

**SUFFOLK COUNTY VANDERBILT MUSEUM
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

Minutes

A regular meeting of the Suffolk County Vanderbilt Museum Board of Trustees was held on **July 20, 2005** in the Lobby of the Planetarium, Centerport, New York.

The following were in attendance:

Dr. Steven Gittelman - President
Deborah A. Gray - 1st Vice President
Bertram E. Seides - Treasurer
Marjorie Kossoy Fuhrmann - Secretary
David D'Orazio - Trustee
Maria Figalora - Trustee
Howard Kleinberg - Trustee
Carl Luecke - Trustee
William Macchione - Trustee
Gretchen Oldrin-Mones - Trustee
Daniel Olivieri - Trustee
Dr. Anthony Pecorale - Trustee
Dr. William Rogers - Trustee
J. Lance Mallamo - Executive Director
Bill Dieck - Staff
Scott Savitt – Staff
Joshua Fuhrmann – Guest
Todd Shapiro – Todd Shapiro & Associates
Ann Marie Pastore - Stenographer

Excused Absence:

Susan LeBow - 2nd Vice President

Absent:

Michael B. DeLuise - Trustee

(Dr. Steven Gittelman called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.)

DR. GITTELMAN:

Good evening, everybody. Do we have a list of guests in attendance?

MS. PASTORE:

Yes.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Thank you. This is a regular meeting of the Suffolk County Vanderbilt Museum Board of Trustees. Any comments or questions? If not, Marge, do we have a motion on the minutes?

MS. FUHRMANN:

I move that we accept the minutes of the June 15 meeting of the Vanderbilt Museum Board of Trustees with one correction.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Is there a second?

MS. GRAY:

Second.

MS. FUHRMANN:

On page 25, line two, and I am sure this is just a case of a misunderstanding of a word that someone said, but on the second line the second to the last word should be "cash." That is the correction.

DR. GITTELMAN:

All in favor? Opposed? **It carries unanimously. (Vote: 9/0/0/6 Not Present: Mr. Macchione, Ms. Figalora, Mr. Seides & Dr. Pecorale. Absent: Ms. LeBow & Mr. DeLuise.)**

For the purposes of tonight's meeting, Susan LeBow called me. She is ill.

Public Relations Report, Todd Shapiro.

MR. SHAPIRO:

We had a pretty decent month this month in public relations. Cablevision has been doing this special half hour piece, which will air four days straight on a special on the Vanderbilt Museum. We're still working out the details as we speak with Cablevision.

Newsday has been putting a lot of our listings and stuff in their paper and also in the "What's to Do" column. News 12 has been doing the same. It's been great in helping attendance here, right, Lance?

MR. MALLAMO:

Right.

MR. SHAPIRO:

I have been in contact with all different Vanderbilt institutions around the country. We're working on bringing them all out here for one day for a Vanderbilt reunion. I'll bring all the institutions to see Long Island as far as marketing and exchange of ideas and how to market all the Vanderbilt institutions together as one. We are working toward some dates in September. That's really it for this month.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Any questions? Would this be an appropriate time to go through Todd's offering to the museum, Lance?

MR. MALLAMO:

Sure.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Could you please explain it?

MR. MALLAMO:

Okay, as most of you know, Todd has been our PR consultant for some time. He has been very patient with his payment. We have been behind with Todd for many months. He made an offer to us, which I'm submitting to you tonight. Todd is interested in having a 10th anniversary party for his business and has offered to give the museum a credit of the full amount for using the museum grounds and facilities toward his bill. That would be a \$10,000 credit, \$7,500 for using the tent and \$2,500 for using the planetarium here on a Thursday night, which is August 4. This is the full price that we charge for Saturday night. We usually charge a lesser amount during the week. He has made this gracious offer to do this for us. I just want to make the board aware of it. I don't know if we need approval or what.

DR. GITTELMAN:

No, I think it's just important that the Members of the Board are aware. I think we're ten months in arrears.

MR. MALLAMO:

Yes. Well, actually, we're seven months at this point. We made a payment for three months.

