

**SUFFOLK COUNTY VANDERBILT MUSEUM**

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING**

**February 21, 2001**

A regular meeting of the Suffolk County Vanderbilt Museum Board of Trustees was held on February 21, 2001 in the Planetarium, Centerport, New York.

**The following were in attendance:**

Dr. Steven Gittelman – President  
Gary C. Fischhoff – 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President  
Carl Luecke – 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President  
Dr. Anthony Pecorale – Treasurer  
Donna deLuca Periconi – Trustee  
Robert LaBua – Trustee  
Timothy Votapka – Trustee  
Michael Broxmeyer – Trustee  
Bertram Seides – Trustee  
Edward J. Hahn – Trustee  
R. Douglas Shaw – Trustee  
Susan LeBow – Trustee  
J. Lance Mallamo – Director  
Leslie Tannen – Todd Shapiro Associates  
Florence Ogg – Staff  
Mark McHugh – Staff  
Bill Dieck – Staff  
David Bush – Staff  
Wendy O'Donohoe – Staff  
Maryann Zakshevsky – Staff  
Ann Marie Pastore – Stenographer

**Absent:**

Marjorie Kossoy Fuhrmann

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

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Good evening. This is a regular meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Suffolk County Vanderbilt Museum. Thank you all for attending. Do we have a list of guests in attendance?

**MS. PASTORE:**

Yes.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

We do. Thank you. Is there anybody who would like to make comments or ask questions of the Board of Trustees? Anybody? Thank you for joining us this evening. Marge Fuhrmann contacted me regarding the minutes. She asked me to put in a motion on her behalf for the minutes of the last meeting to be accepted without change. Is there anybody who would please accept that motion?

**MR. LUECKE:**

Second.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

I have a second to the motion. Is there any commentary? Any changes? If there are none, all in favor of approving the minutes? Opposed? Abstentions?

**MR. FISCHOFF:**

Abstain.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Motion carries. **(Vote: 11/0/1/1 Abstained: Mr. Fischoff. Absent: Ms. Fuhrmann.)**

**MR. LUECKE:**

Are the agendas in there? I don't see them.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

The agendas aren't in there?

**MR. LUECKE:**

No, I don't see one.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Okay, we're going to wing it. Oh, do you have one? I just don't remember the order we do this.

**DR. PECORALE:**

It just shows how much we miss Rita.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

Yes.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

I was going to do public relations next anyway. Can we have the Public Relations' Report, please?

**MS. TANNEN:**

Since we're starting a little bit late tonight, this is going to be mercifully brief. We're not showing any videos tonight, and the report basically indicates that we have covered a pretty wide range of activities that are occurring here. We have the Children's Theater that goes on, the Planetarium shows, and a lot of activities occurred during December around the holiday time. There were lectures. There were tours. There was a wonderful New Year's Eve celebration. There was a holiday reception. We have tried to cover it all.

We're going to have a wonderful opportunity tomorrow that came up at the last minute. I would like you all to be aware of it in case you wanted to be here. At twelve o'clock tomorrow afternoon Channel 21 is coming down with a camera crew, and they are going to be talking to Lance. They're also going to be talking to Mark McHugh. They are going to be covering the Planetarium show. They're going to be covering various activities occurring in the Museum. So I thought that was very nice, and I would like you all to be aware of it. If you care to come down, please feel free to join us.

**MR. LABUA:**

What time was that?

**MS. TANNEN:**

Twelve o'clock.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Thank you. Any questions or comments? Thank you for that report. Reaccreditation Committee.

**MR. LABUA:**

He is handing out copies right now. We have on the list – actually we're in very, very good shape as far as the reaccreditation information that we have to prepare for our self-study. On that listing that is being handed out now, there are 41 individual items of information that have to be submitted as part of our self-study. Only seven remain to be completed as you can see.

I guess the most significant outstanding matter to take care of with that is the photographs. We have to have photographs of everything that were photographed before. We had suggested that perhaps we could keep some of them and just take photographs of where there are significant changes, but after going through the photographs it seems like almost everything there has been a significant change. So Florence is going to be contacting the photographer to let him come over and see what he would charge us to take the photographs again, to bring them up to speed to what we need.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Can we do this digitally? What about a digital camera?

**MR. LABUA:**

I suppose we could. This way we would have it on our computer. I don't know if that particular photographer has a digital camera, but, Florence, you could check that with him, right?

**MS. OGG:**

I'll ask.

**MR. LABUA:**

Some of the areas that we would photograph will be changed and improved between now and October when we have to submit the self-study. So we're going to hold off with the photographs until the work is completed so that we don't take them twice.

