

SUFFOLK COUNTY VANDERBILT MUSEUM

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Minutes

A regular meeting of the Suffolk County Vanderbilt Museum Board of Trustees was held on September 11, 2000, at the Vanderbilt Museum Planetarium, Centerport, New York.

The following were in attendance:

Dr. Steven Gittelman – President
Gary C. Fischhoff – 1st Vice President
Harlan J. Fischer – 2nd Vice President
Marjorie Kossoy Fuhrmann – Secretary
Michael Broxmeyer – Trustee
Robert LaBua - Trustee
Bertram E. Seides – Trustee
R. Douglas Shaw – Trustee
J. Lance Mallamo - Director
Olivia Fischer – Co-chairperson, 50th Anniversary Ball
Carol Sperandeo – Site Use
Corky Cohan - Staff
Bill Dieck - Staff
Maryann Zakshevsky – Staff
Sylvia Young – Staff
Karen Brown - Staff
Carol Hart – Curator of Social Sciences
Rita Beckman – Staff
Barbara Oster – Staff
Elizabeth McQuenney – Staff
Mark McHugh – Planetarium Astronomer
Florence Ogg – Staff
Leslie Tannen – Todd Shapiro Associates
Ann Marie Pastore – Stenographer

Absent: Donna DeLuca Periconi
Edward Hahn
Dr. Anthony Pecorale
Susan LeBow
Carl Luecke
Timothy Votapka

(Dr. Gittelman called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.)

DR. GITTELMAN:

Good evening, everyone. This is a regular Board meeting of the Suffolk County Vanderbilt Museum. I want to thank all of our guests in attendance. Do we have a list of those who have attended?

MS. PASTORE:

Yes.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Is there anybody in the audience who wishes to make a comment or ask a question of the Board? Thank you for attending. Marge?

MS. FUHRMANN:

Okay, as you may have noticed in your packets are the minutes from last month's meeting. Unfortunately, there was no time to have them mailed, so we're going to review these this month, and we will comment on both last month's and this month's meetings next month.

DR. GITTELMAN:

I have submitted a somewhat fictional account of what I had said during that meeting.

MS. FURHMANN:

I also did the same. I worked off my notes, so I'm probably somewhat accurate.

DR. GITTELMAN:

So we have no minutes to approve. Does anybody have an understanding of what happened?

MR. COHAN:

Yes. Two buttons weren't depressed on this recorder.

MS. FUHRMANN:

That's it?

MR. COHAN:

Yes.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Okay, so we don't have a 17-minute gap?

MS. FURHMANN:

No, it was 18 minutes.

DR. GITTELMAN:

No, we would have 17 minutes. Public Relations report?

MS. TANNEN:

Good evening. As you can see by the report in front of you, you had a very, very busy month. I'd like to start by showing you the television tapes that we were lucky enough to get this month starting with the meteor showers.

Video Presentation: 7:35 p.m. – 8:05 p.m.:

8/11/00	News 12	Meteor Showers
8/11/00	WLNY-TV	Meteor Showers
8/17/00	News 12	Sean Grace Band
8/17/00	LI News Tonight	Egyptian Adventure
8/18/00	WMBC-TV	Egyptian Adventure
8/18/00	News 12	Ship & Shore Camp
8/22/00	News 12	Romeo & Juliet
8/26/00	News 12	Romeo & Juliet

MS. TANNEN:

There are a couple more segments, but I think you more or less have the idea.

MR. MALLAMO:

Leslie, do you have anything else?

MS. TANNEN:

Well, I'm not going to take up too much more of your time. I know it's getting late. I know I've probably been on far more than you ever expected or even wanted. I think we have been as busy in the newspaper department as we have been in the television department. We tried to cover as many areas of the Museum's programs in print as we did on television. I hope we were successful. If you just take a quick look at the list at both the daily and the weekly newspapers, we covered the Planetarium, the concerts, the Living History Tours, as you have seen the Arena Players, Eco-Sails, car show, the dinner dance, Ship & Shore Camp, Egyptian Adventure classes, children's theater, Treasure Island.

MR. MALLAMO:

There's an article on the servant's wing.

MS. TANNEN:

Yes, the servant's wing. And that's about it.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Thank you. That was a great report.

