**Strategic Planning Committee – Minutes**

**October 20, 2023, 11:30AM- 1:00PM**

**Location: Dominion Resources 600 E Canal St, Richmond, VA**

**Working Lunch: Provided by Dominion Resources**

Attendance: Lisa Carter, Mark Buss, Sherri Jordan, Art Evans, Joe Keiper, Jonathan Martin, Mary Zell Galen

Virtual: Barbara Truman, DB Poli, Roberto Quinones, Cord Cothren, Bill Kirby, Ryan Barber

1. Call to order

Mark Buss: Called meeting to order at 11:30 am

1. Prior Meeting Minutes Approval

Mark Buss: No need to approve prior minutes, because no quorum at last committee meeting

1. Chairs Intro
   1. Welcome of new members

Joe Keiper: Introduced Barbara Truman, new Foundation Board and strategic planning committee member

Mark Buss: Welcomed Art Evans and Sherri Jordan to the committee, and thanked Lisa Carter for hosting

* 1. Reminder on committee purpose

Mark Buss: Easy for the committee to get off-track, but this committee is most focused on the longer-term goals of the museum and immediate future goals.

1. Current Plan status: *A Museum Without Walls June 2020- May 2025*

Mark Buss: Committee is currently guided by last strategic plan, and getting ready to go into a new five-year period

Joe Keiper:

* + - * Provide brief overview of strategic plan, leading to the new strategic plan. Several projects will not be completed by 2025 and can be included in the next plan: VMNH-Waynesboro, funding for the Early Childhood Learning Center “Young Explorers Center” (pending on Douglas Ave. rehab), and Canopy Walk roadmap.
      * Gave updates on recent progress on Douglas Ave. Instead of doing remainder of project piecemeal, the remaining of project will all happen under the same contractor.
        + Lisa Carter: Asked if layout of building will change.

Joe Keiper: Currently prioritizing making sure project is prepared to hold museum collections and will be making sure entire footprint safe for collections.

Longer term issues

1. Framework for June 2025 – May 2030 Strategic Plan Development

Mark Buss: Provided document to plan for strategic plan

* 1. Discussion of proposed components and rough timeline
     1. Process

Mark Buss:

* Went over museum’s charter. The current plan matches with museum’s charter and need to make sure each current and future goal matches charter. Will get input on plan from both this committee and from other people.
  + Joe Keiper: Benefit of the Code of Virginia is its helpful with agency decision making. All current new initiatives fit nicely into these upcoming goals.
* Provide process for the development of the strategic plan, and move from setting goals, making objectives, finalizing strategies, and creating tactics for plan.
* Recently went to Association of Science and Technology Centers Conference and attended specialty trustee session. Found it beneficial and want to incorporate some of those strategies when trying to get plan right.
  + 1. Inputs and constituencies

Mark Buss:

* Wanted to consider our goals, what environment VMNH is in (ranging from political environment to demographics of the area), who our constituencies are (consider the community VMNH serves, and need to ensure we can serve both Martinsville and Waynesboro communities).
* Need to determine where VMNH can go after this plan on a macro basis and will collect some data from ASTC and bring our own data.
  + Lisa Carter: Suggested the benefit of having formal meetings with the constituency groups, especially for the staff.
    - Joe Keiper: Have some formal elements for some of these groups, but not for all of them.
  + Art Evans: Curators and staff are always welcome at the Research and Collections Committee, and he looks to them for their input when making decisions and meeting their needs.
    - Mark Buss: Looking for way to meet with these groups statewide, even if the format is simply a questionnaire.
    - Lisa Carter: This effort is also a way to raise VMNH’s profile.
  + Lisa Carter: Asked if VMNH had any relationship with HBCUs, besides Howard, as part of DEAI efforts.
    - DB Poli: Suggested for this to be helpful, we need to reach out to the right people. A lot of colleges and universities are restructuring and encourages VMNH to reach out to deans. Breach subject on how VMNH would like to structure with them and what kind of opportunities they would like to have with an institution like VMNH. Make this opportunity worthwhile for academics.
  + Mark Buss: Need to bring in corporate sponsors, even when they may/ may not match the museum’s values. Need to also expand corporate reach.
    - Joe Keiper: VMNH would welcome these conversations with donors,
      * Lisa Carter: Need a connection to get VMNH’s foot in the door with these corporations.
      * Mark Buss- When it makes sense, bring a legislator. Joe Keiper: Haven’t addressed in that fashion, but open to trying something new.
      * Lisa Carter: Important to having a pre-strategy meeting before each contact is important, as insider knowledge is important.
  + Mark Buss: Can’t plan for new governor, but what constituencies are we missing?
    - Roberto Quinones: Being a statewide resource, it would be beneficial to do market research throughout the state. Who doesn’t know VMNH and why haven’t they visited.
    - Lisa Carter: Educators (not academia), neighbors, local government, peer institutions (looking at 5-6 different institutions), other nonprofits.
      * Joe Keiper: Challenge with other nonprofits is VMNH is able to provide other benefits to other groups than VMNH gets.
    - Roberto Quinones: Wide range of groups, including cultural affinity groups, larger nonprofits, etc.
* After accomplishing all these goals, need to consider what VMNH has the financial and human resources to make happen, especially considering that VMNH has more to fit in after 5 year plan ends.
* Will develop measurable objectives and timeline for the project. Goal of this committee is to review inputs.
  + Sherri Jordan: Really need to know resources first, before making any decisions.
  + Lisa Carter: Love the higher participation today, but thinks that the full BOT needs to be presented with all the options to decide. Otherwise, VMNH is disenfranchising a lot on the BOT
    - Mark Buss: In order to accomplish identifying resources, will be staff heavy, so doesn’t want it to be too much for staff.
    - Cord Cothren: Suggests that if you present full list of projects to board, maybe someone else on the board may be interested in the projects. If the committee limits the list, BOT members might not see project that’s a good match for their skill set.
* As part of strategic plan, VMNH has a timeline:
  + Joe Keiper: Will submit self-study to AAM in the November 2024. In spring of 2025, VMNH will host peer reviewers. They will develop a recommendation to AAM board in summer 2025. Recommends to board that VMNH will have draft of strategic plan for 2025-2030 ahead of the new strategic plan.
    1. Consolidation and presentation