DR. GITTELMAN:

We made a payment, so now we're seven months in arrears. Todd has agreed to pay how much for a weekday venue?

MR. MALLAMO:

\$10,000. It would be a credit given to the museum.

DR. GITTELMAN:

This will be a credit against his account and would be our payable to him.

DR. ROGERS:

Is that what we would normally charge?

DR. GITTELMAN:

No, we would charge significantly less for a weekday.

MR. MALLAMO:

We charge that on a Saturday night event.

DR. GITTELMAN:

We would charge that for a wedding on a Saturday night. If we were lucky enough to get a venue on a Thursday night, let's say, I think we would charge about half or less.

MR. MALLAMO:

Yes, about 50 percent less.

DR. GITTELMAN:

So he is making a donation in-kind of approximately 50 percent. In addition to that, it's revenue that we would not normally receive because we probably wouldn't get a weekday booking. So we're getting a weekday booking, and Todd is being, I think, very generous with us.

MR. MALLAMO:

And very patient.

DR. GITTELMAN:

And patient. I think it's a generous contribution, and I wanted you to know what he was doing to help us with our payable to him. Any questions?

MR. LUECKE:

It's very generous. We appreciate it.

MR. SHAPIRO:

I invite everyone on the Board to be part of the event. It's August 4 on a Thursday night at 6:30 p.m.

DR. GITTELMAN:

I understand that you have to wear something white.

MR. SHAPIRO:

It's going to be a white party. We'll try to have it in the courtyard and in the tent. We should have close to 1,000 people.

DR. GITTELMAN:

I hope you have good weather.

MR. SHAPIRO:

I'm sharing the party with Chauncy Howell. It's his 70th birthday party. County Executive Suozzi is coming for his birthday, and the Dolan family is going to be present.

DR. GITTELMAN:

That's wonderful. Are there any more questions? We thank you very much, Todd. Thank you for your report. Buildings and Grounds Report.

MR. MALLAMO:

I don't see Bill Macchione here yet, but I can report that the capital projects are proceeding on schedule. I think I said last time that the Department of Public Works has dedicated an architect to work here almost full time to get these projects underway. During the past two weeks, we have met several times with the architect for the seaplane hangar and revised the final plan for that, so that the final drawings can be completed on that. The new heating and air conditioning in the four other buildings, the Education Center, the Boat House, the Curators Cottage and the Hall of Fishes, are just going out to bid right now. Hopefully we'll get that work underway by early fall.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Any questions or comments? Thank you for that report. Development Committee, Michael DeLuise.

(Mr. Macchione entered the meeting at 7:15 p.m.)

MR. MALLAMO:

Michael was unable to be here tonight, but I can speak for the committee. I did speak to him

yesterday. I think you all received the e-mail that we postponed the gala to September 16 to allow for construction in that area to be completed and the landscape restored.

We have also prepared two grant applications, one to New York State for \$350,000 toward the seaplane hangar project and one for the Bank of America National Leadership Grant for operational expenses for the habitat. These would not be restoration expenses. These would be to provide utility and staff costs when that structure is open. We have requested \$200,000 in that category. We were encouraged by the Bank of America to submit that application. I hope we will be successful.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Bill, we did your committee, but did you have any comments you wanted to make?

MR. MACCHIONE:

No, I did not. Sorry for being a little tardy.

DR. GITTELMAN:

It's good to have you here. Education and Exhibits.

MS. FUHRMANN:

The status report due on the America's Treasures Grant was submitted timely. The Vanderbilt Museum has been nominated for the Workforce Builders Honor Roll. We have a copy of the letter, which I'm going to start passing around that nominates us. It notifies us of the nomination.

The specimens' refurbishing is ongoing. New York Power is exploring refurbishing the generator and pool with us. Florence found in our files a copy of a photograph from 1928 of the power house and its electricians. We're going to pass that around as well.

An adult sketching class spent a day here, and this is a new market for us. We're continuing to explore art classes, photography classes and clubs for adults.

Work has begun on the holiday program. The year this year will be 1936, and we have a picture and some handouts that I will give out as soon as this is done concerning the program. We're going to pass that out as well.