MR. MALLAMO:

We also had an article, which I didn't even remember until I was looking through House Magazine two days ago, but I had the wrong House Magazine. I had last month's, and there was an article in the "North Shore Heritage Trail," which the Museum was very prominently featured in. I just stumbled on this accidentally.

DR. GITTELMAN:

But this only goes for August really.

MR. MALLAMO;

That would have been the August issue. I wasn't even aware that that was in there, Leslie, but I'll get you that. I had picked up the wrong copy.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Thank you very much.

MS. FUHRMANN:

What a nice picture.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Do you have something good?

MS. FUHRMANN:

It's a picture of Harlan and Olivia.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Oh, that's great.

MS. FUHRMANN:

Isn't that a nice picture? But it's in the September one so we'll see it next month.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Finance Committee?

MR. MALLAMO:

Tony couldn't make it tonight.

DR. GITTELMAN:

So there is no Finance Report. Personnel Committee, that would be Tony as well. Development Committee?

MS. YOUNG:

Carl is not here tonight.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Do we want to discuss the ball now?

MS. FISCHER:

I'd like to start by giving everybody a little present. Thank you to Mr. Bert Seides. We have here issues of September/October House Magazine. So if you would like, everyone, turn to page 88. You don't have to read it here, but there is a copy for everyone.

This is going to be a very short meeting tonight. I'd like to start by saying that the ball is a sell-out. We are at 300 and then Gary Fischhoff just put us right over that limit, so we're a little over 300 people who will be attending. It's a wonderful thing to say that the ball is a sell-out.

We have done extremely well with the journal and extremely well with donations. I know that you have a report in front of you, and it's hard for me to look at the numbers and figure it all out. But let me just say that according to Sylvia Young and Harlan Fischer, we're really proud of this group. They have done a fabulous job, and I want to be the first one to say thank you. I'm now going to turn the meeting over to Harlan to take it from there. I'd like to keep the report short this evening because we have really been pounding it into everybody's life for the last three or four months trying to drum up business and drum up money. So tonight is just a night to say thank you very much and we'll see you Saturday night.

MR. FISCHER:

I want to be the second person to thank everybody that's helped make this upcoming event a financial success and success in every other way. I know when I first told everybody that we were going to be sold out and not to worry so much about the seats, nobody believed me back then. You have to learn that if I say things like that, you have to believe me, because I know these things are going to happen.

This doesn't mean that we have to stop getting financial support from any of the people that we talk to. It just means that they can't come and join us for the festivities. They are certainly more than welcome to support any of the different educational activities that we have here and any of the other cultural activities. You don't have to stop as of this Saturday. If there is somebody that you didn't get to, and they said they want to help out, we're not going to have a final financial report on this until the meeting in October. So there is no reason why additional monies can't come in.

It looks like we're going to get over the \$200,000 number on a cash basis, but an extra few thousand here or there certainly wouldn't hurt. So just don't stop.

In addition, we have gotten some tremendous – one of the things that will show up at the next meeting is the House Magazine article. We have gotten some very favorable response from that. This is a magazine that goes out and sits around, and people pick it up month's later. They'll tell you that they saw your picture in it and so forth. What an ideal time right when they say that to really hit

them up for something. So this could go on for months and months, even after this weekend. But I do want to just let everybody know I appreciate your support and thank you. We'll see you on Saturday. We're going to have the best time ever.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Sounds great. I thank everybody for all the effort they have put in. The Museum can use every nickel we can come up with. So let's make that last push, and it will be a smashing event. I'm looking forward to it. Anything else?

MS. YOUNG:

Yes, Doug Shaw has something –

DR. GITTELMAN:

Yes, Doug.

MR. SHAW:

I was just trying to figure out which bow tie to wear Saturday night. The Vanderbilt Cup is on Saturday, the 30th of September. It's right on the heels of the ball. To date we have raised about \$4,000 in cash sponsorships for the event, an additional probably \$2,000 in in-kind donations toward the event and that's without even counting any boat registrations yet. The response to it has been pretty good. The folks down at Centerport Yacht Club are really working very hard on our behalf to raise some money and make this a neat event.

Of course, after the sailing that day there will be a party up here with the Island Boys Steel Drum Band and all kinds of fun stuff. So I hope everyone will stop by. It's only a \$10 ticket.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Thank you. Any other comments?

