

Virginia Museum of Fine Arts
Draft Meeting of the External Affairs Committee Minutes
Wednesday, December 11, 2019, 10:00 – 11:00 am
Founder's Conference Room

There were present:

Ken Johnson, Chair
Sara O'Keefe, Vice Chair
Karen Abramson
Anne Battle, Foundation Liaison
Carol Ann Bischoff
Cindy Conner
Janet Geldzahler
Martha Glasser
Meg Gottwald
Ukay Jackson, Foundation Liaison
Michele Petersen
Pam Reynolds
Pam Royal
Jim Klaus, Foundation Co-President, Ex-officio

By invitation:

Joan Brock
Jeff Humber
Suzy Szasz Palmer

Absent:

Tyler Bishop
Gil Bland
Marland Buckner
Ankit Desai
Ken Dye
Bill Royall, Jr.
Charlie Whitaker
Monroe Harris, Jr, Ex-officio
Lilo Ukrop, Foundation Co-President, Ex-officio

By invitation:

Alex Nyerges, Director
Tom Gutenberger
Jan Hatchette
Stephen Bonadies
Caprice Bragg
Cammy Carleton
Kristine Craig
Maya Erhardt

Jody Green
Deb Love (representing Cynthia Norwood)
Thomas Lunsford
Hossein Sadid
Jayne Shaw
Michael Taylor
Kimberly Wilson

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Ken Johnson called the meeting to order at 10:01am.

II. MINUTES APPROVAL

Motion: proposed by Ms. Martha Glasser and seconded by Ms. Cindy Conner to approve the minutes of the September 26, 2019 External Affairs meeting as distributed.
Motion approved.

III. COMMUNICATIONS UPDATE

Chair Mr. Ken Johnson noted that the previous day's unveiling of Kehinde Wiley's *Rumors of War* was a huge success and he thanked staff for their tremendous efforts.

Deputy Director for Communications Jan Hatchette reported that *Cosmologies from the Tree of Life: Art from the African American South* exceeded its projected attendance with a total attendance of 52,311 visitors. Additionally, she noted that Kehinde Wiley's *Rumors of War* had generated an ad reach of one billion and an ad value of \$10 million as of Friday, December 6. It has already been included in press coverage by the *Washington Post*, CBS 6 and the *Richmond Times Dispatch*. Ms. Hatchette remarked that the museum would be able to gain publicity momentum for months to come with the recent unveiling in Richmond. Mr. Stephen Bonadies, Senior Deputy Director for Conservation and Collections, noted that staff hope to be able to give attendance projections based on the images taken of the event.

Ms. Hatchette then noted that *Edward Hopper and the American Hotel* has outperformed thus far, with a projection of 17,920 as of December 2nd and an actual attendance of 24,336 as of December 2nd. She shared a promotional video that will play as a preview at movie theaters during the holiday season to incite visitors to attend the exhibition. She reported that the exhibition had an ad reach of 453 million and an ad value of \$4.1 million as of Friday, December 6. She then reviewed marketing collateral images and projected attendance for two upcoming exhibitions—*Working Together: Louis Draper and the Kamoinge Workshop* and *Treasures of Ancient Egypt: Sunken Cities*.

Chair Ken Johnson commended Director Alex Nyerges and the senior management team for their hard work and leadership regarding the unveiling of Kehinde Wiley's *Rumors of War* and all of the marketing and promotion surrounding the upcoming exhibitions. He noted that

tremendous steps have been made in executing the 2016-2020 Strategic Plan and that he was very proud of the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts for the progress it has made.

IV. ADVANCEMENT & MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Deputy Director of Advancement Tom Gutenberger provided an update on the Campaign priorities and financial report. Additionally, he noted updates to the Campaign Committee, which includes Honorary Co-Chairs, Co-Chairs, a Planned Giving Committee, Regional Committees, and a Leadership Giving Committee. He noted how much had already been raised and the expected length of the Campaign.

Director of Membership Kristine Craig reported that the museum has 35,461 active member households as of November 30, 2019. She then reviewed the membership percentages, noting that Family/Dual makes up the majority at 32%. Additionally, in her report of membership revenue for FY20, Ms. Craig noted that the total unrestricted giving was at 32% of its goal for the fiscal year. Retention rates stand at 52% overall and 60% overall when students are removed from the equation. Additionally, senior levels have held steady over the year.

Ms. Craig reported that the highest membership levels occurred during the exhibition *Terracotta Army* with *Picasso* just behind. Aspirational membership for FY2021 during *Treasures of Ancient Egypt: Sunken Cities* if attendance reaches 325,000 is 47,178. In order to achieve this, new member acquisition strategies include direct marketing campaigns, additional training for Visitor Services staff, data collection for new member prospecting, promotions offering advance-sale reservations for *Sunken Cities*, and gift membership promotion. Retention and upgrade strategies include exploring additional avenues to deliver renewal notices, expanding *Member Monday* programming for added value, new member onboarding strategies, leveraging the ArtMobile, and more. Ms. Craig then noted new initiatives include the young professionals program, exit surveys to lapsed members, and digital membership cards. She then responded to several questions pertaining to membership and the new digital cards.

V. GOVERNMENT RELATIONS UPDATE

In the absence of Director of Government Relations Katie Payne, Chief Financial Officer Hossein Sadid shared a legislative update. He presented a summary of the museum's operating and capital requests that have been submitted to the Commonwealth of Virginia for the Governor's budget consideration. He then encouraged board members to lend their support by contacting their representatives and attending the January 21, 2020 Legislative Reception.

VI. OTHER BUSINESS/ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:04am.

Recorded By: Jody Green
Administrative and Project Coordinator, Director's Office