Lance is utilizing some Department of Labor personnel that have been sent over here to clean up and paint areas that are really not critical areas but I understand that somebody made a commitment to the Visitation Committee that they are free to open up any door they want to. We didn't want them to have any surprises so we are trying to avoid that.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

That's my standing offer, yes.

**MR. LABUA:**

Also, the plans for this estate are rolled up. This is not acceptable. The plans must be microfilmed and encapsulated for preservation purposes. The County, apparently, has offered to microfilm the plans at no charge to the Museum. However, we do have to buy the encapsulation envelopes. From what I understand, we have an estimated cost of approximately \$2,000. I think we can find somewhere in our budget to take care of that so that we can show that we are moving ahead in that particular area.

Another item that I think I should call to the attention of the Board is that the collections were last appraised in 1985. Our insurance company has expressed a concern that we're probably undervalued in our coverage. It would be a good idea for us to try to get another appraisal. I understand that Christie's conducted a walk-through five years ago. Since this requires specialists, not a regular appraisal, but specialists, that five years ago the cost that was proposed was \$20,000. I suggest to the Board that we consider having another walk-through, which is complimentary, they don't charge us for that. Let them give us another proposal and have these documents available so that if we don't do anything between now and when the Visitation Committee comes here, at least it shows that we're cognizant of the fact that we need this appraisal and that we are trying to complete it whenever we get the necessary funding. It shows that we're not avoiding it. We're trying to do it.

The staff has obtained and installed a new software program for our collection records. The epigraphic artifacts records have been computerized, and Florence is now working on the fine and decorative arts objects. We may have that completed also by the time we have a visit. The bottom line is that I think we are in very, very good shape. We should really breeze through between now and October and have everything all ready for November.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

What about the accessioning of items, biological specimens? I understanding they're accessioned by shelf.

**MR. LABUA:**

Accessioned by what?

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Shelf. Individual containers are not individually accessioned within shelf. They should be accessioned by individual containers as opposed to by shelf. They are currently accessioned by shelf. Am I correct?

**MR. MALLAMO:**

Yes, and we kept taking steps to address that. We have recently hired a new Curator. We're going to be working with Cornell Cooperative Extension. I don't know if we're going to have that completed by the time this process is done, but it is a process that is underway. I think the initial step is getting everything computerized, at least what we do have. We only began that in November, and that's been completed from that aspect. So I think we are making significant progress in this area.

**MR. LABUA:**

Does that have to be completed for reaccreditation?

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

It's not a proper accessioning methodology. It's obvious; an item can be removed from a shelf place to another shelf and now what? It could draw criticism. It's been a known flaw that we have to move on.

The other thing that I would add to your list, although I'm not going to ask this committee to perform it, is I think we have to have – we have a five-year plan. Is it on this list?

**MR. MALLAMO:**

Yes, that would be under future institutional plans.

**MR. LABUA:**

Yes, that is one of the items that is not completed yet.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

It has to be updated. Within that, I would like to have a capital program laid out.

**MR. LABUA:**

Yes, we were talking about that this afternoon.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

This looks excellent. I remember where we were at this point last time, and we were nowhere near here.

**MR. LABUA:**

That's true.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

It would be wonderful to see the photographs, the before and after. It would be wonderful to have all the existing photographs scanned in so that they could be put on computer, presented side by side. It would make a fabulous presentation.

**MR. LABUA:**

We did also discuss that.

**MR. FISCHOFF:**

I just want to bring up that we talked about the appraisal for the collections. I know we have visited that subject a number of times over the years. There were times we talked about it where we were in difficult financial positions and could not realistically address the cost. But I think it's something, now that Bob has brought it up again –

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Let me just break in that the County is prepared to assist us in this matter.

**MR. FISCHOFF:**

Financially or in conducting the appraisal.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

In conducting the appraisal.

**MR. FISCHOFF:**

Do they have the appropriate –

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Christie's.

**MR. FISCHOFF:**

Oh, you mean they will arrange for Christie's to –

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Yes, we're going to get the price.

**MR. FISCHOFF:**

Okay, then I think it's something, as Trustees, that we should keep our attention to.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

What we're going to do is we're going to get the bid and present it to the County. Actually, we are the custodians; they are the owners.

**MR. FISCHOFF:**

They are the owners of the property.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

And it falls within a reasonable request. I think there is a reasonable chance we could get it. If not, then we will have to revisit it.