MR. FISCHER:

I just have one other thing I forgot to mention, which is for the Trustees that have said they were going to have a table and so forth, please get your own money in as soon as possible so we can give this to Sylvia and she can get the money deposited. We appreciate your help.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Okay, anything else? Thank you all. Marge, are you doing the Development Committee?

MS. FUHRMANN:

No.

DR. GITTELMAN:

All right. Director's Report?

MS. FUHRMANN:

No, you forgot Education, Exhibits and Personnel, which are all combined.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Go right ahead.

MS. FUHRMANN:

It's going to be a brief Education and Exhibits Report. Everything is moving along very nicely. School trips are booking. Everything is working out fine.

We're going to include some personnel comments as part of the Education and Exhibits Report. It's with great personal sadness that I report that Sue Hirschmann has resigned as Curator of Life Sciences. Sue has accepted a position, and I will quote from her letter, that she has taken a position at Newfield High School, Middle Country School District, where she will teach high school biology and chemistry. I know everyone will join me in wishing her well in her new position. She has agreed to remain with us part-time. I know this comes as kind of a surprise to everybody, but it was an opportunity that she just could not say no to. So I'm sure we all wish Sue well.

On that note, Carol Hart has also resigned as Curator of Social Sciences. Carol Hart is still with us, however. She will be with us until approximately October 2. Carol has accepted a position as director of a brand new museum that is being developed in Smithtown. It's going to be a reconstruction village somewhat along the lines of Old Bethpage, as I understand it. Again, Carol will also be here assisting us on a part-time basis as an independent consultant for reaccreditation and other projects as well as we go along. And, again, I'm sure you will all join me in wishing her well in her new career as a museum director. Personally, I'm going to miss them both very, very much. They work phenomenally in their work here. I can always count on them for detailed reports and lots of information. Anyway, that takes care of that.

Another personnel note, in your packet everyone has a copy of the draft of the new personnel manual. Tony and I would appreciate it if you would all take a look at the packet so that we can review it at the next meeting.

During the month there have been a number of in-kind gifts to the mansion that Lance has let me know about. Some of them are currently already on display in the servant's wing.

I'm reminding everyone that the LIMA annual conference is Monday, September 25. Registration is 10 o'clock. Please let Florence Ogg know by the 18th if you will be attending. I will be there. Don't forget that Olivia and Sylvia will be giving

a program in the afternoon. That session is from 1:30 to 2:30. The special event fundraiser is "From Nickels to Diamonds," how special events are organized and the goals institutions focus on while planning a range of fundraisers. I know it's going to be interesting. That's just to remind everyone. Florence's extension is 5508 in case anyone needs it.

I have one more thing. In your packet there is a draft of a resolution.

DR. GITTELMAN:

It's not a draft.

MS. FUHRMANN:

It says draft.

MR. FISCHOFF:

It's unofficial until it passes.

MS. FUHRMANN:

Well, there is a proposed text to a resolution concerning the waterfront. Those of you who were here last Monday night for the Education and Exhibits meeting are aware of what we're talking about here. If the rest of you can kind of glance at it real fast and then I have to read it into the record. While you're doing that, I'll read it out loud.

"Whereas the Suffolk County Capital Program includes two projects, restoration of the seaplane hangar and the development of the waterfront to enhance public enjoyment of the Suffolk County Vanderbilt Museum.

Whereas the Board of Trustees of the Suffolk County Vanderbilt Museum hereby recognize that the restoration and utilization of both the seaplane hangar and the Museum waterfront will greatly expand educational and recreational opportunities for the residents of the Long Island region.

Whereas a private donor is interested in providing substantial funding to assist, enhance, and develop the interpretive, educational, and exhibition services provided by the Suffolk County Vanderbilt Museum provided that these two capital projects are implemented.

Therefore be it resolved that the Board of Trustees of the Suffolk County Vanderbilt Museum hereby request the Suffolk County Legislature appropriate the 2000 capital project funds for seaplane hangar construction currently in the Suffolk County Capital Program.

Be it further resolved that the Board of Trustees requests the Suffolk County Legislature to expedite capital funding for construction of a boardwalk, dock, and

related waterfront structures necessary to access, restore, and utilize the Museum waterfront within the next three years.

Be it further resolved that the Board of Trustees support the concept of a dinosaur exhibit centered on inquiry-based learning that will tour the United States and Canada for a period of about three years then be contained within the Planetarium and seaplane hangar buildings for an initial term of five years provided that Suffolk County capital funds and substantial funds provided by the private donor are secured.