Florence is working with the Dowling College archivist. It's too bad Tony isn't here yet, but we have received a major donation of materials from the 1931 Alva trip, photographs and artifacts from the son of a crew member who was the electrician aboard the Alva during the around the world tour from July 1931 to March of 1932. He called us. He found this stuff in a trunk in his father's house after his father passed away. As soon as possible, we will be requesting that this material be accessioned. That will hopefully be next month. Of course, we'll be bringing it down for everyone to see when we request that.

(Ms. Figalora entered the meeting at 7:20 p.m.)

There is a new guidebook for greeters in place, and we were referenced in three articles. Two of the articles, "Elements" and "Soundings" are being passed around. The third reference is the AAM Journal, which lists our reaccreditation.

Maintenance continues in the mansion. Dave has been working toward fine-tuning the laser programs as our primary contact when the company resigned. He feels that the programs were not fully installed prior to his departure, and he's working to resolve these issues. We are upgrading to MPEG from laser discs as they are less hazardous.

Work has begun on a new planetarium show called "The Open Sky," which will work like a pop-up video on the dome. One would walk into the theater, the night sky would be up, and information would pop up about the various stars, moons, planets, etc. Work is continuing on the amps and projectors.

The William Floyd School Librarian, Margaret Finney, was named best school librarian on Long Island. She credited the Suffolk County Vanderbilt Museum for her award in her speech. She has sent pictures of the presentation, and we're going to pass those around to the Board.

School bookings for November mornings are already full, and we will be running two weeks of summer programs this year.

During our meeting there was a discussion on how to improve the appearance of the planetarium without spending a great deal of money. Lance suggested that we take up the carpeting and buff the concrete underneath after painting it. The educators would like to see the rugs and the seats in the theater cleaned. The planetarium is now using a questionnaire with an email grab on it.

We would like to thank Tony Pecorale for all the help he has been giving us with the brochure and to the Education and Exhibits Committee itself. He wrote a letter that is sitting over there for his signature. That letter will be sent to district superintendents inviting them to a breakfast on August 29 as a kind of kick-off to our new fall education season and brochure. Tony has also offered to pay for this event.

(Mr. Seides entered the meeting at 7:23 p.m.)

Thanks, also, for his suggestions for implementation. These suggestions were discussed with the staff. They are going to do the following: They will include a free coupon for a future family visit for the visiting teachers as a teacher recognition concept. The teachers will fill out a mailing card for notification of upcoming events, including their email address. They offered that they had a sign-in book for school visits and would start using it again. At the meeting we told the staff about the letter, which will be sent out on the Vanderbilt letterhead with Tony's signature. The invitations to the superintendents will be followed up by a phone call if there is no response. They will be told that attendance will give them special consideration for classes at future events.

Last month we listed a number of goals necessary for a mutli-dimensional dinosaur exhibit. Some of the insect sound effects have been installed. The exhibit is always staffed now, and they are being trained on how to operate the various special effects that have been installed. Stephanie and Bill Dieck took an inventory of the contents of the four storage containers. The committee is now determining if there are additional dinosaur assets currently in storage that can be used now, such as the raptor or the Mr. Wizard stations. After enhancing the current exhibit, the remaining items will be moved to different free storage sites refurbished.

One of our ideas was to mount the raptor on the roof of the exhibit. If you step outside, you can see it up there now. In the near future, we will be relocating it to the lawn so it can be used as a

sign to the building, as we have decided that that would be a much more effective use of this raptor.

Lance is researching if we can store the remainder of the contents at Coindre Hall or in the basement of Normandy Manor. We also discussed the cost of heating and cooling the building. We all agreed that there is a need to insulate.

There was a presentation from a muralist of ideas for the outside walls of the building. The staff gathered estimates for upgrading the exhibits and we discussed each interactive kiosk, digital announcer, boulders, audio tours, etc. In the end, we drew up a priority list for implementations as funds become available.

We thank both Bill Rogers and Tony Pecorale for their insightful suggestions in attendance at the last Dinosaur Sub Committee meeting. We welcome all Trustees to our meetings and their suggestions as to how to improve our presentation to the public, be it through the school or the public programs.