Mark Buss:

* Presents timeline of the plan. Will also provide a list of constituencies and format of discussions to get process started. Doesn’t know if committee wants to look at those materials first.
  + Joe Keiper: New plan starts May 1, 2025.
* Thinks plan should be agreed by the board by November 2024.
  + Lisa Carter: Suggests having strategic offsite meeting in at August 2024 meeting, and full Board votes on it at the November 2024 meeting. Suggests pushing meeting back to September 2024 for better attendance.
    - Mark Buss: Maybe plan will be completed before November board meeting. Lisa Carter: Doesn’t want it to be too much work for Mark Buss, and suggests delegating constituency groups.
  + Ryan Barber: Staff can bring any deliverables and incorporate that into the museum schedule.
    - Joe Keiper: In last two strategic plans, VMNH created a glossy printed document to distribute. VMNH can go back to print model for next year.
    - Lisa Carter: Suggests a one-page intermediate product would be helpful.
* VMNH has great legislative friends and should ask for their input on next strategic plan.
  + 1. Board Approval

Mark Buss:

* Does VMNH still want to use the “Museum Without Walls” theme for next strategic plan?
  + Joe Keiper: Would like to consider a new option, considering many museums use that language.
  + Lisa Carter: what does phrase even mean? Joe Keiper: Previously, a lot of the museum’s work was more insular and had the need to branch out throughout the state. Now, even children’s museum in Waynesboro uses the tagline “museum without walls.”
* Need to attract a different demographic with our new plan. Suggests all committee members come up with ideas for next plan’s theme. Important to consider the multi-directional resources that the museum offers
  + Roberto Quinones: What’s next after two locations open? Are we addressing the rest of the state with these two physical spots?
    - Art Evans: Need to consider a way to expand collections capacity, whether that’s Douglas Ave or expanding to the building next door. Using a lot of political capital for Waynesboro project, and need to plan for future collections needs.
      * Lisa Carter: How long will Douglas Ave. project take, and will it be ready to store collections soon enough?
        + Art Evans: There’s not a hard answer, and need to determine how Douglas Ave. will specifically address needs. And if not, part of strategic plan needs to be how VMNH will address collections growth.
      * Joe Keiper: Project is currently about a year and a half out, and work will be completed by January 2026. Need to determine how VMNH can ensure downstair collections space is ready to hold materials. Need to determine what materials lives in Starling Ave. and what goes to Douglas Ave.
      * Mark Buss: Need to determine if Douglas Ave. is enough to carry that plan, or if we need another option.

Immediate future goal issues

1. AAM reaccreditation- Discussed by AAM Reaccreditation Committee
2. New Business

Mark Buss:

* + - * Opens up discussion to ensure everyone’s comfortable with the process, as there are several new committee members:
        + Lisa Carter: One of the things committee has done in past couple years is DEAI work. Doesn’t have any action items in mind, but wants to make sure the committee checks in about it.

Mark Buss: How does DEAI fit into reaccreditation process? Joe Keiper: It’s another item, not weighed any more or less. During last reaccreditation, DEAI wasn’t a part of the consideration.

* Mark Buss: do we have statewide targets? Joe Keiper: At one of pandemic meetings, the BOT developed a list, but will need support. State had outline of a DEAI statement a few years ago, but doesn’t feel like that alone is adequate. Will share both laundry list of DEAI items and guidelines from the reaccreditation process.
* Mark Buss: Is there a state requirement for DEAI? Joe Keiper: No.
* Mark Buss: Is there a method when new board appointments are open, is there a way to make sure the board’s recommendation is considered by the Office of Appointments?
  + Joe Keiper: Office of Appointment is always open to options, and nomination committee can add recommendations. Office of Appointments will also have their own guidelines they want to meet.
  + Roberto Quinones: It may be beneficial for to be more pushy with Office of Appointments.
  + Roberto Quinones: What will our decision making process look like, knowing we have limited resources and time? Mark Buss: At beginning of discussion, if VMNH had something that everyone wants to do, we had to prioritize.
    - Art Evans: Not all goals will be completed in next five years. Need to identify a list of long- and short-term goals. Things shouldn’t be dismissed because it won’t be completed in 5 years.
    - Joe Keiper: When completing strategic planning, can develop enough projects for 20 years. When need to cull anything, look back to both Code of Virginia and charter documents. Helps decide things that would be nice to do, vs. a major priority.
    - Joe Keiper: When looking at VMNH’s festivals and visitation, VMNH has outgrown size of the building and our property. VMNH needs to consider at some point in the future, what to do with the existing building. There’s real estate opportunities and other options include building a wing.

1. Adjournment