Be it further resolved that the Board of Trustees support the concept of naming the waterfront area of the Museum in honor of the private donor upon acceptance of terms and conditions of the gift as agreed by the Board and the donor.”

Does anyone have any comments on this?

MR. FISCHOFF:

We have to second it. I'll second it.

MS. FUHRMANN:

Thank you, Gary.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Discussion?

MS. FUHRMANN:

There was a long and detailed discussion last Monday night so there may not be too many questions here.

MR. FISCHOFF:

I'm just going to state that I know at the committee meeting I had some pointed questions about the proposal, but I think at the meeting and subsequent to the meeting a lot of the concerns that I had were clarified so that if there was any question, I wholeheartedly support the resolution. One of the issues that I had raised at that time, which has been clarified and I think it's best to state it on the record, is that it initially appeared that the donor would be making a contribution to a third party and then would be preparing an exhibit for the use of the Vanderbilt Museum.

As I now understand it, this donor, at least as the terms of the concept are, would make a substantial donation directly to the Museum. However, it would be designated to be used in conjunction with New York Institute of Technology for the development of an inquiry-based learning exhibit as described in the resolution. In exchange for the designated contribution, the contribution with the designated use, we would agree subject to the terms and conditions to be reached with the donor, and the Museum agrees to name the waterfront. So

since it is a donation coming directly to the Museum, although designated which is not uncommon in charitable contributions, the issue that I had expressed concern about has been resolved, at least in my mind.

So I'm comfortable with that and think with that issue removed, I think it's a great idea and a great concept. I think we could become at the forefront of this inquiry-based learning and with the technology that was explained that may become available to us with the palms and the software, it learns to adapt to the people who are using the hardware. I think it's going to be wonderful. I think we'll have long lines of people trying to get into this Museum to utilize this exhibit. I think it's great, and I look forward to the three years passing quickly until we have it here.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Further discussion?

MR. FISCHER:

I was also at that meeting, and I basically support the concept of everything you're trying to accomplish here. The only question I have is where it says the initial term of five years. I thought this was supposed to be – originally we talked about having a committee to decide exactly whether it was going to be three years or five years and whatever the terms were based on the last paragraph here that had to do with the acceptance in terms and conditions of the gift as agreed by the Board and the donor. So I'm not sure if the five years was decided upon them or is that going to be part of the agreement?

MR. MALLAMO:

I drafted this resolution at Gary's request. It was my understanding that the donor had requested a period of approximately five years. I included it in there. I look at it as what we're really talking about here is supporting the concept of this endeavor with the specific terms of the agreement to be worked out between the Board and the donor. I would suppose the Board would appoint a committee to do that. A number of details would have to be resolved.

When we say initial term, it may be that after this is up the Board at that time wants to retain it, so we didn't want to lock ourselves in either way. That's why I worded it that way.

MR. FISCHOFF:

My feeling on five years is that five years isn't really all that long in the scheme of things. One of my initial concerns when I first heard about this idea was I didn't want us to have a permanent dinosaur exhibit because I wasn't sure that that's what we wanted for the Museum. I wanted the flexibility to use the facilities that we build for the inquiry-based learning to be flexible enough to adapt it to perhaps other medium that might be acceptable or available in the future. I don't think five years is that long. What I was concerned about, which has been changed, is that we didn't want it to be a permanent dinosaur exhibit, whether it's

five years, we extend it beyond five years, or it turns out to be three years. In my mind, it isn't crucial so long as we have the flexibility that at one point if we want it to leave and substitute it with some other exhibit, we have that option. In my mind, five years or three years isn't that important as long as we have the ability or the flexibility to substitute it if we need to in the future.

MS. FUHRMANN:

I just want to say that regarding the five years, in terms of the educational programs here at the Vanderbilt, five years is not that long. I personally think there is going to be a great deal of enthusiasm among the school districts to send school children here. It may well take us five years to get through that cycle. You must remember that every school district on Long Island comes to the Vanderbilt at one time or another during the school year. I think this is going to be a tremendous draw. Perhaps we will be able to enlarge our base as a result of it. I don't think five years is an extraordinary length of time, either.

