Virginia Museum of Fine Arts
Minutes of the Operations Committee Meeting
9 December 2015, 8:30am
Founder's Conference Room

There were present:
Susan S. Goode, Acting Co-chair
Jil Womack Harris
Steven A. Markel
Dr. Paul S. Monroe
Stanley J. Olander
Satya Rangarajan
Michael J. Schewel
William A. Royall, Jr., Ex-officio

By invitation:
Stephen D. Bonadies
Ryan Dunstan
Laura Keller
Hossein Sadid

There were absent:
Thomas F. Farrell, II, Co-Chair
Richard B. Gilliam
Kenneth Johnson, Sr.

I.   CALL TO ORDER

At 8:33 am, Susan Goode called the meeting to order.

II.   MINUTES APPROVAL

Motion: proposed by Susan Goode, and seconded by Jil Womack Harris, to approve the minutes of the September 16, 2015 Operations Committee as distributed. Motion approved.

III.   INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY/INFRASTRUCTURE – Stephen Bonadies, Deputy Director for Collections and Facilities Management

Mr. Bonadies began the report on technology infrastructure by giving an overview of the integration of two key information management systems: TMS (collection database) and Piction (image database). VMFA has over 33,000 works in the collection that are tracked and managed through these systems; 7,000 works are currently available for public view. Mr. Bonadies reported that it is an on-going process that is being continually worked on and compared with other museums, VMFA is making good progress. Mr. Royall expressed excitement and impatience in regards to this project and asked if this information would be available to scholars to which Mr. Bonadies replied it would. The board members and Mr. Bonadies examined the McGlothlin page on the website and were happy to see that this information was up for the public view.

Mr. Bonadies then demonstrated how TMS displays the object's cataloguing information and photograph by using a Tiffany Lamp as an example. He explained that once TMS and Piction are all up to date with the museum's records, then the next step is to push these records to the website. A discussion followed on the services offered by VITA and issues and delays associated with the use of VITA. Mr. Bonadies reported that he is working on multiple fronts to improve service from VITA.

Mr. Bonadies updated the board members on the status of the new museum shop online feature of the website. Since the shop launched online in August, business has been steady and it has generated $12,000 in sales.

Next Mr. Bonadies reported on the IT Benchmarking study which concluded that VMFA "spends a lot more for a lot less". Peer museums have more in-house staff to help with IT, which VMFA does not. Mr. Bonadies reported that there have been discussions of hiring a Chief Information Officer. The benchmarking study also recommended the creation of separate and distinct operations and digital strategy teams. It is the belief of VMFA staff that hiring more in-house staff would improve the technology systems at VMFA. This discussion led to the conclusion that in the short run, the museum needs improved service from VITA. In the long run, Stephen Bonadies, Michael Taylor, and the marketing department should work together to develop a 5 year plan to improve the technology infrastructure, beginning with developing institutional demand and developing a staff after that is complete.

IV.   CAPITAL PROJECTS- Stephen Bonadies

Mr. Bonadies reported on the progress of the Robinson House construction. The construction is temporarily on hold due to a need for additional funding. The Faberge gallery should be under construction in February 2016.

V.   OTHER BUSINESS/ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:48 am.

Recorded by: Laura Keller
                      Assistant to the Secretary of the Foundation