



APPROVED Minutes  
Quarterly Board of Trustees Meeting  
Forum  
2500 West Broad Street

October 20, 2022  
3 p.m.

**Present:** John Benton (via Zoom), Gina Burgin, Dr. Richard Groover, Glenn Davidson (Via Zoom), Cristina Ramirez, Dr. Rodney Berry, Elsa Falls, Patricia Nicoson, Lauren Mathena, David Mills, Ukay Jackson, and Dr. Denise Walters.

**Staff:** Rich Conti, Elizabeth Igelhart, Courtney Moyer, Timshel Purdum, Ada Sue Siler, and Tyler Holtzman.

**Other Attendees:** Cynthia Norwood Marquez, Office of the Attorney General; Nene Spivy; and Gary Crum.

**Welcome**

Dr. Walters called the meeting to order at 3:01 p.m and verified a quorum was present before reviewing the agenda.

**Approval of Minutes**

Dr. Walters asked the Trustees to review the June 16, 2022, meeting minutes. Ms. Nicoson called a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Mills called the second. Dr. Walters called for a vote which passed unanimously without objection.

**Director's Report**

Mr. Conti discussed the following:

- The Science Museum has a continued focus on capital projects.
- The Northern Virginia Science Center project is the largest project in the history of the Science Museum.
- The Green Phase II design phase is complete.
- The Board took a tour of the completed Phase I area of The Green.
- Commissioned art sculpture, *Cosmic Perception*, is under construction.
- The art piece should be assembled in December 2022 and installed in March 2023.
- The tree type for the allee in Phase II was changed to a lower profile tree.
- The Art & Architectural Review Board (AARB) approved two large specimen trees for Phase II near the main entrance.

- The Kugel sculpture needs a new vault.
- The Green is the largest depaving project in Richmond's history.
- The Science Museum's internal administrative structure was reorganized in August. The Science Museum now has three divisions: external, core, and operations. The Education Department now has four assistant directors to help with the core function of the Science Museum.

Ms. Iglehart recapped a recent meeting with House Appropriations. It was recommended that the Museum submit decision packages for:

- More flexible wording for Maintenance Reserve funding for optimum utilization.
- Capital funds to demolish the Workers' Compensation building and address the remaining site..
- A supplemental capital request to cover construction cost overruns for the Northern Virginia Science Center.

Dr. Groover asked for additional information on the demolition of the Workers' Compensation building. Mr. Conti replied that the building's usefulness has run its course. The needed repairs and exorbitant costs to renovate now outweigh the benefits. The rental income will be missed, but there is a great opportunity to rethink the use of the site. Dr. Berry asked if the building holds any historical significance. Mr. Conti said that the building was built in the 1980s and does not have any historical significance.

Dr. Berry asked about the warranty on the native plants and trees planted in The Green. Mr. Conti clarified that all the grass, shrubs, plants, and trees have a one-year warranty.

### **Operations Report**

Mr. Harris introduced himself to the Board and shared key operational points.

- Special event rentals recently took a pause on booking to reevaluate pricing and contracts. Rentals are ready to start booking again with more competitive pricing and simpler contract language. The Science Museum's web page dedicated to special events was also revamped to be more user friendly and easier to navigate.
- The recent ¡Virginia Fiesta! event was a huge success.
- Management is currently reviewing the status of our security structure and procedures. The Science Museum will be increasing the security presence on the campus and will utilize a hybrid approach to security, using both outside contractors and staff. Administration will take great care with vetting and choosing staff security personnel.
- The Green and general campus will have clearly posted hours, most likely closed dusk till dawn.
- The next steps for operations are summed up in the following three key focus points:
  - The Science Museum will focus on properly placed people.

- Operations will have clear daily operating procedures and concise documentation.
- The guest experience will be prioritized, creating the best product possible.
- Changes are underway to update directional and general signage throughout the campus.

### **Northern Virginia Science Center**

Mr. Crumb expressed his joy in seeing this project come to fruition after working on the concept for almost a decade.

Ms. Spivy shared a video flythrough of the current Northern Virginia Science Center design and shared several updates about the project.

- The process of bringing the science center to reality has been long and extensive.
- Securing the land has proven to be the toughest hurdle.
- The State will own the land, 3.5 acres next to a nature conservancy and new urban development.
- The State expects to close on the land in December 2022 or the first quarter of 2023.
- Vital partners on the project include Loudoun County, Kincora Development, and the State.
- A goal has been set to cultivate a working partnership with George Mason University and Virginia Tech.
- The finalization of the building design is the next major milestone.
- Next month, the current designs will go to the architectural review board.

### **Work Plan Update**

Ms. Iglehart discussed the following:

- Steele Strategies, the Science Museum's DEAI consultant, met with a cross section of 65 staff members.
- Steele Strategies is working with leadership on establishing next steps and interpreting the findings.
- Overall the Science Museum culture is in a good place.
- The Science Museum has a culture with problems, but is not a problem culture.
- Having a better understanding of where the organization is, the Science Museum can move forward more strategically.
- Steele Strategies provided the following recommendations:
  - Additional coaching and mentoring is needed for Center4IDEAs.
  - The Science Museum needs to continue focusing on improving internal communication.