MR. MALLAMO:

I discussed this at a meeting of our curatorial team this afternoon. One of the focuses they would like to see done with this is to focus on public programming in addition to a focus on education, and that this will not conflict with our existing educational programs and would expand our family visitation here to the Museum in addition to the many other activities we have going on here.

MS. FUHRMANN:

That point was also mentioned at our Monday night meeting, that this would be a good way to get families to come to the Museum as well as school districts.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Further discussion? I think for me the most important element here is that we look at this gift and make the most of it. Hopefully everybody will have a sense of excitement, that everybody participated in it as much as they possibly could, and that for the period of time that it's here, hopefully it will be such as smashing success that you'll never let go of it. I think it's healthy for the institution to have a period of time where they say, "Look, we're going to do this. It's going to travel three years, be here for five years. If we love it, then we'll work with it for as long as it works for us." It's hard to get donors to be that flexible. Donors like to see things last forever. This would be a stumbling block with the donor, but it is the way that I will propose it. Any other comments? Are you prepared to vote? All in favor? Please communicate by raising your hand and stating aye. It passes unanimously. Thank you very much for your support. Director's report?

MR. MALLAMO:

If you'll notice as you came down here today, our new sod along the right side of the driveway, which vastly improves the appearance of our entry gate. Also, our gardens we're planning with Cornell Cooperative Extension Master Gardeners, their placing of the gardens that were done in an annual fashion this year. We're

looking at planting perennials there. This fall we're going to be upgrading with chrysanthemums tomorrow, so even for the ball it should look a lot more beautiful by the weekend. Chris Smith from Cornell Cooperative Extension was here today to report that Cornell has received the first installment of County funds toward establishing the marine center at the boathouse. He will be going ahead and retaining staff. He's got interviews scheduled already for the boathouse location. He expects the funding of \$280,000 from {Flag} Communications that will be provided through the Town of Huntington. The Huntington Town Board will approve it in two weeks. At least it will be considered in two weeks, and we hope that they will approve it.

I have a meeting scheduled later this week with the Board of Health and our caterer regarding the café operation. I think we're getting very close there. So hopefully we'll have good news to report next week.

The gift shop, as you can see over here, is awaiting very minor improvements to be done. We will start furnishing next week and putting in new stock that we're actively buying. I think you will all agree it has come out beautifully, and we hope that this is going to be a major economic engine of the Museum in the future. We're trying to get geared up for the holidays to make holiday shopping at the Vanderbilt a real designation for those doing their holiday shopping. We're going to have a special holiday event.

MR. FISCHOFF:

Lance, are we going to open this during "Music Under the Dome" events and so forth to try to make it like a retail operation that's available to other than the kids?

MR. MALLAMO:

Absolutely. The beauty is not only does it drastically increase our space, but as you can see we can lock that off so that we can have activities occurring here and not have to worry about things being removed. We can keep the stock out more.

MR. FISCHOFF:

It's starting to look like a real store, so I was thinking maybe we would have hours that reflect the activities at the Museum other than just school kids.

MR. MALLAMO:

Yes, definitely. We hope to make it public space. We're even working it out where different music can play in there than plays out here so we can have our "Music Under the Dome." We're going to have a whole tape and video collection, which we have never had before.

MR. FISCHOFF:

We can have performers in the shop and work out something on the night of the show.

MR. MALLAMO:

Exactly. That's what we're planning to do.

MS. FUHRMANN:

They currently sell their own CD's in the lobby so we could probably work something out with them.

MR. FISCHER:

Well, that, plus there is going to be a collection of all the artists that have performed in the "Music Under the Dome" series.

MR. FISCHOFF:

They will be available.

MR. FISCHER:

Yes, they will be available for sale on a consignment basis.

MR. MALLAMO:

We're also trying to work our interpretive efforts into that space. As I have described to you different areas of the room will be decorated to reflect the different disciplines the Museum covers. We'll also be including some historic photographs from our collection within the confines of the shop. For instance, in the Egypt area, we'll have a photograph of Mr. Vanderbilt on a camel in front of the sphinx and the pyramids. I think it will be an interpretive destination in addition of a retail operation. So we're all very excited about it. I think all of the staff that have been involved in this effort have done a phenomenal job. We even have the curators working with us to define what it is they want to see sold in the shop that will reflect their areas. It's a major new effort for us and I think we're going to be very, very pleased with the results. We hope to open it in two weeks. That's my report, Steve.

