

**SUFFOLK COUNTY VANDERBILT MUSEUM  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**Minutes**

A regular meeting of the Suffolk County Vanderbilt Museum Board of Trustees was held on October 19, 2005 in the Planetarium, Centerport, New York.

**The following were in attendance:**

Dr. Steven Gittelman - President  
Deborah A. Gray - 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President  
Susan LeBow - 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President  
Bertram E. Seides - Treasurer  
Michael B. DeLuise - Trustee  
David D'Orazio - Trustee  
Maria Figalora - 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  
Todd Shapiro - Todd Shapiro & Associates  
Ron Margulies - Todd Shapiro & Associates  
Florence Ogg - Staff  
Ann Marie Pastore - Stenographer

**Excused Absence:**

Marjorie Kossoy Fuhrmann - Secretary

**Absent:**

Howard Kleinberg - Trustee

**(Dr. Gittelman called the meeting to order at 8:25 p.m.)**

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

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. Is there a motion to approve the minutes?

**MR. OLIVIERI:**

I'll make the motion.

**DR. PECORALE:**

Second.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

All in favor? Opposed? **Motion carries unanimously. (Vote: 13/0/0/2 Absent: Ms. Fuhrmann & Mr. Kleinberg)**

Todd Shapiro, Public Relations Report.

**MR. SHAPIRO:**

For the gala we had coverage on News 12. They did a great job on the piece prior to the event. Newsday covered the gala in "What's Cool to Do," which is a Friday feature, before the gala. Channel 11 spent four hours at the museum promoting the event all morning long from 5 a.m. to 9 a.m. They were promoting the event and mentioning the museum. It seems to have gotten a lot of hype from the local papers as far as all the listings as well as many of the cable stations before the event.

We've also been working on planning a reunion for the first time in probably 40 years. All of the various Vanderbilt institutions are going to be coming to Long Island on November 18, which is a Thursday. They are coming from the Biltmore from down in North Carolina. The Biltmore Vanderbilt Estate, the Newport Vanderbilt Estate, which is in Vermont, as well as Hyde Park are all coming. Some of them are bringing their curators, and some are bringing their presidents. They're going to come here to try to find ways to market and work together promoting all these institutions as one. It's really a fun story to bring all these people together in one room and spend a day here and to have dinner. They're flying here from all over. It's a really great thing where they can bring the exhibits from some of their institutions over here, and we can send our exhibits over there. There are so many possibilities that can be opened up to us as a result of this reunion. We're really happy and excited that our museum has taken the initiative to do this.

We also have with us tonight Ron, who recently started with us. He has done a lot of work with non-for-profits throughout Long Island.

**MR. MARGULIES:**

My name is Ron Margulies. I've been doing PR for over 20 years. I started way back when I was working for McGraw Hill and have also worked for a variety of agencies both on the agency side and on the corporate side. I'm looking forward to doing some good things for the Vanderbilt Museum. We're trying to get you a little more exposure and a little bit of recognition on Long Island. Hopefully that will drive some additional revenue to the museum.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Any questions or comments? Gentlemen, thank you for attending. Sorry we kept you waiting so long. Development Committee, Michael.

**MR. DELUISE:**

The "Night in El Morocco" event was very successful. All in attendance seemed to enjoy it. Those not in attendance heard about it and said, "Gee, I wish I was there." We're still waiting for the final numbers, but Lance's estimate is that it will bring in a cash revenue about \$20,000. Lance, how much was it in in-kind services?

**MR. MALLAMO:**

It was about \$47,000.

**MR. DELUISE:**

Right, about another \$47,000 in in-kind services. Looking at the future, the suggestion was that we do our gala event next August, maybe Saturday evening, August 5 as a working date right now. The suggestion was that we do it as an Egyptian theme. We can talk about that as we go along. If you want to just pencil that in your calendars, August 5, 2006. It will be a good time for all.