**MR. FISCHOFF:**

Right, but I think we should at least get the process and see where we stand. I'm sure it's more expensive now, but –

**MR. LABUA:**

We could have some documents in our file here so that if the question comes up when we have our site visit, we could at least show that we are –

**MR. FISCHOFF:**

But I'm just thinking that putting aside the fact that we have the documents to show them, it's something important for the Museum to attend to.

**MR. LABUA:**

Yes, if we could get the funding and do it before, that's great.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

On the issue of accessioning by shelf, what I would request of the committee would be if you would be so kind as to work with Lance and staff to obtain an inventory of those items that are currently shelf accessioned. This way we know how big of a problem we're dealing with, how many items. Have we visited the issue of alcohol levels in the specimens?

**MR. MALLAMO:**

Yes.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Those visible to the public and those not visible to the public?

**MR. MALLAMO:**

Yes.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Okay. Have we visited the issue of changes in nomenclature on any labels?

**MR. MALLAMO:**

That is something that we were working on when Carol Hart left. I will bring that up with the new Curator on where we will be changing labels and where, for historic purposes, we'll be keeping original labels.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

I'm sure the new Curator will know how to check out a name to make sure it's still the current name.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

Yes, definitely.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Also, in terms of accessioned items, we should have a separate list of newly accessioned items available to them to show what our accessioning policy is. I did not see an accessioning policy on this.

**MR. LABUA:**

On the list?

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Oh, it's here. Perhaps we should revisit our bylaws to make sure that everything is current.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

Yes.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

That's great. You guys are making great progress. It's a big job. When you look at all the items on this list, every one of them has to some extent value to the institution for having going through the exercise and putting it together at some point. And that which we have to put together now, let's find some learning value out of it. Okay. Any other comments or questions on that report? Finance Committee.

**DR. PECORALE:**

Trustees have a copy of the Treasurer's Report through December. We hope to have the January one out soon. If everyone would take a moment to take a look at our year-end, we, unfortunately, did not meet our business plan, but we also were able to under-extend our anticipated expenditures.

The auditors are currently in at the Vanderbilt completing their work. We hope to have the auditor's report for Trustees sometime next month. It will be sent to you as soon as we receive it. The auditors will meet with the Board to review their recommendations and go over their audits so that if you have any questions, you will have an opportunity to have them answered.

The Board may remember that I indicated that County Comptroller Caputo was also doing an audit of the Museum. We have not received his report as yet. They have completed their work. They are no longer in the Museum. They are now putting together their report. They did send a letter to me and to Lance and I believe Steve as well –

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

I don't think I got it.

**DR. PECORALE:**

Well, they did send me a letter. I sent a copy on to Lance where they indicated that when they have their audit complete, they would like to meet the Board to review their report. Once we get that information, I'll get it out to everyone as quickly as possible and let you all know when that meeting will be held. They did not do a complete audit. They only picked certain areas in which to focus their attention. We don't know really what they're going to come up with.

Our current week when schools were closed, our revenues were up. We have been doing well. Admissions are up, membership is up, and our store receipts are up. Presently, we're pleased with the way things are going fiscally.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Terrific report. Comments or questions?

**MR. FISCHOFF:**

How has the store been doing?

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Great.

**DR. PECORALE:**

The remodeling of the store has done exceptionally well. They were fortunate that they went into the city and did the show and got in the number of items just before this week. So that is helpful. You can open it again, right, Lance, if anyone wants to take a walk in and see?

**MR. MALLAMO:**

Yes, we can open it.

**DR. PECORALE:**

So if you want to wander around at the end of the meeting, we could open it up and take a look, but the store has actually been doing exceptionally well.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

We feel we're going to break \$9,000 this week. We have taken in four in the past three days. Monday you couldn't even get in it was so crowded.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

What a change. Remarkable improvement, along with the stars in the carpeting.

**MR. FISCHOFF:**

It makes it look like new carpet.

**MS. PERICONI:**

It does, doesn't it?

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

It does. I have to remember that at home.

**DR. PECORALE:**

Our wives don't quite approve of the same thing.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

The best part is if you get another spot, just get the paint.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Personnel Committee.

**DR. PECORALE:**

There has not been a need for us to have a Personnel Committee meeting. Actually the last conversation I had with Lance, things were moving along quite well, and we assume we'll be advertising for a Director of Development to get that office back up

and operational. At the present time, things are moving along. Every member of the Board did get a copy of the Personnel Manual. I received no comments back so we're moving forward with the Personnel Manual as we sent it to you. If anyone does have any comments or anything on it, get back to me and we'll take them under advisement.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Any other comments or questions?