Stephanie offered to give Marjorie and Gretchen a brief lesson in grant writing. We met with her on Friday, July 1. She discussed the big book of grant buzz words and how to attract a reader's attention. We have begun to research grant opportunities for the museum.

The committee would like to thank Gretchen's neighbor, Mary McLaughlin, who has donated a printer capable of using poster sign paper so we can do more signage on site. Gretchen has also donated three additional ink cartridges for this printer, one black cartridge and two color cartridges. We also would like to thank Tony Pecorale who donated an LCD DLP projector and an additional bulb for use with the exhibit. We had discussed that last month as one of our desirable items. Gretchen has also donated five videos and DVD's on dinosaurs.

Lastly, we are in final negotiations with a local restaurant for offering box lunches to school groups and birthday parties on site. We were hoping to have this finalized by today, but it looks like it will require one more meeting or so. This opportunity will also be offered to weekend scout groups. They were very excited about that.

If there are no questions or comments, that's our committee report.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Questions or comments? Thank you very much for that report. Finance Committee, Bert.

MR. SEIDES:

We met yesterday at Normandy Manor. Everyone was there. Our meetings are open to the entire Board. We would like to encourage more Board Members to attend.

We discussed the need to make a decision on a new firm to do the audit. We have three firms in front of us. We had a roundtable discussion about the firms. I think for a moment we should defer to Lance to expand on the firm that we are looking to select. Would you please do that, Lance?

MR. MALLAMO:

Well, as requested, we have three proposals in front of us. I can provide the names if you want to know that. I didn't know whether we should do that or not. I have it down as firm one, two

and three. The estimates are \$22,500 for firm one. This would be to prepare the 2004 financial statement, the 5500 and the 990 tax returns.

Firm two was \$15,000, a savings of \$7,500.

Firm three was \$13,600. Clearly it's between two and three. We interviewed both of them and we felt them to be comparable that could provide more or less the same level of service. Both of them are local. It was the committee's recommendation that we go with a low bid. I have them here if you'd like to look at them.

MR. SEIDES:

Thank you, Lance.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Do you want to make a resolution to approve this?

MR. MACCHIONE:

Do you want to say who the low bidder was?

MR. MALLAMO:

The low bidder was Lambrides Certified Public Accountants in East Northport. Steve, I think you had sat in on that interview, didn't you? That was the first group that we came up with.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Yes.

MR. SEIDES:

Thank you, again, Lance. I would like to say that in your folder, you have the operating budget.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Before you do that, do you want to close the issue of choosing an auditor?

MR. SEIDES:

Okay, I apologize.

MR. MACCHIONE:

I'll make a motion to concur with the committee's findings and go with the lowest bidder.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Do I have a second?

MR. LUECKE:

Second.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Discussion? In the absence of a discussion, all in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? It passes unanimously. **(Vote: 12/0/0/3 Not Present: Dr. Pecorale. Absent: Ms. LeBow & Mr. DeLuise.)**

MR. SEIDES:

We would like a request for the operating budget for 2006 to be accepted.

MR. MALLAMO:

The budget is in your packet. We had handed out a budget last month. It had a minor error in it so that error has been corrected. There was a mathematical error in the department income of \$10,000. That has been corrected. We have tried to make some economies, including some staff reorganization and still meet the objectives for the responsibilities that we feel are beyond our control, such as our utility costs that we don't expect to go down.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Are there questions about this budget? Discussion? In the absence of discussion, are you prepared to vote? All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? **It passes unanimously. (Vote: 12/0/0/3 Not Present: Dr. Pecorale. Absent: Ms. LeBow & Mr. DeLuise.)**

MR. SEIDES:

I would like to say that I have the check history report for this month in my folder. I'm going to pass it around for your review. Also, I would just like to state that at our meeting we developed a little sub committee, and we are going to create a list of items that we feel are pertinent for all Board Members to be aware of. We may request at some point in the near future for all Board Members to attend one of our meetings so that we can all be on the same page with some of the financial situations that we feel you should be aware of. We will probably be doing that this coming week, and we will let you know the date we can all get together and review those issues. They are issues that have been on the table for quite some time. We have quite a number of new Board Members, and we feel that you should be brought up to snuff with those issues. That's the end of my report at this time.

