MEETING OF THE SOUTH CAROLINA STATE MUSEUM COMMISSION AND FOUNDATION BOARD

Thursday, March 27, 2025, 9:00 AM
Commission Chairman John F. McCabe Presiding
Foundation Board Chairwoman Rita Bragg Caughman Presiding

Commission Members Present: Chairman John F. McCabe, Lori Arledge, Gray Culbreath, Dr. Alexander Patrick, Jed Suddeth

Board Member Present: Chairwoman Rita Bragg Caughman, Chair-Elect Geoffrey Hardee, Roger Blau, Regina Brown, Charles Duke III, Debbie Durban, Emilie Lewis, Blake Montgomery, Nonie Price, Dedee Rowe, Philip Simoneaux, Alexandra Stathakis, Rodger Stroup, Margaret Wallace, Deborah Vandeventer

Museum Staff Present: Doug Beermann, Sonja Bradford, Hunter Brazell, Clayton Evans, Tom Falvey, Emily Gallo, Dorothy Hall, Robyn Thiesbrummel, Jennifer Thrailkill

I. **Call to Order:** The Commission and Foundation Board meeting was called to order at 9:02 AM by Commission Chairman John F. McCabe and Foundation Board Chairwoman Rita Bragg Caughman on March 27, 2025.
II. **Approval of Minutes:** Commission and Foundation Board approved their respective minutes from the January 2025 meetings.
III. **Foundation Legislative Updates:** Ms. Emily Gallo gave an update on the legislative budget cycle. The first draft of the budget has passed the House of Representatives, the Senate will release their draft budget in April.
IV. **Museum Revenue and Attendance:** Mr. Doug Beermann gave an update on the museum revenue and attendance. Projected revenue through the end of the fiscal year is $9.7 million. Attendance for February 2025 was 12,894, and March 2025 to date of meeting is 11,537.
V. **Federal Grant Update:** Mrs. Robyn Thiesbrummel provided an update regarding the IMLS grant and museum staff funded through the grant. Amy, Sonja, and Robyn are looking at other options to retain the current staff funded by the IMLS grant. Currently 5 museum staff positions are funded through the grant, these positions will be continued through August of 2025. There may be a reapplication process in September of 2025 to continue the imaging work funded through the IMLS grant.
VI. **Foundation Director Search Update:** Ms. Emily Gallo gave an update on the hiring of the Foundation Director position. Candidates will move to the second round of interviews that will take place on April 8th.
VII. **Foundation Update**
    - **Donor Relations**: Mr. Hunter Brazell gave an update on Annual Fund, RTE, Board Gifts, and Community partnerships. Numbers are reflective from

January 31 through March 27. Annual fund: $6,005 + $10,000 restricted gift, RTE: $5,000, Board Gifts: $4,000, Community Partnerships: $8,000. Capital Campaign gifts and commitments to date are $18,863,465. Two new community partnerships; Jeffcoat Injury and Car Accident Lawyers and LS3P Associates LTD.

- **Membership:** Mr. Clayton Evans gave an update on membership. February membership revenue was $23,948, March membership revenue is $16,257.

VIII. **Museum Refresh Projects:** Ms. Emil Gallo gave an update on the refresh projects around the museum ahead of the Heroes and Villains exhibition opening. These include painting in the Main Lobby and East Gallery, Mezzanine, Meeting Rooms, Blockbuster, Community Gallery, Lipscomb Gallery, Education Classrooms, and more. Wood flooring refinishing in the 2nd floor Blockbuster entrance, 4th floor overlook, registration, and traveling exhibitions. There is also a new front desk monitor and signage throughout the building.

IX. **New Exhibition:** Mr. Tom Falvey introduced the new *Light from Beyond* exhibition. This exhibition will allow low-vision guests to better understand and experience the science of light and telescopes.

X. **New Business**

- Chief Engagement and Content Officer 2nd round interviews will take place the week of March 31st.
- Upcoming dates of note:
  - April 28th Heroes and Villains Staff, Commission, and Board Preview night
  - April 30th Heroes and Villains Press Day, D23, and Friends of Finn Event
  - May 3rd Heroes and Villains official opening

XI. **Old Business:** No old business

XII. **Adjournment** – Commission and Foundation Board meeting adjourned at 9:45 AM. Pherabe Kolb of Reveillon Solutions opened the strategic planning session immediately following the adjournment of the Commission and Foundation Board meeting.