**DR. PECORALE:**

I'm pleased to report that Gary is going to be taking over the Personnel Committee.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Yes, we're going to do committee appointments in a few minutes.

**MR. FISCHOFF:**

You took away the wind from –

**DR. PECORALE:**

Oh, I'm sorry. I didn't mean to. I felt so good about him –

**MR. MALLAMO:**

He couldn't restrain himself.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

You've done a fabulous job with it. Now we're going to limit you to the Finance Committee, but you can still attend all meetings of the Personnel Committee.

**MR. FISCHOFF:**

Well, I'm only going to do it with his assistance because he's done it so well.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Carl.

**MR. LUECKE:**

Yes, I'd like to at this time request an executive session to discuss a personnel issue.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Yes, we have a personnel situation. Can I have a second?

**MR. FISCHOFF:**

Second.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

All in favor? Opposed? Abstained?

**MR. LUECKE:**

But we'll have it at the end of the meeting, right?

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Yes, it will be at the end of this meeting.

**DR. PECORALE:**

May we also add that there will be no further business so that no one has to remain around?

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

This is not an action meeting. It's an information meeting. So there will be no further business afterwards.

**DR. PECORALE:**

I just wanted to be sure that that's what we'll be doing.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Yes. Good point. Thank you. Education and Exhibits meeting, Marge isn't here. Do you have any report to make?

**MR. MALLAMO:**

No, we don't. Well, I'll make a small report. We're working currently in the mansion what would be considered the servant's kitchen, not the warming kitchen. As you recall, we restored the warming kitchen last winter with the appropriate color scheme and we're finishing up the cabinetry. We're now extending that on to the serving kitchen, which is the room between the warming kitchen and the dining room. So that's occurring currently. When that is done, we're going to move on to the nursery wing, hall, the Lancaster Room will be repainted, and then we'll be working on the ship model room, which needs a major overhaul of the paneling in that space. We hope to have that done by March. Florence is making plans to dismantle the exhibits in the ship model room right now so we can get that work underway hopefully in a few weeks.

Our education programs here at the Museum were sold out last week for this week. We have record crowds this week. Monday was certainly a full day. We're adding shows on wherever we can.

Luckily or gratuitously I came across a paper napkin in my file where comments were written by one of our staff last President's week of visitor complaints, things people didn't like at the Museum last year, visitor service type things. Last year we did not have the tram running because of cost constraints. Refreshments weren't available so we really moved heaven and earth to address all of those complaints this week. We have the tram running every day. We have added refreshments which are served right here in the lobby of the Planetarium. We sell them in the gift shop, and they can bring their bottled water, soda, packaged cakes, and cookies out here.

That's been a little too popular. The first two days people were ordering out pizzas and bringing in buckets of chicken so we had to say, "No, only the refreshments that we sell here you can bring in." Literally I was told we had a problem getting people to move out on Monday. They were sitting here. We bought new videos for our monitors and have music. It's very, very comfortable for people. So I think with the new gift shop, it's really become a destination for people during the week. As you can see, the place has been hopping all week long during the day.

**MR. FISCHOFF:**

I guess, Lance, that tells us if we ever get our café up and running, it's going to be successful.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

It's going to be a tremendous success.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Maybe we should just do it right here.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

Well, what we're doing here now is an experiment to see if something like that might not be justified.

**MR. FISCHOFF:**

Bring that little toaster oven, go buy some pizzas, heat the slices, and sell the slices here.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Development Committee?

**MR. LUECKE:**

Yes, we had a meeting prior to the Board meeting earlier this evening and talked about the possibility of the potential of what type of event we would have this year. Donna suggested and the consensus was that it appeared to be a good idea that we would have what Donna called a "Cole Porter Evening," which would be about a three-hour cocktail party sometime in August that would require \$500 sponsorships or enable us to get \$500 sponsorships. The admission for each person we discussed at the time was \$100. The question was what would be a good time in August. The thinking in the room appeared to be that the first week in August would be preferable to hold that.

**MS. PERICONI:**

May I comment?

**MR. LUECKE:**

Sure, absolutely.

**MS. PERICONI:**

We need to have an entirely different effort this year, since we have done the gala for two years and we had the ball last year. I think its just time to do a new event. I had wanted to do this last year, but Harlan at the time had asked that we not do it. It's going to be "Cocktails with Cole Porter." It will just be a cocktail party in the courtyard, and we will have a particular group playing and singing Cole Porter for the evening. We will have for our menu oysters, clams on the half shell, hopefully lobster tails, an elegant kind of sultry summer evening – a completely different perspective on the Museum.