MR. OLIVIERI:

I have one question.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Yes.

MR. OLIVIERI:

If we all meet, are we going to be able to do it at an hour in the evening, when some of us aren't working?

MR. SEIDES:

That would be fine with me. We will discuss a few opportune times, and we'll make some phone calls. If the majority of us can meet, we will do it.

MR. OLIVIERI:

I'm sure there are quite a few people around these tables that need to be here in the evening post during work hours.

MR. SEIDES:

I think that we should all get together at some time and do it.

MR. OLIVIERI:

That's not my issue. I agree with you.

MR. SEIDES:

What time –

MR. OLIVIERI:

We have to be able to do it in the evening after working hours.

MR. SEIDES:

It would be after working hours. What is a good time, seven?

MR. OLIVIERI:

I don't care. I'll be here any time after work hours.

MR. MACCHIONE:

Can we have it prior to our next meeting at 6:00 or 6:30?

MR. SEIDES:

Just prior?

MR. MACCHIONE:

Yes.

MR. SEIDES:

We wanted maybe a little bit more time than a half hour or 45 minutes.

MR. MALLAMO:

We could move the meeting back to 7:30 for that night so that you can schedule it for 6:30.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Yes, Marge.

MS. FUHRMANN:

I just want to remind you that Tony has mentioned that he can't possibly get here before 7:30 due to his teaching schedule. He would be out of it if you have it before a meeting this semester. I don't know what his schedule is for next semester.

MR. SEIDES:

We will do our best to accommodate everyone. Thank you.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Any comments or questions about that report? If not, thank you for your report. Personnel Committee, Deborah Gray.

MS. GRAY:

No report this month.

DR. GITTELMAN:

I'm going to ask for an executive session to discuss our employment arrangement with the Director. Can I have a second?

MR. MACCHIONE:

Second.

DR. GITTELMAN:

All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? **It passes unanimously. (Vote: 12/0/0/3 Not Present: Dr. Pecorale. Absent: Ms. LeBow & Mr. DeLuise.)**

Director's Report, Lance.

MR. MALLAMO:

I have a bit of a surprise. I received in the mail this past week or so a certificate from Congressman Steve Israel to Dr. Steve Gittelman and the Trustees of the Suffolk County Vanderbilt Museum for the successful reaccreditation of the Vanderbilt Museum. Steve, I'm going to hand that out to you. It's a very nice surprise and well deserved.

We're trying to keep up with the summer and the major construction that is going on. I think we're making it in spite of the rain and the weather that we have had. We have had to reschedule our South Pacific performance, as well. We got rained out two weeks ago or a week and a half ago, so that will be occurring tonight at eight o'clock. I know some of you have tickets and are dressed for the occasion. We will try to accommodate that.

It's been a good summer. I looked back at our admission revenues in May. We did better in May than we have for the past four years. Hopefully, things are starting to pick up.

That's my report tonight.

DR. GITTELMAN:

I don't have any report tonight. We can go into executive session. Old business? New business? We have established the need for an executive session. We are not going to adjourn until the end of that session. If all Trustees will proceed to the classroom, please.

(Dr. Anthony Pecorale entered the meeting at 7:50 p.m.)

(Executive Session 7:35 – 8:35 p.m.)

DR. GITTELMAN:

We are back in session.

MR. OLIVIERI:

I would like to make a resolution.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Okay, go ahead, please.

MR. OLIVIERI:

Whereas J. Lance Mallamo has served as Executive Director of the Suffolk County Vanderbilt Museum since 1998.

Whereas during his tenure the museum has greatly improved facilities and programs, achieved the goals outlined in the 1999 to 2003 long-range plan adopted by the Board of Trustees in 1999. It had been awarded with the full ten-year unconditional reaccreditation by the American Association of Museums.