- The Science Museum also needs to aim for active inclusion of all staff in events and meetings.

Dr. Berry asked how many staff members are in the Center4IDEAs work group. Ms. Iglehart responded that currently the group is six people. Dr. Barry suggested having 10% of the staff, which would be about 16 staff members.

Mr. Mills asked what finding surprised leadership the most? Ms. Iglehart said that it was surprising that staff members did not realize that everyone has the opportunity to apply for professional development funds. Will focus on ensuring that staff is aware that anyone can apply for funding for training and continuing education.

Ms. Falls asked if the volunteers were involved in the talks with Steele Strategies. Ms. Iglehart shared that volunteers participated in a SWOT analysis which was utilized in the data collection process.

### **Finance and Business Operations Committee's Report**

Mr. Benton discussed the following:

- The financial position of the Science Museum remains strong.
- The first quarter of FY23 exceeded expectations.
- Revenue from rentals is down due to the strategic pause in booking.
- Overall expenditures are under expectations.
- Staffing costs are very well managed.

### **Resolution #001-2023**

#### **Statement of Approval for the Transfer of Fund 200 - Special Revenue to Support Phase II of The Green**

The Board of Trustees of the Science Museum of Virginia recognizes the importance of investing resources to build The Green, a six-acre public green space on the Museum campus that will provide ecological, health and social benefits for Museum guests, including school children visiting on field trips and individuals that live and work nearby.

The Board authorizes the Museum Director to transfer up to \$1.5 million from Fund 200 - Special Revenue to support the completion of Phase II of The Green in the agency budget.

Mr. Benton made a motion to approve Resolution #001-2023 as presented. Mr. Mills called the second. A vote was taken, all approved, none opposed. Motion carried.

### **Resolution #002-2023**

## **Approval of Trustee Discretionary Fund Transfer for Wage Staff Bonus**

The Board of Trustees wishes to recognize the commitment and dedication of the Museum's wage staff members. Since the Commonwealth of Virginia is designating bonuses for classified staff members, the Board of Trustees wishes to ensure that wage employees are not overlooked. Therefore, the Board of Trustees resolves that the Science Museum of Virginia is authorized to transfer \$35,000 from the Trustee Discretionary Fund to the Science Museum of Virginia operating account for the purpose of paying a one-time bonus to wage staff members.

Mr. Benton called a motion to approve Resolution #002-2023 as presented. Ms. Ramirez seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all approved, none opposed. Motion carried.

### **Education Report**

Dr. Berry recapped the highlights from the Education Department.

- Summer camp was a great success.
- Scholarship program was utilized at full capacity.
- The Education Committee took an informative tour of The MiX, the teen only makerspace.
- Model Railroad Weekend is fast approaching.
- Science After Dark programming for October will feature Spooky Science.

### **Closed Session**

At this time, 4:05 p.m., Dr. Walters called for a motion for the Board to go into a closed meeting to discuss the award of a public contract involving the expenditure of public funds and discussion of the terms or scope of such contract, where discussion in an open session would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the public body, pursuant to Virginia Code Section 2.2-3711 (A) (29), specifically to discuss a lease located on the Science Museum of Virginia campus located at 2500 West Broad Street.

A Board member replied to Dr. Walters request by saying "so moved," a board member seconded the motion and the Board took a vote by show of hands. All in favor, none opposed. Motion carried.

Closed session occurred.

Dr. Walters asked for a motion to reenter the open session. A Board member called the motion and was seconded. A vote was taken by show of hands. All in favor, none opposed. Motion carried.

Dr. Walters called the current time, 4:18 p.m. During its closed meeting, the Board discussed only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements under the Virginia Freedom of Information Act and only those public business matters identified in the motion convening the Board in closed session.

Dr. Berry made a motion to certify the closed session. The motion was seconded by Ms. Falls. A vote was taken, all in favor, none opposed. Motion carried.

A roll call vote was taken from the Trustees present.

Cristina Ramirez-Aye  
David Mills-Aye  
Denise Walters-Aye  
Elsa Falls-Aye  
Fran Bradford-not present  
Gina Burgin-abstain  
Glenn Davidson-Aye  
John Benton-Aye  
Kathy Lu-not present  
Lauren Mathena-Aye  
Patricia Nicoson-Aye  
Richard Groover-Aye  
Rodney Berry-Aye  
Suri Ganeriwala-not present  
Ukay Jackson-Aye

### **New Business**

Dr. Walters asked for any new business.

### **Adjournment**

With no new business heard, Ms. Falls made a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Mr. Mills. Dr. Walters called for a vote which passed unanimously without objection. The meeting was adjourned at 4:20 p.m.

The next meeting will be on January 19, 2023.