Just to add, as Marge indicated, we have had two members of our curatorial team which were a vital asset here to the Museum going on to bigger and better things for them. They will still be working with us so that we're not left in a void. But we will be looking in the future for new curators to cover these areas.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Okay, President's Report. I want to wish Carol and Susan the best in their future endeavors. I consider them both to be my friends and they certainly gave me a sense of camaraderie in being in this place, and I will personally miss them.

I think that over the years I've kind of beaten that theme to death maybe to the point where some people felt I was slighting them. I don't wish that to be the perception. It's just that sometimes you connect with some people. You see each other and you have them the day your kid comes in and you happen to watch a class, that's the class you watch and say that was wonderful and you

talk about it. It becomes a wonderful thing that you remember. So I hope that I'm able to connect with all of you in the same fashion that I did with Carol and Susan and get to understand what each of you does better. But certainly understanding what they did was a wonderful part of my term here. I will miss them, and I wish them the best of luck.

I had a meeting with Computer Associates to discuss the inquiry project. I thought the meeting went fairly well. The meeting was on Friday, last Friday. One of the things that was missing in the meeting was in-depth support materials. I recognize that we're all very busy between the gala or the ball, whatever you want to call it, and everything else, but I have a promise from Lance and I know the people at New York Tech will work feverishly over the weekend to provide better support materials because those same materials will be very useful in lobbying to the Legislature for the waterfront. If we're not all totally exhausted on Monday next, I apologize for your exhaustion but we will pursue the waterfront full blast because if we do not get that money appropriated, there is a chance we could lose it, a very good chance because some of the bills expire at the end of the year. We will be going after it.

Saturday is a very big night for me. I can't even tell you how big a night it is for me. I have to tell you how big of a night it will be for me because sadly not that much of the staff will be there, and I will miss them. I think that \$250 a night per person is a lot of money for many of my friends and apparently it's a lot of money for a lot of people. So I guess not everybody goes. But I have to tell you that this place is so meaningful to me and so fulfilling for me, and it wouldn't be anything for me if I didn't have the staff that made it happen. So I need you to hear that.

I have to thank Harlan and Olivia and all the Trustees for what is an incredible effort. This Museum has never seen an effort like this. I think we are all honored by the effort that you put out, certainly not just me, but everybody. It was really outstanding. Really, no one let us down. Everybody pitched in. I think that the credit is incredible. There were plenty of rough spots. There always are when you try to get something done. But I'm very grateful for everybody's ability to bounce back. As Harlan said, we should just have a good time on Saturday night.

I also understand that this place is filled with emotions, mine especially, and that everybody likes to see their particular niche given equal attention. They like to have fulfillment from the work that they do. So I think that we have to look at this new project as a way of fulfilling your niche, so whether you're involved in education or whatever you're involved in, I don't want anybody to feel closed out of anything. We don't want anybody to be closed out of anything. So it's just important that you take that approach. This is just another project that should be helpful in interpreting the Museum. That's my report.

Any unfinished business?

MS. FUHRMANN:

I just have a question.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Yes.

MS. FUHRMANN:

Are we getting close enough to reaccreditation that we should start to think about a committee and things like that?

DR. GITTELMAN:

Well, I think we have been noticed to begin self-studies. Is that the case?

MR. MALLAMO:

We will begin that in November.

DR. GITTELMAN:

I'm going to ask that we not move forward on reaccreditation until we have passed the obstacles of the Legislature in terms of the appropriations. I need Lance to be focused on the appropriations, and I think that that's about a two month process.

MS. FUHRMANN:

Okay. I was just curious.

DR. GITTELMAN:

If that's okay. Unless there are other things Lance can delegate, I would like the focus to be during the next month or two on getting the stuff through the Legislature. It's just so critical. We're at such an incredible turning point.

MS. FUHRMANN:

Okay.

DR. GITTELMAN:

And I would be very hesitant to take on any other project at this point, not to say the reaccreditation won't be an enormous project and not to say that it's not important. I think, by the way, that if we were able to get these last few appropriations through, they will help with the reaccreditation.

MS. FUHRMANN:

Definitely, but I was thinking about the self-help study that we developed last time. I don't know how much lead time you need to develop it.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Fortunately, we have that self-study to help us with it. One of the things that I'll steal from Lance is in looking at the photographs from the last time versus the actuals from this time, it's a dramatic change that should be very helpful in our appeal.

