

## **MINUTES OF THE MAY 6, 2025, GOVERNANCE AND NOMINATING COMMITTEE MEETING**

The Governance and Nominating Committee (“Committee”) of the Board of Regents (“Board”) of the Smithsonian Institution (“Smithsonian”) conducted a meeting on May 6, 2025.

Participating were Committee Chair Roger W. Ferguson, Jr. and Committee members Senator John Boozman, John Fahey, and Denise M. O’Leary.

Also present by invitation of the Committee were Inspector General Nicole Angarella; Chief of Staff to the Secretary Greg Bettwy; Deputy Chief of Staff to the Regents Kate Forester; Special Assistant to the Regents Mallory Gianola (recorder); Under Secretary for Museums and Culture Kevin Gover; Chief of Staff to Representative Smith, Josh Jackson; Chief Legal Officer Jennifer McIntyre; and Counselor and Chief of Staff to the Regents Porter Wilkinson.

Korn Ferry consultants Divina Gamble and Dayna Keene also participated in the meeting.

### **CALL TO ORDER**

Committee Chair Roger Ferguson called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. and reviewed the agenda.

### **REVIEW OF THE MARCH 2025 AND APRIL 2025 COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the draft minutes of the March 13, 2025, and April 3, 2025, Committee meeting were approved.

### **ANNUAL REVIEW OF COMMITTEE CHARTER**

The Committee performed a provision-by-provision review of its Charter per its mandate to annually review and assess the Charter and evaluate its own performance. No modifications to the Charter were proposed.

### **ADVISORY BOARD APPOINTMENTS AND REAPPOINTMENTS**

The proposed slate of candidates to seven (7) Smithsonian Institution advisory boards was presented for the Committee’s consideration. Mr. Ferguson noted that for each respective advisory board, the unit director, the Under Secretary for Museums and Culture, the Assistant Secretary for Advancement, and the Secretary support the proposed appointment or reappointment of each candidate.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Governance and Nominating Committee approved the following motion for recommendation to the Board of Regents:

**VOTED** that the Governance and Nominating Committee recommends approval by the Board of Regents of the proposed slate of candidates for appointment or reappointment to seven (7) Smithsonian Institution Advisory Boards.

#### **PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE NMAFA ADVISORY BOARD**

The Committee then considered proposed amendments to the bylaws of the National Museum of African Art (“NMAFA”) Advisory Board. The proposed amendments include an increase in the size of the advisory board. The amendments also include modifying language to reflect the Smithsonian’s current organizational structure.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Governance and Nominating Committee approved the following motion for recommendation to the Board of Regents:

**VOTED** that the Governance and Nominating Committee recommends that the Board of Regents approves the proposed amendments to the bylaws of the National Museum of African Art Advisory Board.

#### **PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE NMAL ADVISORY BOARD**

The Committee was also asked to consider proposed amendments to the bylaws of the National Museum of the American Latino (“NMAL”) Board of Trustees. The proposed amendments include allowing the NMAL Board of Trustees to recommend for approval to the Board of Regents up to two (2) additional terms for board members who demonstrate exceptional commitment to their board service. Mr. Ferguson noted that these additional terms would allow NMAL advisory board members to serve four (4) terms totaling 12 years of service, consistent with Smithsonian best practices and the Institution’s policies regarding the establishment and operations of advisory boards.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Governance and Nominating Committee approved the following motion for recommendation to the Board of Regents:

**VOTED** that the Governance and Nominating Committee recommends that the Board of Regents approves the proposed amendments to the bylaws of the NMAL Advisory Board.

#### **EXHIBITION CALENDAR AND PUBLIC PROGRAMMING**

Under Secretary for Museums and Culture Kevin Gover reported on public programming activities, reviewed the exhibition calendar, and provided an overview of recent Smithsonian Directive 603 (“SD603”) reviews – the Smithsonian’s internal review process for exhibitions, public programs, research, and educational content. Mr. Gover reviewed: (1) Native Knowledge 360° American Revolution digital educational materials at the National Museum of the American Indian; (2) Smithsonian-wide Pride Month programming; (3) *American Stories: Artists' Books from the Smithsonian Libraries and Archives* exhibition; and (4) Malcolm X Centenary

programming at the National Museum of African American History and Culture. Mr. Gover also informed the Committee that the *Here: Pride and Belonging in African Art* exhibition at the National Museum of African Art that was slated to open in May 2025, has been postponed. Mr. Gover also shared that the National Air and Space Museum will open the next phase of revitalized galleries at its flagship building in Washington, D.C. in late summer 2025. Five new exhibitions, the Lockheed Martin IMAX Theater and the museum's redesigned entrance on Jefferson Drive along the National Mall will open on July 28. Mr. Gover reminded the Committee that the project to renovate the entire museum began in 2018 and will culminate next year when the remaining galleries open July 1, 2026, the 50th anniversary of the museum in Washington and in time for the United States' 250th anniversary.

## REPORT OF THE SECRETARY

To conclude the open session, Chief of Staff to the Secretary Greg Bettwy delivered the report of the Secretary on behalf of Secretary Bunch. Mr. Bettwy first shared feedback from the Smithsonian All-Staff meeting, which was held on April 10, 2025, in the Warner Brothers Theater at the National Museum of America History. At the All-Staff meeting, the Secretary shared an update on the Smithsonian operating environment and his vision for the Institution. The meeting also included a panel discussion with five museum and research unit directors sharing new developments in exhibitions, education, research and outreach.

Next, Mr. Bettwy noted recent events, including the Smithsonian Volunteer Appreciation Event, which took place on April 29 at the Arts and Industries Building and the Annual Smithsonian Weekend, which was held May 2-3 and celebrated culture, innovation, and discovery across the Institution.

Mr. Bettwy also briefed the Committee on the public announcement and launch of the Smithsonian Scientists Taking Astronomy to Rural Schools ("STARS") program. The STARS program will equip schools with a donated telescope, accessories such as solar lenses, ongoing teacher training, and curricula designed to strengthen science, technology, engineering and mathematics ("STEM") education for rural schoolchildren. As part of the program, staff from the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory ("SAO") will provide in-person and ongoing support for teachers as well as live observing sessions for students led by SAO staff and scientists. The STARS program will launch in Arizona during the 2025/2026 school year. Following the Arizona launch, the program will expand to reach rural schools across the country.

To conclude, Mr. Bettwy informed the Committee that on April 10, U.S. Senators John Cornyn and Ted Cruz introduced the Bring the Space Shuttle Home Act. This legislation (S.1403) would direct the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration to transfer the Space Shuttle Discovery from the Smithsonian's National Air and Space Museum's Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Center in Chantilly, Virginia, to the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's Johnson Space Center in Houston, Texas. The bill has been referred to the Senate Committee on Rules and Administration, and the Secretary will keep the Board apprised on any further action at the June meeting.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

The Committee entered into an executive session at approximately 10:43 a.m. to discuss the Smithsonian operating environment and the search for new citizen Regents to succeed Barbara Barrett, John Fahey, Risa Lavizzo-Mourey, and Michael Lynton when their terms expire in 2026.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to consider, the meeting adjourned at approximately 11:15 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Roger W. Ferguson, Jr., Chair