The remaining events this year, we have our holiday events, and the teas that are coming up. Do they start November 16?

**MR. MALLAMO:**

Yes, and there are brochures on the table over there.

**MR. DELUISE:**

Pick up a brochure before you leave. There will be more to come as we go through the next few months. Any other questions regarding Development?

**MR. LUECKE:**

What was the \$47,000 in-kind? Were there a lot of them or mainly a big one?

**MR. DELUISE:**

The main big one was from Verizon.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

Yellow Book.

**MR. DELUISE:**

Yes, Yellow Book.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

We had a \$47,000 sponsorship from Yellow Book.

**MR. DELUISE:**

In-kind advertising.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

They gave us the front cover, and we will have that for as long as we want it.

**MR. SEIDES:**

So that will be '06 or '07?

**MR. MALLAMO:**

Yes.

**MR. DELUISE:**

And that's the end of my report.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Any other questions? Okay, Education and Exhibits.

**MS. OLDRIN-MONES:**

On September 26 we had a joint meeting of the Education and Exhibits and the Dinosaur Subcommittee. I'm going to pass around the revenue numbers and attendance numbers that we got from that meeting. A copy has also been given to Ann Marie.

Some encouraging news for us is that we are holding our own regarding attendance as compared to the other museums where attendance is down. This news comes from Florence and Stephanie who heard it while attending a LIMA conference on "No Child Left Behind."

The reason why we're able to maintain good attendance for our own fine educational programs is because we adhere to the curriculum and educational standards established by New York State.

Our educational programs are greatly admired, and our Living History Program fascinates people. I know it fascinated me when I saw it at the "Night in El Morocco." I thought all the characters were wonderful, but I particularly enjoyed Dorothy Parker. It's just a delightful way to learn history.

At the LIMA annual meeting Florence and Stephanie were asked about possibly doing a workshop on creating a Living History Program, and they were also asked for some of our educational brochures. In fact, Florence is here tonight to speak to us about accessing some images and artifacts collected during the Alva's 1931-32 global voyage. Before I go on with the rest of the report, maybe she can give that presentation.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

I just need to inject one thing. Bill, I'm sorry, I skipped your committee. I'll come back to you in a second.

**MR. MACCHIONE:**

Not a problem.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

It was a complete accident. Go ahead.

**MR. MACCHIONE:**

I thought you were saving the best for last.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Sorry, I just missed it.

**MS. OGG:**

I don't know if all of you are familiar with the accessioning process. That means we're formally accepting these objects into our collection. When we do that, we protect it, but we also allow the public to use it with very strict rules.

This was a donation that was in – someone had this in their attic. Their father was the engineer on the Alva in that trip around the world. What they donated was an album of these wonderful

photographs. I made a copy to pass around. These were photographs taken on that around the world trip in 1931 and 1932. These are photographs that we could never get any other way. These are priceless to us. I will pass this around.

**MS. LEBOW:**

Florence, I have a question. With regard to photographs, do we run the risk that they are going to deteriorate the way film does?

**MS. OGG:**

What we have done in the past is we make a copy negative, then when we store this album, and we put acid free paper within that. So we do have acid free boxes. When someone comes to look, we will hand them a copy so that they are not looking at the original. We don't really want people handling it. We like to use the white gloves when handling it. Now that this is going to be, hopefully, part of the formal collection, there are certain rules that we adhere to, and that's one of the reasons we want that as part of the collections. We're protected because we are members of the AAM, so we, as staff, have to treat this collection in a very special way. But we have to allow the public to enjoy this and research from this.

So this is one of the things, this album, which you'll pass around. These are pictures of Belanski and Vanderbilt in very casual poses. We see the real people here. We know the names and we know the titles. These are great documents.

