



Approved Minutes
Quarterly Board of Trustees Meeting
Executive Conference Room
2500 West Broad Street

April 26, 2018
3:00 pm

Present: David Botkins, Eucharia Jackson, Elsa Falls, Richard Groover, Ph.D., Tiffany Jana, Patricia Nicoson (teleconference), Denise Walters, Ph.D, Missy Neff, Mary Ellen Pauli.

Staff: Richard Conti, Chuck English, Kinsey Peeler, Saa'dia Walker, Elizabeth Voelkel, Courtney Moyer, Jim Blow

Other Attendees: Cameron O'Brion, Assistant Attorney General, Office of the Attorney General

Lauren Mathena, President, Danville Science Center Foundation.

Mr. Botkins called the meeting to order at 3:04 p.m.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Botkins asked the Board to take a few minutes to review the draft minutes from the January 25th, 2018 meeting, and then asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Ms. Falls made the motion, which was seconded by Dr. Groover. Mr. Botkins called for a vote to approve which passed without objection.

Director's Report

Mr. Conti discussed the following:

- The Museum has experienced two consecutive strong years.
- Attendance is up 16%, 38,000 more guests over last year.
- Including Danville Science Center, attendance is up 40,000 over last year.
- Over 6,000 member families.
- \$422K additional earned revenue from attendance.
- The detailed planning finds for the Danville Science Center are expected to be approved by the General Assembly.

- Design concepts for the new Danville Science Center exhibits are looking good.
- Northern Virginia Children's Science Center project is proceeding.
- The goal is to get pre-planning funds for the CSC in the second half of the biennial.
- The MiX currently has 650 teenage members, 250 of these attend several times per month.
- Experience in the MiX is informing programming for the Forge.
- New programming for Lightplace is coming.
- Wonderplace is undergoing renovations.
- 21+ programming focus group drew 150 members of the target market
- First 21+ event is scheduled for June 14th, three more to follow
- Going Places is currently in the Museum.
- The STEM Awards are later in early May.
- Barbara Thalheimer Theater and RF&P Forum renovations are complete.
- Work on the Forge is underway.
- The Center for Advanced Manufacturing is currently building the robot for the Forge.
- Science After Dark: Slime Night! was a major success with 2500 guests.
- Climate Connections lectures drew 700 attendees.
- Girls in Science Camp-In sold out.
- March Ratness was very popular.
- The new meteorite is installed to replace the one that was stolen, the theft drew international attention.
- The Marketing department did an excellent job on social media, and made an unfortunate incident into positive exposure.
- Field trips are up.
- Body Worlds Animal Inside Out VIP opening is on May 3rd, open to the public May 5th.
- Amazon Adventure and Oceans: Blue Planet are opening in the Dome soon
- Curious George will be coming to the Museum next January.
- Pompeii: The Immortal City is contracted for summer 2019
- Planet Shark: Predator or Prey is set for summer 2020.
- Public meetings for the Museum Green and parking deck were held in the past few weeks.

Mr. Conti then showed illustrations of the proposed parking deck and Museum Green designs to the Board, and told the Board that input from the Trustees on the designs was welcome. Among the possible features are a restaurant, public art, a water feature, and a dog park.

Dr. Groover said that Dr. Tom Lovejoy who is on the faculty at George Mason University has done very influential work on the Amazon, and suggested

contacting Dr. Lovejoy to speak at the Museum. Mr. English said the he would take Dr. Lovejoy's contact information.

Ms. Falls asked if the Museum plans to charge for parking in the new deck. Mr. Conti said that is not planned for normal days, however the Museum would like to be able to control parking in the deck as needed for special events. Ms. Falls asked if anyone was considering native plants as a part of the design. Mr. Conti replied that the Pollinator Garden does have native plants already, and that is being considered as part of the Museum Green along with other interpretive features about the native biology of the local area.

Dr. Groover asked about the possibility of a green area on the deck. Mr. Conti said that is a desired feature, but the challenge will be funding. \$10M is allocated for a \$12M parking deck, so alternate funding sources will have to be obtained in order to incorporate these features.

