

Virginia Museum of Fine Arts
Draft Minutes of the Ad Hoc External Affairs Sub-Committee Meeting
Tuesday, April 27, 2021, 1:00pm
Electronic Meeting

There were present:

Janet Geldzahler, Chair
Carol Ann Bischoff
Ken Johnson
Pamela Reynolds
Pamela Royal

Absent:

Charlie Whitaker

By Invitation:

Alex Nyerges, Director and Chief Executive Officer
Lynette Allston
Kay Baker
Candy Banks
Caprice Bragg
Stephanie Cooperstein
Cindy Norwood, Office of the Attorney General
Katie Payne
Michael Taylor

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Janet Geldzahler called the meeting to order at 1:03pm.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Ms. Geldzahler reported that there were no requests for public comment.

III. BACKGROUND

Dr. Michael Taylor, Chief Curator and Deputy Director for Art and Education, discussed the background of a proposed land acknowledgment that recognizes Indigenous peoples and the history of the land where the museum is located. The idea to draft a land acknowledgement came during the *Hear My Voice: Native American Art of the Past and Present* exhibition, which highlighted the need to recognize Native artists and the tribes of Virginia. Curator of Native American Art Dr. Johanna Minich, Director of Education Celeste Fetta, Interpretation Manager Courtney Morano, Chief Strategy Officer and Deputy Director for Strategic Planning, Government and Board Relations Caprice Bragg, and Office of the Attorney General representative Cindy Norwood developed the draft, which Director of Government Relations Katie Payne shared with Secretary Qarni, Secretary Thomasson, and Courtney Wynn, Director of Indigenous and Native American Outreach for review. Dr. Taylor noted that the acknowledgement will be on plaques at the museum's entrance and

within the Native American Galleries respectively, and on the VMFA's website after it is approved by the Board of Trustees and presented to the tribes of Virginia.

IV. DISCUSSION

The Sub-Committee discussed the language of the draft to ensure it honored the history of the land and people, while remaining legally sound. Trustee and Chief of the Nottoway Indian Tribe Lynette Allston provided feedback and recommendations to the Sub-Committee, including the use of resources such as the Virginia Department of Education's website on Native Americans and the Virginia Humanities expanded encyclopedia. The Sub-Committee will present the proposed land acknowledgement to the External Affairs Committee to be voted on before sharing it with the full Board of Trustees for approval at its June 2021 meeting.

V. NEXT STEPS

Dr. Taylor outlined next steps with the land acknowledgement.

VI. OTHER BUSINESS/ADJOURNMENT

There being no other business, Ms. Geldzahler adjourned the meeting at 1:40pm.

Recorded by: Stephanie Cooperstein
Executive Administrator to the Chief Strategy Officer and
Deputy Director for Strategic Planning, Government & Board Relations