These are objects that were collected during that tour. I sent photographs of all these objects to the Director of Collections at the American Museum of Natural History. He identified these. So we have that documentation, too. Anything like this is wonderful, wonderful background material. For any projects we do, we like to include these in the exhibits. What I will do now, if it's accepted into our collection, is we send a thank you card to the donor. We try to have it in a small exhibit in the mansion. We invite the family. We have the pictures taken, and if we ever lend this out to another institution, we will say that it's from the collection of the Vanderbilt Museum, donated by the donor's family. They were very happy to give it to us because they know that we are the center for a lot of this research.

What we have done here is we have taken photographs of all of these. I don't know if anybody wants to come up and see them, but I will hold them up. We have a mace, a hatchet and the bola. As I said before, the Director from the American Museum of Natural History was able to identify most of these things. This is a part of history that will fill the spaces we need. They are a very personal part of the history.

A couple of weeks ago I sent a packet, and I hope all the Trustees got this, with some of the photographs, but also a listing from the crew of the Alva. It does list the electrician's name. His family was very happy for us to have it because he knows that the public will enjoy it as well. I'm going to give you a pair of gloves to look at that. Here you go.

So what I would like to do is I would like to ask the Board if they would accession this and formally accept it into the Vanderbilt collection.

**MR. SEIDES:**

How many items were donated at this time?

**MS. OGG:**

Let's see –

**MR. SEIDES:**  
Approximately.

**MS. OGG:**  
About 10 or 11, and the album, which has about 200 photos.

**MR. SEIDES:**  
Does this exhaust what they might have?

**MS. OGG:**  
Pardon me?

**MR. SEIDES:**  
Does this exhaust the number of items they might have or still possess?

**MS. OGG:**  
This is the collection that he had. It was in a trunk in the attic, and they are moving. They didn't know what to do with it, so they called us. We didn't even pursue this. Last year we received another great collection on the Alva with the specifications from the family of the naval architect that was in Germany when the Alva was built. We're building this collection because the Alva is a very important part of Vanderbilt's history for the collection for his travels. Are there any questions?

**DR. GITTELMAN:**  
Lance and I were having a debate. Was it the torpedoes that sank the Plymouth or was it the submarine that sank the Plymouth?

**MS. OGG:**  
The torpedoes.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**  
It was the torpedoes.

**MR. MALLAMO:**  
They were made in the –

**MS. OGG:**  
The same place that the Alva was made.

**DR. PECORALE:**  
You have that article from the newspaper about the sinking.

**MR. MALLAMO:**  
Yes.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**  
I guess we need a motion.

**DR. PECORALE:**  
Do you want a motion to accession these items?

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Yes, please.

**DR. PECORALE:**

So moved.

**MR. DELUISE:**

And I'll second that.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Is there any discussion? If there is no discussion, all in favor? Opposed? **It carries unanimously. (Vote: 13/0/0/2 Absent: Ms. Fuhrmann & Mr. Kleinberg.)**

**MS. OGG:**

If you would like to come up to the archives at another time to have a closer look, you're all welcome. We have quite a few interesting things in the archives.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Is the gentleman still alive or has he passed away?

**MS. OGG:**

His father is dead. His father was the engineer. This is the son who gave us these. I did write a letter to the son, but once we have accessioned it, we'll send them a thank you card. We have a deed of gift. So this becomes ours to do with what we please. They do get some recognition, and then, as I said, I try to have them on exhibit so that they can see that we're not just putting them in storage.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Right.

**MS. OGG:**

But they contacted us. I think that's great, that people are looking to us as a place to deposit things that are very special to them. This is a family history. Thank you very much.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Thank you.

**MR. LUECKE:**

Question. Do we have a central list of everything that has been accessioned?

**MS. OGG:**

I have files on everything.

**MR. LUECKE:**

Do we tell the underwriter who does our fine arts that we're accessioning something? Is there a value there that we –

**DR. PECORALE:**

Inventory.