Whether we have it on a Friday night or a Saturday night is to be determined. I am hoping that we'll be able to get 100 sponsors at \$500 each, which will entitle you to two tickets. So hopefully the Trustees will be able to bring in two or three sponsors at \$500 a piece, perhaps more for some of you. If we could do that, then we would certainly make a profit before we even begin to sell tickets. I do have a caterer in mind.

I hope the idea is pleasing to everyone. I mean, Lance pointed out that we could actually have up to 500 people standing in the courtyard for a couple of hours. We're not setting up large tables. We're not sitting down dining. It will just be a different effort.

I do have a particular group in mind, if I could book them. If we can settle on the date, I would like to reach out and try to confirm this group that sings Cole Porter. I think it would be very interesting. I have wanted to do this for many years. So if everyone approves, we'll start on this.

**MS. LEBOW:**

Could I just ask you a question?

**MS. PERICONI:**

Yes.

**MS. LEBOW:**

The kind of food that you're envisioning could be very expensive.

**MS. PERICONI:**

Yes.

**MS. LEBOW:**

Will that leave enough of a margin to make this a profit-making endeavor?

**MS. PERICONI:**

I'm very much aware of that. That's what I'm trying to find out. I know we'll be able to do clams and oysters. I'm questioning lobster tails. When I come back and report that to our committee, then we can determine whether the amount we're charging per ticket will be sufficient. But I would very much like for one time to open the Museum to the masses. If we could get a regular group of people to come into the Museum, and by regular I mean just our surrounding areas to come at \$100 a piece, \$200 a couple, I think we would introduce a new group to the Museum. I'm not that \$250 or \$500 a couple thing. It would be great. And we do have Todd Shapiro now. This would be very important to have good press on this, good advertising. You would be surprised, I think, and I'm hoping that we'll all be surprised to see how many regular folk may come to the Museum for "Cocktails with Cole Porter" with good publicity.

**MS. LEBOW:**

I think your idea is excellent.

**MR. LUECKE:**

I think generally for the meeting the thought was, here's an idea. But rather than hold a committee meeting now and go into the details –

**MS. LEBOW:**

Do you want to go on to talk about it another time?

**MR. LUECKE:**

What I'm thinking of is if we could have another meeting prior to the next Board meeting to finalize the dates or to get an action plan to get started on it, that would be –

**MS. LEBOW:**

So do you want us to hold further questions for that meeting?

**MS. PERICONI :**

Oh, not at all. I'm delighted to talk about it. What we were hoping was that Lance would very much like us to solidify a date. If the Board knows now what weeks they may be on vacation in August – now, for example, I know Doug has his annual huge seafood festival at the Maritime Museum, but that's at the end of August; correct?

**MR. SHAW:**

It's the weekend before Labor Day.

**MS. PERICONI :**

Right, so I would just like to get a sense of where the Board is in terms of vacations so that at least we would make sure that most of our Board Members are included. Is there anyone who has particular plans for August off hand?

**MR. LUECKE:**

Well, the first week in August was sort of what was said would be the best.

**MR. FISCHOFF:**

I might be away the first weekend, but you're not going to satisfy everyone.

**MS. PERICONI :**

What is the first weekend in August?

**DR. PECORALE:**

The third, fourth, fifth.

**MR. FISCHOFF:**

And then the second weekend Steve is going to be away for two weekends.

**DR. PECORALE:**

Ten, eleven, twelve.

**MS. PERICONI :**

And we need a sense of what you think about a Friday or Saturday night. It's your call. It's summertime. People do things all weekend.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

This is going to be about five o'clock?

**MS. PERICONI:**

Whatever you think.

**MS. LEBOW:**

Could I ask you two more questions?

**MS. PERICONI:**

Surely, let's talk about it.

**MS. LEBOW:**

Question one, what do you do about senior citizens who make up a large population of people who might be interested in Cole Porter standing for three hours? It might be very difficult.

**MS. PERICONI:**

We would have tables and chairs, but we're not going to have large dinner tables. That's what I'm saying. We'll have cocktail tables.

**MS. LEBOW:**

I find in these kinds of events if you're attracting people who remember and love Cole Porter, they may not be your youngest.

**MS. PERICONI:**

We will always have tables and chairs. What I'm trying to say is that the courtyard will not be occupied with large tables. We'll be able to have a crowd of 300 or 400.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

We have small cocktail tables. We can seat 80.

**MS. PERICONI:**

We'll rent more than that, Sue. I intend to do that.