Ms. Pauli asked what kind of water feature was in the current plans. Mr. Conti said that that it would be some kind of an architectural feature. Dr. Walters asked about a rain garden on site. Mr. Conti replied that all of the rainwater on site actually already stays on site, and the Museum is trying to get permission to get some of the city's rainwater as well, so that will be a part of any future plans.

Mr. Davidson asked about security for the parking deck. Mr. Conti replied that the deck would be well lit and patrolled routinely by the Capitol Police. No additional security was planned at this time.

Mr. Botkins encouraged the Board members to send their ideas and thoughts to himself and Mr. Conti.

Committee Reports

Mr. Botkins transitioned the meeting to the committee reports.

Finance Committee Report

Dr. Groover said that the report to the finance looked very good and complimented the finance department on their excellent work. He then turned the meeting over to Ms. Walker.

Ms. Walker discussed the following:

- Earned revenue and admissions are still trending up.
- Event space rentals are up over \$85K over last year due to the opening of the Dewey Gottwald Center.
- Shop 4 Science has been performing well and has done a lot of work to update the inventory.
- Total expenses are being well controlled
- The Foundation has transferred over \$700K to the Museum this year so far.

- Memberships have exceeded budget by \$31K for a total of \$382K.
- Extra \$100K spent in contractual services for the Forge charge-outs through the IMLS grant which ended in March.
- NOAA grant ended in December.

Ms. Pauli asked about \$500K left in the Foundation for FY 2018. Mr. Conti relied that the funds would only be pulled from the Foundation if they were needed. Ms. Walker added that funds were usually left in the Foundation for projects.

Ms. Pauli asked if the Dewey Gottwald Center is being rented for weddings. Ms. Voelkel replied that it is, and the Museum had just booked its first FY20 wedding and the wedding business in general is doing very well at the Museum. Ms. Falls asked about wedding bookings when exhibits are in the DGC. Ms. Voelkel replied that the DGC is only made available for private bookings from September to April.

Dr. Groover remarked that what affected the variances in the finances is the timing of expenses this FY due to the large projects underway, and what is most significant is the management of expenses. The variance in expenses this year is 1% less than in previous years. Dr. Groover credited this to the excellent expense management of the finance department.

Dr. Groover invited Mr. Conti to discuss the strategic objectives for FY18.

Mr. Conti discussed the following:

- The Museum is making excellent progress on the strategic objectives.
- Capacity has been added to the Museum
- 21+ programming is planned for later in the year.
- A full maintenance assessment of the Broad Street Station is planned.
- The Museum scientists are actively working on relevant topics and working them into programming.
- The Museum's social media presence is doing well and interactions are up due to the quality of the content.

Mr. Botkins then turned the meeting over to Mr. Davidson for the Education Committee Report.

Education Committee Report

Mr. Davidson remarked on the Museum's success with Museums for All as discussed by Ms. Voelkel at the committee meeting. He then invited Mr. English to discuss Dr. Hoffman's recent achievements.

Mr. English told the Board the Dr. Hoffman was recently featured on the cover of Richmond Family Magazine, and that Dr. Hoffman was deeply involved in

sharing the idea that science is for everybody and is something that families can do together that doesn't have to happen in a laboratory or a classroom.

Mr. English also discussed the following:

- Science After Dark: Slime Night! was extremely successful.
- Summer camps have been selling out quickly and are growing in popularity.

Mr. English then invited Ms. Voelkel to discuss the upcoming 100th anniversary of Broad Street Station and Museums for All.

Ms. Voelkel discussed the following

- Planning and research that has been taking place for a celebration of the Broad Street Station Centennial on January 6th, 2019.
- Discussion with the local universities for unique programming to discuss the architecture and engineering of Broad Street Station are underway.
- The Forge will be used to bring artisans in to discuss historic plasterwork and the rosettes throughout the building.
- Discussions are also underway with Blanchard's Coffee for a Centennial Roast that would be on sale in the building.
- The Collections Department also plans to curate a small exhibit of artifacts from Broad Street Station.
- Updates will be given in future meetings.
- The Museums for All membership is available to EBT cardholders and was added in late November
- Since November the Museum has sold 102 memberships.
- Museums for All is intended to remove any barriers to experiencing the Museum.