MS. FUHRMANN:

Okay.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Is there any other unfinished business? New business? Is there a need to establish an executive session?

MR. FISCHOFF:

Yes, I think we need an executive session for a personnel issue. It's regarding the Chairman, so we ask that you excuse yourself from that executive session. Do we need to vote to have the executive session or do we just go in?

DR. GITTELMAN:

We still need to vote.

MR. FISCHOFF:

I propose that we have an executive session regarding a personnel issue for the Chairman.

MS. FUHRMANN:

I'll second you.

DR. GITTELMAN:

All in favor? Opposed?

MS. FUHRMANN:

Why don't we go in the classroom? It's much easier.

DR. GITTELMAN:

It's easier for me to leave.

MS. FURHMANN:

But everybody leaves. It's an executive session.

MR. FISCHOFF:

I don't think we're going to be long.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Okay.

(Executive session: 8:45 p.m. – 9:35 p.m.)

DR. GITTELMAN:

We're back in order, I gather.

MR. FISCHOFF:

We have a resolution that arises from the executive session. So I think Marge is prepared to propose a resolution.

MS. FURHMANN:

The Board of Trustees would like to make a resolution that the Suffolk County Vanderbilt Museum Hall of Fishes be dedicated to Dr. Steven H. Gittelman, President of our Board of Trustees for his outstanding leadership and service on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the Museum. Here, here.

MR. FISCHOFF:

I second it.

DR. GITTELMAN:

All in favor? Opposed?

MR. SEIDES:

I abstain.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Thank you very much.

MS. FUHRMANN:

It will be announced Saturday.

DR. GITTELMAN:

That's really beautiful. That's wonderful.

MS. FUHRMANN:

I don't think the plaque will be ready in time.

DR. GITTELMAN:

That's wonderful.

MR. FISCHOFF:

So you thought we were going to fire you, and you'd get off easy.

DR. GITTELMAN:

I thank you very much. The only thing I can tell you is all it does is move me to work harder. That's just wonderful. It's very fulfilling. Thank you very much. I

really have to tell you that. I really appreciate it. Can I ask something to be added to the plaque? You can tell me no. Just listen. It sounds like an amazing goal but just listen. “And he asks all of you who enters the hall to ask, why are there so many fishes?” Would you mind?

MR. FISCHER:

Do you want all of that on there, or just why are there so many fishes?

DR. GITTELMAN:

Yes, because that’s the way I’ve always approached that hall. It always reminds me of that question. Do you take objection to that?

MR. FISCHOFF:

No.

MS. FUHRMANN:

No.

MR. FISCHOFF:

That could be the beginning of the inquiry learning at the Hall of Fishes.

DR. GITTELMAN:

To me, that’s what that hall always represented.

MS. FUHRMANN:

Biodiversity.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Biodiversity. So if you would put down, “He asks you all to ask yourself, why are there so many animals,” or “Why are there so many fishes?”

MS. FUHRMANN:

Fishes. Sea creatures.

MR. FISCHOFF:

Fishes sounds better.

DR. GITTELMAN:

I just want them to think about biodiversity.

MS. FUHRMANN:

But there are other things beside fishes in the Hall of Fishes. There are turtles there and things. I was trying to be more encompassing. Marine animals?

MR. GITTELMAN:

Whatever. The original question was, why are there so many animals? There was an article written in 1953, I think, that started a science of biodiversity. That's how I feel about that. I think that would be wonderful.

MS. FUHRMANN:

You want animals instead of fishes?

MR. MALLAMO:

Could we just work on that and talk about it?

DR. GITTELMAN:

Yes, I apologize for asking for something like that.

MR. MALLAMO:

Maybe it's fine, but I would just like to think about that a little bit. I know what you're trying to say. With the Board's approval, if I come up with something, then we'll talk with everyone beforehand.

DR. GITTELMAN:

I really appreciate it. It's wonderful, absolutely fantastic. Thank you very much. It's a wonderful honor. Any other business?

MS. FUHRMANN:

Motion to adjourn. Anyone want to second me?

MR. FISCHER:

Yes, second.

DR. GITTELMAN:

We are adjourned.

(Dr. Gittelman adjourned the meeting at 9:45 p.m.)

SG/ap