Virginia Museum of Fine Arts

Minutes of the External Affairs Committee Meeting

Thursday, 14 December 2017, 10:30am

There were present:

Ken Johnson, Chair

Tyler Bishop, Vice Chair

Martin J. Barrington

Cindy Conner

Janet Geldzahler

Martha Glasser

David Goode

Margaret N. Gottwald

Sara O'Keefe

Michele Petersen

Pamela C. Reynolds

William A. Royall, Jr.

Michael J. Schewel, Ex-Officio

By invitation

Alexander Nyerges, Director

Dr. Lee Anne Chesterfield

Jody Green

Jan Hatchette

Laura Keller

Cameron O’Brion

Hossein Sadid

Jayne Shaw

Michael Taylor

Absent:

Karen C. Abramson

Ankit Desai

Kenneth M. Dye

**Ukay Jackson**

1. CALL TO ORDER

At 10:40pm, Chair Ken Johnson called the meeting to order.

II. MINUTES APPROVAL

**Motion:** proposed by Mr. Johnson and seconded by Mr. Royall that the minutes of the September 13, 2017 meeting of the External Affairs Committee be approved as distributed. Motion approved.

III. ADVANCEMENT REPORT

Director of Development Jayne Shaw provided an update on the museum’s current fundraising priorities, including exhibitions, statewide, conservation, and unrestricted giving. Ms. Shaw noted that 35% of the unrestricted fundraising goal of $4.1 million has been raised and many end-of-year gifts are expected by December 31 to increase that number. Ms. Shaw expressed that Development is currently fundraising for the ArtMobile as well as upcoming exhibitions, including *Napoleon: Power and Splendor*, *Congo Masks: Masterpieces from Central Africa*, and *Awaken*. She also acknowledged that Foundation Board of Director Ms. Mary Gray Shockey has given a recent gift to make important changes and upgrades for VMFA’s Education Center.

Ms. Shaw reported that for the past 5 years VMFA has ranked number 1 amongst 8 partners for receiving grant funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the National Endowment for Education, and the Institute of Museum and Library Services. Ms. Cindy Conner and Ms. Pamela Reynolds posed questions regarding fundraising and advancement opportunities for the ArtMobile, its schedule for the first year, themes and staffing. Ms. Shaw noted that Development is searching for statewide and local visit sponsors and Mr. Jeffrey Allison, VMFA’s Paul Mellon Educator & Statewide Programs Coordinator, will be on the ArtMobile as an educator and VMFA will also include the driver and a greeter. The theme will be former VMFA fellowship winners, including Sally Mann, Cy Twombly, and Vince Gilligan. There will also be social media opportunities. President Schewel suggested that the ArtMobile make a trip to the General Assembly and Ms. Pamela Reynolds suggested that VMFA send a note to members of boards of local art museums, community centers, and schools. Director Alex Nyerges stated that the ArtMobile would attend local fairs and festivals; additionally it will be on site for the General Assembly event at VMFA and for Fine Arts and Flowers.

Ms. Shaw reported that $200,000 has been raised for VMFA’s participation in the Winter Antiques Show in New York City in January of 2018. Development expects a large crowd for the opening night party on the evening of January 18. She asked that any board members let her know if they would like to attend or invite friends.

IV. MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Dr. Lee Anne Chesterfield, Senior Advisor for Museum Planning and Board Relations, gave a brief membership update on the behalf of Director of Membership, Kristine Craig. Dr. Chesterfield noted that VMFA’s goal is to reach 40,000 members, and she reported on the recent development of Member Mondays running during the Terracotta Army exhibition. Members are allowed to bring two friends to visit the exhibition on these special Mondays. She noted that all timeslots were sold out within 2 hours. President Schewel noted he would like to see the membership assumptions in the budget to determine rate of growth. Mr. Barrington noted that the exhibition sells itself once visitors are in the door. Mr. Johnson suggested the option of adding a fee for the membership attendance. Ms. Reynolds suggested that the museum target the suburbs.

V. COMMUNICATIONS REPORT

Deputy Director for Marketing and Communication Jan Hatchette reported that *Hear My Voice* had an attendance goal of 46,800 and exceed the goal with a final attendance of 56,200. The *Terracotta Army* exhibition has a goal of 120,000 and has reached 32,000 visitors already. For marketing the exhibition, 26 bus ads have been purchased and a guerilla marketing campaign is underway with the replica warriors being sent across the state. Social media already has 1.3 million impressions and the Terracotta Army video produced in-house by VMFA has received 140,000 views to date. The press preview for the exhibition included 70 media outlets with both television and newspaper coverage. There will be several target promos through partnerships with Hardywood, Fat Dragon, Quirk, and more. There will also be a warrior fitness challenge partnership with the YMCA and the November Project. Ms. Hatchette reported that the goal is to tell a story and provide context through the China Media trip, archaeology forum, ChinaFest, AfterHours, and more. Ms. Hatchette also noted a possible reprint of the catalogue because of its popularity.

VI. GOVERNMENT RELATIONS REPORT

Chief Financial Officer Hossein Sadid reported that the biennium budget process was underway and that the museum would find out the following Monday its proposed budget for 2019-2020. Requests for the budget include a capital request of $1.1 million, gallery space for works on paper, ArtMobile, Evans Distance Learning Program, Conservation Center, Robinson House, and more. Lastly he noted that the museum continues the hiring process for a Director of Government Relations. President Schewel suggested that the ArtMobile and the Evans Distance Learning Program are going to reach more people than any other educational institution other than k-12 and that it will be important to show their impact on legislators in each district.

VII. OTHER BUSINESS/ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:40am.

Recorded by: Laura Keller

Assistant to the Secretary, Virginia Museum of Fine Arts Foundation

and

Jody Green

Administrative Assistant, Director’s Office