**MS. LEBOW:**

If you're having as many as you think –

**MR. MALLAMO:**

And you wouldn't have to do it all in the courtyard. You may put some in the garden.

**MS. LEBOW:**

What do you do about weather?

**MS. PERICONI:**

What we always do about weather.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

We could have a rain date.

**MS. PERICONI :**

We could have a rain date this time.

**MS. LEBOW:**

Well, I think you have to think about that.

**MS. PERICONI :**

We've done this before. It's tough.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

But you're not planning on a tent?

**MS. PERICONI :**

We can put a deposit and hold a tent for the event if we wanted to, but we would prefer a rain date for this.

**MR. LABUA:**

If you have a rain date, would it be better maybe to shoot for a Friday and if it rains you could have it on a Saturday or a Saturday and Sunday?

**MS. PERICONI :**

We could do that.

**MS. LEBOW:**

These are things I think we have to kick around and worry about.

**MR. LUECKE:**

I didn't want to hold a committee meeting here because generally that's where we're headed. The other topic that we really didn't talk about was that last year at the beginning of the year we started to get together names of corporations and foundations to go after them for money, but because of the gala we held off completely and went 100 percent into the gala. We have budgeted last year I think \$200,000 looking for gifts. We fell far short of it.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

No, we didn't.

**MR. LUECKE:**

Well, we did –

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

On a cash basis –

**MR. LUECKE:**

\$220,000 was what we were looking for. We got \$55,000. So we got 25 percent of what we were looking for. But there are so many corporations on Long Island and there is so much money on Long Island that we really have to have an organized plan to talk to the people and invite them down here for lunches. That should be the main topic of a meeting, even more just to get them down here. The meetings last

year were held where I work, which happens to be Route 110 and the Expressway, which I thought would be convenient for people, but I would hold a meeting anywhere. It could be held here, there. It's important that as many Board Members come to it as possible to try to raise the money for this.

**MS. PERICONI :**

I apologize for not knowing we were having Development prior to this meeting, but I think having it prior to this meeting would encourage a lot of people to join that committee. I think, Sue, you might be interested in Development and all of us working together.

**MR. LUECKE:**

That's fine. If that's where everybody wants it.

**MS. PERICONI :**

I think it would work out ideally.

**MR. LUECKE:**

That's fine.

**MS. LEBOW:**

So you're saying prior to the next meeting you'll have this.

**MR. LUECKE:**

Right. That's fine.

**MS. PERICONI :**

Before we conclude, do I have a sense of approval on the concept from the Board? Is it a pleasing idea? I don't think getting sponsorships of \$500 a piece is too extensive, right, which entitles you to two tickets?

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

But you will accept supplementary sponsorships.

**MS. PERICONI :**

So we have a unanimous feeling on this? Bert, do you agree also?

**MR. SEIDES:**

Yes.

**MS. PERICONI :**

Great. And we're approving a Saturday?

**MR. FISCHOFF:**

A weekend so you can have the rain date.

**MS. PERICONI :**

So shall we do four and five? August 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>?

**MR. LUECKE:**

That sounds good.

**MS. PERICONI :**

Saturday is the fourth, Sunday is the fifth.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

Yes, I like the Saturday and Sunday better. I think Friday at five you would get people who are stuck in traffic.

**MS. PERICONI :**

My only problem here is to book this particular group. Rain dates really don't hold because they're so in demand that I will be lucky to get them at all.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

Just so you know we did get a donation last year specifically for a tent for the Museum. So we will be buying a tent this year for \$5,000. I'll get the biggest tent I could get for \$5,000.

**MS. PERICONI :**

That's great. So we may just do a foggy day in London town. We may do something like that.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

Right, so we may have a tent. Maybe it won't cover the whole courtyard, but it will cover part of it.

**MS. LEBOW:**

And maybe some people could go inside.

**MS. PERICONI :**

Okay, so we'll try to get, I hope, August 4<sup>th</sup>. I will do that tomorrow if all goes well. Thank you.

**MS. LEBOW:**

Are you going to sing with them?

**MS. PERICONI :**

No, I'm trying to get Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers, some sort of dance couple. If anyone knows of anyone who does Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers, would you contact me? I would love to get that up for about 30 minutes, just to have them. Seriously. I just don't know of anyone. I have been inquiring for months on that.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

I know there's a group in Connecticut, the Vintage Dance Society. I have had them at events before.

**MS. PERICONI :**

Have they done Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers?

**MR. MALLAMO:**

Yes.

**MS. PERICONI :**

Could you find out about that? That would be a great campy idea.

**MS. LEBOW:**

Are we coming in costumes of the year?

