Meeting of the South Carolina State Museum Commission
Wednesday, November 13, 2024, 11:30 am
Commission Chairman John F. McCabe Presiding

Commissioners Present: Chairman John F. McCabe, Lori Arledge, Robin McNair, Dr. Alexander Patrick, Jed Suddeth

Museum Staff Present: Amy Bartow-Melia, Doug Beermann, Sonja Bradford, Hunter Brazell, Clayton Evans, Tom Falvey, Dorothy Hall, Karen Hall, Paul Matheny, Robyn Thiesbrummel, Jennifer Thrailkill

I. **Call to Order:** The meeting of the South Carolina State Museum Commission meeting was called to order at 11:30 am by Commission Chairman John F. McCabe on November 13, 2024.

II. **Approval of Minutes:** Minutes from the Wednesday, September 25, 2024, joint SCSM Commission and SCSM Foundation Board meeting were approved.

III. **Thank you, Karen:** John shared that Karen Hall, SCSM Foundation Director, will be embarking on a new chapter, thanked her for her decade of service, wished her well on her next journey, said that she will be missed, and asked her to stay in touch.

IV. **Legislative Update**

- **FY25.26 Budget Request Overview** – SCSM Staff presented the museum's FY25.26 Budget request to the Governor's Executive Budget Office on October 1st.
- This year's requests include:
    - Recurring requests:
        - Rent and excess energy of the museum's current footprint and acquisition of the "West Wing" (formerly occupied by DHEC) 1st and 4th floors at $1.7 million annually. This will bring the Museum's full rent and excess energy charges to approximately 3.5 million dollars annually.
        - Staff retention & recruitment support for approximately $1.2 million which includes a request for 8 part-time positions converted to FTEs and funding for 8 vacant positions.
    - Non-Recurring requests included:
        - Emergency Public Announcement and Wayfinding/Alarm System at $300,000, with an emphasis on our need for a system to effectively address emergency situations.
        - $100,000 is requested for a new server.
    - Capital Funding request for FY25.26 for the *Reimagine the Experience* project is $20 million (with future annual requests slated over the next three years at $10 million each).
- Amy Bartow-Melia and Emily Gallo had a meeting with Marc Truesdale and Stephanie Meetze from the House to review the museum's FY25.26 budget request on October 24th, 2024.

- **West Wing Update** -
    - SC Department of Administration asked SCSM to change its proviso to exclude $1.8 million rental cap and instead pay full $3.5 million rental amount for taking over 1st and 4th floors of West Wing.
    - SCEIS and the Office of Resilience will occupy the 2nd and 3rd floors of the West Wing starting in FY25.26.
    - Dan Purini from the Department of Administration met with Amy, SCSM staff and state architects for a walk through to discuss options for security access for the multiple agencies using the floors.

V. Executive Director's Report:

Attendance and Revenue Update: Chief Revenue and Operations Officer, Doug Beermann, provided an attendance and revenue update.

- Revenue - Overall revenue generation continues to be positive. Operating from carry forward is being used for special projects, including the upcoming blockbuster exhibition.
    - YTD museum revenue is $436,096 with projected revenue for the year at $1.8 million with $1,639,194 budgeted as the worst-case scenario.
- SCSM attendance in October was slightly below the ten-year average.

Foundation Budget:

- FY24-25 actual development income is $71,827. Total expense is $83,399. Annual projection/budgeted is $335,000.
- FY24-25 actual membership Income is $62,611. Total expense is $131,032. Annual projection/budgeted is: $275,000.
- Salaries funded by the Capital Campaign are not reflected in the Foundation budget numbers above.
- Capital Campaign gifts and commitments to date: $18,823,432
    - State Funding: $15,055,465
    - Corporations: $1,600,000
    - Private Foundations: $420,000
    - Individual Donors: $148,000
    - SCSM Sponsorships/Memberships funds allocated to RTE over 5 years: $1,600,000

VI. Museum Updates

- **Staff Shout Out** – Congratulations to Timia Thompson, Collections Outreach Manager, for receiving a 2024 Southeastern Museum Conference Emerging Museum Professional Award and for being selected to participate in the Jekyll Island Management (JIMI) Leadership 2025 Institute.
- **Staff updates.**
    - Posted Positions: Collections Manager, Associate Art Curator, Support Services Manager, Procurement Manager, and Finance Director
    - Upcoming Full time Positions to be posted: Chief Engagement & Content Officer and IT Security Specialist
    - Recently Hired are Laura Conte – History Curator, Jimmy Morris & Delorme Arant - Public Safety Officers.
    - SCSM makes a concerted effort to hire our valued temporary part-time employees when they meet the required/preferred qualifications and are deemed the best qualified applicant. In addition to recently hiring Jimmy Morris and Delorme Arant, previously part-time temporary employees, our current HR Coordinator and Graphics Manager served in part-time roles before becoming full-time regular employees over this past year.

VII. SCSM Partnerships:

- **SC Athletic Hall of Fame (SCAHOF)** - Amy is drafting an MOU with the SC Athletic Hall of Fame for consideration along with draft budget and partnership plan.
- **Partnership with the USC Center for Civil Rights History and Research.**
    - MOU established to collaborate with the USC Center for Civil Rights and History Research (CCRHR) is currently at USC' History Department's Provost level for final review.
    - SCSM hosted a reception with CCRHR on October 18, 2024. Event attendees included civil rights pioneers, researchers, and educators from across the country.

- **Marketing & Outreach for Education/K-12 Programs** – Amy presented an update on the marketing and outreach our Audience Engagement team is doing to encourage more school visitation (including our grant program to provide bussing for Title One Schools). The Audience Engagement team will give a full presentation about our school programs at the January Commission and SCSM Foundation Board Meetings.

- **SCSM State- Wide Reach Updates** -- Upcoming Invites (Commissioners were provided with an expanded overview of general state-wide reach in each region)
  - Harvesting Heritage – November 16, February 8, March 22, May 17
  - Vista Lights – November 21
  - Holiday Planetarium Lighting – December 15
  - Douglass Day – February 14

VIII. Recent Acquisitions

- Paul Matheny, Chief Curator, gave an overview of recent art acquisitions to the State Collections, with public announcements of these additions coming in the New Year. New acquisitions include sweetgrass baskets and pottery.

- The Foundation Acquisition/Care fund now has $1.9 million. SCSM staff are great stewards of funds and have not touched the principal amount.

IX. Deaccessioning Vote. Robyn Thiesbrummel, Director of Collections Management, explained the museum's deaccessioning process, forms to be completed, and presented a SCSM object in the collection to be deaccessioned per recent NAGPRA Federal regulations. The SCSM Commission took a vote and approved deaccessioning of the object, which will be returned to the Catawba Nation. Robyn will remove object from collection once John F. McCabe, Commission Chair, signs paperwork. All NAGPRA-related collection items that should be repatriated must be completed by 2029.

X. Executive Session - Commission voted to enter into executive session to discuss a museum personnel item without objection at 12:30pm. Commission exited executive session at 1:00pm. No votes were made on items discussed in executive session.

XI. Adjournment - Commission meeting adjourned at 1:00pm.