Meeting of the South Carolina State Commission

July 10 2024, 11:30am

Chairman John F. McCabe Presiding

Commissioners Present:

Chairman John F. McCabe, Lori Arledge, Sharon Bryant, Gray Culbreath, Robin McNair, Dr. Alexander Patrick, Jed Suddeth (via Microsoft Teams)

Additional Persons Present:

Rita Caughman, Annie Wilson, Tony Denny

Staff Present:

Amy Bartow-Melia, Doug Beerman, Sonja Bradford, Emily Gallo, Dorothy Hall, Karen Hall, Paul Matheny, Jennifer Thrailkill, Chandler Mack, Clayton Evans, Hunter Brazell

I. **Call to Order at 11:33am** by Chairman McCabe.

II. **Approval of Minutes**
   a. Chairman John F. McCabe asked the Commission to approve the minutes from the last commission meeting on May 22nd, 2024. Chairman McCabe made a motion for approval. Dr. Alexander Patrick seconded. Without objections, the motion carried at 11:34am.

III. **Welcome Remarks** from Executive Director Amy Bartow-Melia. The Commission began the meeting by reading the Museum's mission and vision statements and introducing new staff members.
   a. Chandler Mack: Public Relations Manager
   b. Clayton Evans: Membership Manager
   c. Hunter Brazell: Donor Relations Specialist

IV. **Legislative and Budget Updates** led by Amy Bartow-Melia, with contributions by lobbyists Annie Wilson and Tony Denny.
   a. Amy Bartow-Melia provided an overview of the Museum's FY25 budget which includes $1.2m for Retention and Pay Equity and $4.2m Capital Funds towards *Reimagine the Experience*
   b. Annie Wilson and Tony Denny encouraged the Commission to strengthen relationships with the legislature
   c. Commissioner Jed Suddeth gave an overview of his recent meeting with Senator Bennett
   d. Amy Bartow-Melia provided an overview of the Museum's intended budget requests for FY25. HR and IT requests are due on August 1st. On Tuesday July 16th the Museum will host a meeting with commissioners, board members, and lobbyists to discuss budget requests in detail and will present this report to the commission once compiled and ready for final input.
      i. Meeting for Amy to discuss acquisition of DHEC office space scheduled for August 8th.
         1. Amy shared rent payment timeline and options. DHEC paid rent for FY25. The Museum would not need to pay rent until FY26.
      ii. Provided overview of critical safety needs including new public address system and alarm systems.

iii. Further discussion regarding capital fund requests will take place at the meeting scheduled this Tuesday July 16th.
iv. Chairman McCabe encouraged commissioners to attend benchmarking trips to learn about methods and strategies of other museums for capital campaigns and renovations.
v. Jed Suddeth presented idea of sharing how capital funding will be allocated to specific parts of the *Reimagine the Experience* project. Amy Bartow-Melia outlined the phased approach of RTE and presented possible immediate actions that could take place upon expansion of the museum. Prior to the next budget cycle, the museum will detail these possibilities to show how expansion is immediately beneficial. The Museum needs to be very clear about how the SCSM Foundation will support RTE as well.
vi. Annie Wilson shared the importance of articulating our requests which will be further discussed during the Tuesday July 16th meeting.

e. Legislative Night 2025 is on February 25th. Emily sent a calendar invitation to commissioners.
f. Commissioners were provided a printout of the Museum's representation across the state to reference when speaking with legislators. Please reach out to the Museum if you have a meeting with a legislator and we will be happy to provide detailed statistics and information regarding specific districts.

V. **Events**

a. Upcoming events include:
   i. **July 17th:**
      1. Book Talk series launch featuring *Sharks Don't Sink* by South Carolina scientist Jasmin Graham. This event will take place under Finn.
      2. Teacher Preview Night: The Museum will offer an opportunity for teachers in the state to view museum galleries and to learn about our field trip offerings, led by Laura Kane.
   ii. **August 17th:**
      1. *Harvesting Heritage: Coastal Connections.* Please share invitation recommendations for anyone who may be interested in attending this event.
   iii. **August 22nd:**
      1. Visiting former commissioner Dr. Amon Martin in the upstate. Please let Emily know if you plan to attend.

b. The Museum's new 4D show is *Turtle Odyssey* and new planetarium show is *Solar Superstorms.*
c. Thank you to the SCSM Foundation for providing an ice cream truck for staff appreciation day.
d. Thank you to Chairman McCabe and foundation board members for attending the 80th Anniversary of D-Day Salute at the museum last month.
   i. Representative Brandon Cox, Attorney General Alan Wilson, and other friends from the state house were also in attendance.