**MR. FISCHOFF:**

You can maybe, but I'm not.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

We're always in costume.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Okay. Thank you for that report. The Director's Report.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

Well, Carl didn't mention it so I will mention that our membership is significantly up. Wendy O'Donohoe has taken that over recently. Last year at this time we had about less than \$900 in memberships. Currently we have almost \$6,000. We are doing a major membership promotion. For those Board Members who may not be members, sign up now because you get a free gift that's in the case over there. You can select what you're going to get. We encourage people as they are buying a ticket to the Planetarium to take a membership, and if they purchase a ticket and see the show we remind them that they can still turn their ticket in toward their membership.

**MR. VOTAPKA:**

Is that retroactive?

**MR. MALLAMO:**

So we're really looking at the category to grow. Last year our whole membership was about nine thousand and change. In two months getting almost \$6,000 is a tremendous shot in the arm. We're also looking to boost our corporate membership with some new programs that we're going to propose at the next Development Committee.

We also talked about the gift shop, which is doing great. We'll be adding – I had hoped to have it up today, but we know it's going to be taking a little more effort than we could do in an afternoon. We're adding a whole new nautical department, which will be right here in the front. We're also going to be taking collectibles from the 1920's, 30's, and 40's, which will be in the window here where the geological items are. They're going to be moving over into that case over there. So we're trying to make it continually changing and upgrading the merchandise that we're selling. It's become quite exciting.

We did have all of our capital projects for the year 2000 approved. I think I had told you that at the last meeting. We also in January had the seaplane hangar project approved. That's now fully funded. We have about two and a half million dollars for the seaplane hangar. That's now going out to the architect for initial design planning.

I have just finished the Capital Budget for the next four years. New projects, we're looking to continue everything we have on the board, and I will give you a whole schedule of what's involved with the program. But one of the new programs that we're going to be looking at is our new project here for the Planetarium. We're going to be renovating the lobby and addressing some structural deficiencies that we have identified. I have had the Department of Public Works in looking at those.

We're also looking to expedite the revitalization of the William and Molly Rogers waterfront. That project has been renamed by the Legislature in recognition of the gift of the Rogers to the Museum. We're looking to expedite that to the years 2002, 2003, and 2004. So hopefully with everything going the way we hope, we will be getting that project next year.

We're also looking to increase the restoration of facades' project. This is the masonry and wrought iron components of the mansion, but we're looking to extend that to the Hall of Fishes and the masonry wall that goes along Littleneck Road, which is deteriorating in certain spots. Although we just had it painted last year, if you look really close, you'll see some spoiling of the concrete. We're looking to correct those deficiencies.

Also our Goto projector replacement project is under way. We're just beginning a process to select a consultant to plan our new equipment here. It's a very exciting time.

I want to remind everybody, and I think I sent the notice out that we're having an event next week. We also have the dedication of the Hall of Fishes, which was done for the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in Steve's honor. We'll be doing that eleven o'clock. County Executive Robert Gaffney will be coming to assist the Board with that dedication. We will be having a reception afterwards.

**MR. FISCHOFF:**

What day is that?

**MR. MALLAMO:**

Wednesday the 28<sup>th</sup>, a week from today at eleven o'clock.

**DR. PECORALE:**

How about the whale –

**MR. MALLAMO:**

The habitat?

**DR. PECORALE:**

Right.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

The habitat, it's funny you should ask that because it was asked at the Reaccreditation Meeting. We did correct the leak into that room in 1999. The wiring, electrical, heat and ventilation are going to be done in the current project,

which is right out to bid at the current time. When those aspects are completed, we do have the funding from the County in another capital program to redo the plasterwork and repaint the room. We have to develop the funding to restore the dioramas themselves.

**DR. PECORALE:**

Have we given any thought to hiring a curator for that area?

**MR. MALLAMO:**

I believe the Curator that we just hired will be able to address that issue. It's going to be a complex project, and we know that some removal of the items is going to have to be undertaken through the electrical and HVAC project. We do have funds in the budget to achieve that. That will give us an opportunity to ascertain exactly what's going to be needed in those areas. While it's still not open, it's an area that's on the agenda, and we are working on it. These major infrastructure projects have to be done before we get into the restoration of the dioramas themselves.

**DR. PECORALE:**

And there's a light at the end of the tunnel?

**MR. MALLAMO:**

Yes, there is a light at the end of the tunnel.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

And how far from now is that light?