Ms. Pauli asked how the Museum promotes the Museums for All membership. Ms. Voelkel replied that Britt Thurman, the Museum's Community Partner Liaison, is promoting the program through the marketing team. Materials have been put in places like the Henrico County Welcome Center and Richmond Public Schools. Also through working with the Department of Social Services to include it in new client enrollment packages.

Mr. Botkins then turned the meeting over to Ms. Jackson for the Brand Strategy report.

Brand Strategy Report

Ms. Jackson said that the Brand Strategy meeting was highly productive, and Mr. Conti had already covered a lot of what the Committee had discussed including upcoming exhibits and films. She then invited Ms. Moyer to deliver some highlights of the meeting.

Ms. Moyer discussed the following:

- 3 year and 10 year attendance is trending upward.
- Actual attendance is 119% of forecast year to date.
- The Museum has surpassed 6,000 member families.
- The Digital Guest Engagement chart has been updated to provide more accurate data.

Ms. Jackson added that the admission rates recently increased by \$.50 and a new admission tier for 3-5 year olds was added. The first Science on Tap 21+ event will be titled Science on Tap: Animals Unleashed, and will be held June 14th to support Body Worlds Animal Inside Out.

Mr. Botkins then turned the meeting over to Ms. Peeler to deliver the Foundation report.

Science Museum of Virginia Foundation

Ms. Peeler discussed the following:

- The Illumination Gala was an amazing evening.
- The Governor was among the 360 attendees.
- The event netted about \$120K
- Membership has never been stronger with over 6,000 members
- Total assets \$25.1M
- All VAM endowments have been transferred except funds earmarked for the long-term care of the SR-71.
- Up & Atom coming on May 16th.
- May 3rd is the VIP opening for Animal Inside Out.

Ms. Jackson asked about a large spike in Foundation donations in 2014. Ms. Peeler replied that was due to a large gift from Floyd Gottwald for the Dewey Gottwald Center.

Dr. Groover asked if he needed to notify the Museum in advance if he were to bring a guest to the Animal Inside Out VIP event. Ms. Peeler said that would be appreciated. Mr. Botkins added that the VIP event would be a good opportunity to introduce potential donors to the Museum.

Ms. Peeler introduced the Foundation's new federal grant writer, Brian Wilson.

Mr. Botkins then introduced Ms. Mathena.

Danville Science Center

Ms. Mathena discussed the following:

- The Danville Science Center Foundation had its quarterly board meeting the week prior.
- The DSC Foundation is in the second year of its five-year plan.
- All goals have been hit so far.

- Support from SMV and SMVF staff have been instrumental to the DSCF's success.
- Annual giving has now doubled due to new corporate partnerships.
- DSC is working with SMV and Roto on exhibit design concepts.
- The Early Childhood Center now has talking animals created by Roto.
- There is a pledge for \$250K for the Early Childhood Center.
- The DSCF hopes for a multi-million dollar grant request later this summer.
- It's time to revamp the Strategic Plan to extend it out further.

Mr. Conti added that the talking animals in the Early Childhood Center may be a development opportunity if someone wanted the chance to name them.

Dr. Groover asked if Danville was improving economically. Ms. Mathena said that it was improving and new jobs are arriving. Ms. Pauli asked if there has ever been a board trip to Danville. Mr. Botkins said that it had been discussed but had not happened during his tenure. Mr. Conti added that the last one had been about six years ago. Ms. Mathena said that she would be willing to spearhead planning a trip for the Board. Mr. Botkins said that if there was interest that he would welcome the opportunity. Mr. Conti responded that April 2019 Board meeting might be a good time to make that trip.

New Business

Mr. Botkins asked for any new business. Dr. Groover said that he had recently published a new book and had donated four copies to the Foundation for sale in Shop 4 Science.

Mr. Conti explained that the Museum had created an original video for an international online contest, Museum Dance-Off 5. Ms. Moyer explained the voting process and said that she would send the link to the video to everyone so they could vote. Mr. Conti then played the "Factual" music video for the Board.

Adjournment

With no further business, Mr. Botkins asked for a motion to adjourn. Ms. Neff made the motion to approve which was seconded by Ms. Jackson. Mr. Botkins called for vote which passed unanimously without objection. Mr. Botkins adjourned the meeting at 4:20 p.m. The next meeting will convene on October 25th, 2018.