**MS. OGG:**

Well, what we did was we just recently did that for the year 2004. It's the donations and gifts in-kind. We never give a value because the family might want to give a value to it for insurance purposes, but the museum does not give a value. To me, this is not even about money. It's priceless, but we just gave a list to the accountant of everything that was donated and any gift in-kind. As far as how they determine the value, I'm not sure.

**DR. PECORALE:**

We do have an inventory of everything.

**MS. OGG:**

We have an inventory of everything.

**DR. PECORALE:**

Is that now also available on our computer website?

**MS. OGG:**

No, it's enormous. We would have to have somebody sit down and enter all of that. What we do have on the website is a general description of the archives. When you come in to do your research we have inventories.

**DR. PECORALE:**

The only reason why I asked the question is the other day I was in a museum in Belgium and they did have a page that had an inventory of all the items they had.

**MS. OGG:**

Well, we have the collections – if you were to ask or if you were to call, what I usually do is have people set up an appointment, and we have a list. We could send out a list of, let's say, the Motor Parkway, the Alva, the furnishings, so you can get a general feeling about what we have. Thank you.

**MS. OLDRIN-MONES:**

Thank you, Florence. Back to the report regarding some old business regarding the dinosaurs. In our ongoing quest to make our dinosaur exhibit more widely attended, cost effective and profitable, we have revisited the following topics: storage containers, we discussed the need to use, consolidate, or loan out materials from the dinosaur exhibit that are currently being stored in trailers and cost hundreds of dollars a month. It was suggested that Margaret Finney, a Librarian at William Floyd School District, might want to borrow these items, as she has successfully used so many of our educational materials in the past. We tried to set a goal to resolve the storage problem within the next couple of months.

Birthday parties, we started to promote using the dinosaur exhibit for birthday parties. Lorraine discussed her previously stated idea of dedicating the front planetarium classroom for dinosaur use, birthday and dino-education programs, decorating it permanently for dino-use, possibly stocking it with fossil sets and mineral sets. Naturally as a classroom it would be available for all other programs, as well.

Stephanie is still pursuing Keith Strasser, a muralist, who could create an appropriate dinosaur mural on vinyl that could be used now on the outside planetarium wall facing the butler building and later in the seaplane hangar. The last we heard, he is still in Texas.

Dave has installed one of the donated videos, which he says is great. All that's required to start it is to push a button, but having said that, pushing a button is not such a routine thing in the butler building. There are ongoing electrical issues. There is the ground fault interrupter outlet that trips every day, and this is a frustrating waste of staff and visitors' time. Before further improvements are made to the dinosaur exhibit, it really makes sense to straighten out the problems with the electrical system.

The problem of heating costs and whether or not to hire a full time greeter for the dinosaur exhibit were discussed. Lance said that the exhibit would be open and heated and greeted as necessary on weekends and for programs only. School groups leave their coats on for the presentation. That mostly eliminates the need for heat.

Subway sandwiches, the Subway cart is on site as of October 1. He or she will work down by the turntable and service birthday parties and school groups. Debbie Plant will make it part of her routine to ask about purchasing Subway when the school groups call to book. Of course, it's always been a problem offering groups a comfortable, weather protected area to eat. Now we have that tent right outside the dinosaur exhibit, but that's not really suitable for winter conditions. That's the dinosaur news.

The rest of the report is about the regular Education and Exhibit Committee meeting. Lance gave us a small report on the classrooms and how Bill's committee looked for potential new classroom space. We're very grateful for that. Hopefully when some of these new rooms are properly equipped they can be used. That will be a source of maybe more revenue.

One potential problem, however, is that some of the programs share exhibits, they share collections and they share space. It seems like we can't have all of the programs up and running at the same time.

In your folder or on top of your folder I passed out a list of materials. We asked the staff for a list of items that they needed or they wanted for current programs. Could you look these over and see if there is anything on those lists that you have access to or that you would want to donate? There is also a page of book titles that would be nice to have for sale in the gift shop and to have to hand out.

