Virginia Museum of Fine Arts

Minutes of the Resources and Visitor Experience Committee Meeting

Wednesday, 7 December 2016, 9:00am

Theater Level Conference Room #1

There were present:

Tyler Bishop, Co-chair

W. Birch Douglass III, Co-chair

Karen C. Abramson

Anne L. Battle

Cindy Conner

Cynthia Kerr Fralin

Terrell Luck Harrigan

Michele Petersen

Pamela C. Reynolds

Charles H. Seilheimer, Jr.

Michael J. Schewel, Ex-Officio

By invitation:

Alexander Nyerges, Director

Maggi Beckstoffer

David Bradley

Dr. Lee Anne Chesterfield

Jody Green

Claudia E. Keenan

Laura Keller

Alex McGrath

Cameron O'Brion

Hossein Sadid

Michael Taylor

Absent:

Kelly Armstrong

Kenneth M. Dye

Margaret N. Gottwald

Dr. Monroe E. Harris, Jr.

Barbara Noble Howard

H. Eugene Lockhart

Sara O'Keefe

Judy Niemyer

Dr. Claude G. Perkins

William A. Royall, Jr.

Mary Gray Shockey

John Staelin

1. CALL TO ORDER

Co-chair Birch Douglass called the meeting to order at 9:01 and welcomed the committee.

**Motion:** proposed by Mr. Douglass and seconded by Mr. Bishop that the minutes of the September 21, 2016 Joint Meeting of the Fiscal Oversight and Resources & Visitor Experience Committees be approved. Motion approved.

1. ADVANCEMENT REPORT

Deputy Director for Advancement and Membership Claudia Keenan reported that the development staff has raised 41% of its annual fundraising goal, explaining that December is a robust month for gifts. She noted that leadership giving has been strong. She explained that there are three new bequests, indicated as $1 contributions under planned giving.

She drew the committee’s attention to the special projects category. The Council raised more than $200,000 for the expansion of the Fabergé galleries through Fine Arts and Flowers. The development staff is working to raise funds for the 2020 Strategic Plan. They have raised $1.4 million this fiscal year.

She listed several opportunities for cultivating new donors, including tours of the conservation center and a friendraiser in New York City. She encouraged the board members to purchase tables for the *Yves Saint Laurent: The Perfection of Style* gala on May 2, 2017.

1. GOVERNMENT RELATIONS REPORT

Director of Government Relations David Bradley updated the committee on the FY18 and FY19 state budget. The museum has complied with a request to reduce the state appropriation by 5% for FY18. Although the state has indicated that the cuts may carry over to FY19 plus an additional 7.5%, it may depend on state revenues. He encouraged the committee to get to know their delegates, advocating for the museum using the talking points provided.

Next, Mr. Bradley updated the committee on legislation regarding a US cultural treaty on immunity from seizure. The bill would prevent artwork from being seized when loaned abroad. There are ongoing discussions of how this relates to Nazi era provenance.

1. EXHIBITION MARKETING UPDATE

Interim Deputy Director for Marketing and Communications Maggi Beckstoffer provided a report on exhibition marketing. She said that *Gordon Parks: Back to Fort Scott* attracted 63,759 visitors, a record among Evans Court Gallery exhibitions. Fine Arts and Flowers and the Fabergé opening drew large crowds this fall, as well. The press has visited to write about both Fabergé and *Jasper Johns and Edvard Munch: Love, Loss and the Cycle of Life*. She gave an overview of current marketing efforts, including television commercials, social media, and press. She outlined areas for improvement in 2017: media coverage, advance ticket sales, public awareness, and membership sales.

Ms. Beckstoffer outlined her plans for a press conference on January 10, 2017, with curators presenting the year’s exhibitions to the media. She explained that the museum has engaged a New York public relations firm specializing in fashion for Schlumberger and *Yves Saint Laurent: The Perfection of Style.*

1. OTHER BUSINESS/ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:57.

Recorded by: Jody Green

 Administrative Assistant to the Director’s Office