Whereas Mr. Mallamo served the Suffolk County Department of Parks as Director of Historic Services from 1980 to 1998 and has continued to serve as the Chairman of the Suffolk County Historical Trust Committee. He has been the official Suffolk County Historian since his appointment by the Suffolk County Legislature in 1987.

Whereas Mr. Mallamo is the only current employee of the Suffolk County Vanderbilt Museum whose position and qualifications are specified by Suffolk County Code Chapter 184.

Whereas Mr. Mallamo has public employment credit service from 1973 to 1998 and is the only current employee of the Suffolk County Vanderbilt Museum that has enrolled and is vested in the New York State Public Employee Retirement System.

Whereas the Suffolk County Vanderbilt Museum formerly was a participating employer in the New York State Public Employee Retirement System but withdrew from the system in 1974.

Whereas Mr. Mallamo has expressed a desire to return to public service as an employee again covered by the New York State Public Employee Retirement System.

Whereas the Board of Trustees of the Suffolk County Vanderbilt Museum is desirous of assisting Suffolk County into developing appropriate museum programs and services at historic trust parks and museums administered within the County that meet the high standards of the American Association of Museums.

Whereas the Board of Trustees of the Suffolk County Vanderbilt Museum is desirous of strengthening the cooperative relationship between Suffolk County and Suffolk County's first public park, now known as the Suffolk County Vanderbilt Museum.

Whereas Mr. Mallamo is eminently qualified and able to administer administrative interpretive and educational services that are mutually advantageous to both Suffolk County and the Suffolk County Vanderbilt Museum.

Now therefore be it resolved that the Board of Trustees of the Suffolk County Vanderbilt Museum requests the Suffolk County Legislature and Executive to authorize the appointment of Mr. Mallamo to a position within Suffolk County with the salary and employee benefit cost associated with this position transferred reimbursement to the County of Suffolk by the Museum.

Be it further resolved that Mr. Mallamo, as Executive Director of the Suffolk County Vanderbilt Museum, report directly to the Board of Trustees of the Museum and Suffolk County respectfully. The performance of his duties to be outlined in an agreement to be determined by both the Museum and Suffolk County.

And be it further resolved that this position transfer will remain in effect until nullified by the Board of Trustees of the Museum and/or Suffolk County under terms established within the agreement.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Is there a second?

DR. PECORALE:

Second.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Discussion? If there is no discussion, all in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? **Motion passes.**
(Vote: 11/0/2/2 Abstentions: Ms. Gray & Ms. Fuhrmann. Absent: Ms. LeBow & Mr. DeLuise.)

In order to facilitate this Board being responsive to the legislative calendar, we have to move the date of the next meeting. In checking with Lance and the stenographer, the only date that appears to be available is Monday, the 8th of August. I realize that it will be a hardship for some Trustees. I don't know whom, but I would like to reschedule the meeting for that date, if possible. I know I have a conflict.

DR. ROGERS:

I know I won't be able to attend.

DR. GITTELMAN:

I have a conflict I will have to work out, also.

DR. PECORALE:

I might not be able to attend, unless it's clearly understood that I won't be here before about 8:00. My class doesn't end until 7:30.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Let's start the meeting at 7:30, then.

MR. MALLAMO:

Steve, can I just make a notation about something? I forgot to say this earlier, that Susan LeBow –

DR. GITTELMAN:

I said it already.

MR. MALLAMO:

Oh, you did say it, great.

DR. GITTELMAN:

So the next meeting is 7:30, Monday, the 8th of August.

MR. LUECKE:

And the other meeting will be cancelled. This is a replacement.

DR. GITTELMAN:

This is a replacement for the other meeting in August. If the Secretary would send a reminder, I would appreciate it, or Lance or somebody.

MR. MALLAMO:

Sure.

MS. FUHRMANN:

It will go out.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Thank you. Having no other issues before us, can I have a motion to adjourn?

MS. FUHRMANN:

Motion.

MR. MACCHIONE:

Second.

DR. GITTELMAN:

I have a second. **(Vote: 13/0/0/2 Absent: Ms. LeBow & Mr. DeLuise.)**

(Dr. Gittelman adjourned the meeting at 8:50 p.m.)

SG:ap