER BUSINESS/ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:01 AM by Mr. Bishop.

Recorded by: Jody Green
Administrative Assistant to the Director's Office