VI. **Staffing Updates**

a. New Manager of Rentals and Special Events, Tamera Tedder, is starting on Monday July 15th
b. New Special Events Operations Coordinator, Haley Vaccaro, is starting on Monday July 15th
c. Jeremy Burt was promoted to Exhibition Design and Fabrication Lead

VII. **Finance and Attendance Updates**

a. Presented by Chief Operating Officer, Doug Beerman. FY24 ending income (including state appropriation) and revenue was $8.85m. Expenditures $7.97m. Ending cash carryover is approximately $2.2m. Final numbers will be reported by Shared Services by August 15th.

b. Year end attendance equaled 121,160, which is an increase from FY23 of approximately 10,000 visitors.
c. FY24 revenue totaled $1.77m. The average is $1.79m.

VIII. **Grant Updates**

a. The Museum received increased local grant allocations from Richland County A-Tax and City of Columbia H-Tax. The Museum received a decreased grant allocation of Richland County H-Tax.
b. Richland County denied the Museum a grant for monthly accessibility mornings. We are seeking other sources of funding for this program.

IX. **Museum Updates**

a. RTE
    i. Tuesday, July 16th: Museum staff, commissioners, board members, and lobbyists are meeting at the Museum to review our priorities for the next fiscal year.
    ii. August 8th: Amy is meeting with the Department of Administration regarding museum expansion
    iii. Flock and Rally RTE messaging strategy and crisis communication plan are being finalized and will be shared with commissioners once complete.
b. SC250
    i. Richland County 250 Committee meeting to take place at the Museum on August 6th
    ii. SC250 Commission taking a tour of the Museum on August 8th
    iii. SCSM submitted two SC250 grants: one for a Rev War exhibition, and one in collaboration with the South Carolina Historical Society for a traveling trunk. Should we move to the next phase of the grant application process, presentations will take place in August.
c. Commissioners were made aware of the next blockbuster exhibition coming to the museum.

X. **American Alliance of Museums Museum Board Data Report**

a. Presented by Chief of Staff Emily Gallo. Side by Side comparisons of the Commission, Foundation Board, and AAM Data were shared with the commission. The full report will be shared to commissioners, and side by side comparison graphs included in this meeting presentation will be emailed as well.

XI. **Foundation Report**

a. Presented by Foundation Director, Karen Hall. The current Foundation operating balance is $74,304. The current Capital Campaign balance is $1,770,339. The total across all accounts is $4,824,237. The total Capital Campaign contributions and commitments total $3,338,000. Total FY23.24 capital funds received was $942,292. The SCSM Foundation's RTE capital campaign goal for FY25 is $1.85m.
b. Karen Hall provided an overview of two new cross functional Commission and Foundation Board committees: Government Affairs and Steering. Commissioners interested in participating on either of these committees should reach out to Amy Bartow-Melia and Karen Hall. Assignments to be emailed by Friday July 19th.

XII. **Old and New Business** Presented by Chairman McCabe.

a. Old Business

i. Commissioner Dr. Alexander Patrick shared his experience attending the Museum's Artist Homecoming Event in June.
    1. Recommendation made to further engage Marshall Foster and Leo Twiggs
ii. Dr. Patrick also raised questions regarding the Museum's deaccessioning process. Director of Collections and Curatorial Affairs, Paul Matheny, provided a brief update regarding the deaccessioning process and will share further information regarding our process and policy at an upcoming commission meeting.
iii. Amy Bartow-Melia recalled the importance of discussing digitization in our upcoming FY26 budget request.

b. Silver Hills Development
    i. Chairman McCabe shared a letter from the State Historic Preservation Office regarding the proposed development next to the Museum on Huger Street.
    ii. Amy Bartow-Melia shared the proposed renderings of this property. This letter encouraged the developers to communicate with the Museum as a historical property to ensure the properties are visually aligned.

XIII. **Executive Session:**

a. The Commission entered into executive session at 12:37pm to discuss:
    i. An update on a legal matter
    ii. A confidential HR-related matter

XIV. **Meeting adjourned** at 1:13pm by Chairman McCabe.