**MR. MALLAMO:**

Well, the infrastructure improvements should be done within 18 months from now. Then I think we can address the restoration of the plaster and the painting. We probably should be gearing up for the diorama restoration this year beginning that process.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

It is painfully slow.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

One interesting note I think we did discover, and, Florence, correct me if I'm wrong, is we are virtually certain that the Della Robbia is in tact behind one of the dioramas in the Stoll Wing. We did find correspondence in the file looking for something else. Florence determined that that Stoll Wing was built around that.

**MS. OGG:**

We have pictures of the diorama and the Della Robbia in place. I'll bring that to the next meeting.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

Quickly, could you give a description of what it is that we're talking about with the date?

**MS. OGG:**

It's of the virgin and child surrounded by fruits and vegetables, a typical Della Robbia look. It looks like it's about two, two and a half feet deep. It was on the wall as you go into where the Stoll Wing is. There is a diorama in front of it now. According to the correspondence, there were instructions not to remove the Della Robbia. The only way that you could find out for sure is by removing the backdrop from one of the Stoll dioramas. I don't know if that's ever going to happen.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

Do you remember the estimated date of that piece?

**MS. OGG:**

That's probably from the late 1600's or 1700's.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

That was my recollection as well. So that's my report.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

We have been asked to change the date of our March meeting. Currently it's scheduled for Thursday, the 22<sup>nd</sup>. Can we consider Wednesday, the 21<sup>st</sup>? Okay, so the meeting is now rescheduled to the 21<sup>st</sup>.

I have a few things to just bring up. Perhaps for me the most important one is that the capital plan that we set out to do seven years ago, as Lance sort of mentioned, took a tremendous boost with the appropriation of one and three quarter million dollars toward the seaplane hangar at the last meeting of the Legislature. As you know, County Executive Gaffney has signed that.

In addition to that, as Lance mentioned, another appropriation has been accelerated so that the balance of the waterfront can be completed. Given those events, we are hoping that Bill Rogers will write his first check and be giving \$1 million -- \$200,000; it's a start and then \$200,000 on each anniversary thereafter. So we're hopeful to get a check from him shortly. I will be making the call for that tomorrow.

Getting the seaplane hangar funds has been a long journey. I have been before the Legislature four times to get the money for the seaplane hangar and managed to lose out three times. Only this last time was I able to get it. For me it's a particular triumph because it was not a very popular project. It was something that people didn't want to tackle. But we have managed to put together a package that the Legislature went along with.

The feedback that I received from the Legislature was so positive that I just need you to know that they think things are going very well here. I think a lot of that should be shared by Lance, the staff, the Board, everybody involved. The Museum apparently is doing extremely well in their eyes. That's what we need to continue to receive the support that we have been getting. I do have other proposals for funding out. I'm anxiously awaiting answers on them.

The next thing I wanted to address is the appointment of Committee Chairs. I have what is seven committees, a Membership Committee, which Doug has agreed to chair, a Development Committee, which will be co-chaired by Carl and Michael, Buildings and Grounds will be Bert Seides, Finance will be Tony Pecorale, Education

will be Marge, Personnel will be Gary, and Reaccreditation will be Bob LaBua. All Trustees are invited to join all committees of their choice and to take part in as many as they have interest in. I will leave it to the Committee Chairs to recruit members of their Committees. If they are not getting interest, go shang hia a few people and get them in there. The Committees meet once a month. It's very important that we build the strength in our Committee system.

The issue of Board Meetings being every other month was raised in a Committee meeting, and I feel that we have to have our Committees performing stronger than I think we perhaps we can do with fewer Board Meetings. In the future, Lance and I will review the necessity of Board Meetings two weeks prior to the date of each meeting. In the event that we feel that the agenda is not substantive or there is no strong reason to hold the meeting, we will convert meetings to Executive Committee Meetings. The importance of doing that is that Trustees will not be required to attend. However, I want to make it extremely clear that if we convert to an Executive Committee Meeting, I really want to see all of you there anyway. The reason why I don't like doing that is because I don't want any Trustee to be left out. All of you are important. All of you are equally important. Really going into an Executive Committee Meeting is more of a convenience. By statute we're supposed to meet six times a year. Carl and I had discussed this, that for a decade we have now been meeting every month. We may cancel a few meetings depending upon the necessity and to give committees a chance to work. So are there any questions? Questions, suggestions, or comments? Let's see, new business? Unfinished business? We have established a need for an executive session. I will call this meeting adjourned at this time. We will just meet in executive session and the stenographer and everybody – there's no reason to hang around. We're just going to meet and discuss this issue.

(Dr. Gittelman adjourned the meeting at 8:30 p.m.)

SG/ap