Speaking of the gift shop, we reiterate the need to make the gift shop a more functional asset by stocking it with those items in demand by visiting teachers in school groups. Teachers are always looking for items to bring back to the classroom as educational tools or as gifts for the children. Posters, pencils, books, planet spheres, binoculars, and books on the Vanderbilt are items known to be in demand.

Since money, which we don't have, is needed to stock the shop, we discussed the possibility of it being run as a concession. Lance was going to look into that.

It was also suggested that a satellite bookstore in the mansion would be a nice addition, as visitors so often ask where they can purchase a book and do not want to go all the way back to the planetarium.

It was previously mentioned that Tony Pecorale could get a school bus donated. Lance has also been in contact with Suffolk Bus in West Islip. They are considering partnering with us to provide a bus and driver as well as insurance for free or at cost. The Bank of America grant might provide the cost of economically challenged schools coming and paying the fee to us. There is some hope that this might come about.

The education brochure, it's not too early to think about next year's education brochure, especially if we want to make changes. The educators have prepared programs for this winter and spring break. You have a copy of that which I passed out. They are preparing now for next summer's theme, which is Southeast Asian Exploration. We would like to work on the 2006-07 brochure in January and February of 2006. So between now and then if you could please make suggestions and contribute ideas and if possible attend the work sessions.

Recently we have had a bit of media exposure. There is an article by Bill Beyer about the ship model exhibit in naval architecture. Florence was interviewed for an article about the Living History Program, which appeared recently in the Northport Times. I have copies of that here, which you can take and pass around. It's a very interesting two-page article.

The planetarium is mentioned in the newsletter of the Northport, East Northport Public Library, which I have a copy of and we'll pass around. Our Vanderbilt mummy will be in an article by Dr. DeSantis, which will be published in a radiological journal entitled, "Advance Magazine." We have been contacted by Barbara Hall, an education writer, who saw the Gold Coast special on Channel 21 and may do a piece on the Vanderbilt.

News 12 will air an image cycling segment that was filmed in our planetarium. It's an hour-long exercise session using stationary cycles while watching projected images.

We have recently rejoined Arts and Cultural News and joined the Northport Arts Coalition and can now list our programs with them as well as with the Town of Huntington Department of Parks and Recreation, a program that is mailed out to everyone town wide and in which we can advertise our break and school programs. A copy of that also is being passed around. We are trying to make the public more aware of our fine programs in any low cost way available to us.

The news from the planetarium is that Dave is backing up all the slides and the programs digitally. Work continues on the open sky pop-up video, which is a planetarium enhancement that will be free to the public. Lorraine and Dave have worked out a way to increase student involvement by setting up a solar scope on a table outside to actually look at the sun while Lorraine is inside with another group of students. A new constellation show is planned for the spring. They have updated the Mars adventure making it timeless.

Finally, exhibits and collections. Because the electrical project for the Hall of Fishes is going out to bid, Stephanie will be busy labeling shelves, cases, and specimens. Ten years after the leak was discovered in the habitat area, the cause has been identified. Stephanie actually brought the pipe with her to our meeting. The IMLS Grant Committee can be informed that the problem is fixed and an extension can be asked for. Florence is working with the collection manager, an intern from Sagtikos Manor, to help them with documenting and cataloging their collections. She visited Dowling College Library to look through their archives on the Vanderbilt. Muriel Vanderbilt left her collection to the college and Florence has arranged to have their archivist visit our site so that we can share information from our collections.

Florence will return to the archives in the fall and have some photos of the Vanderbilt family

scanned. Artifacts from our collection were included in an exhibit designed and sponsored by Howard Kroplick at the Cradle of Aviation on the Vanderbilt Cup Race. The exhibit on the 1904 race was brought here and included in the October 2 car show.

Very soon the garden clubs will be decorating holiday rooms in the mansion according to prepared themes. These will be interpreted by greeters.

That's the end of my report. The next meeting is November 3 at 2 p.m. in Normandy Manor. Everyone is most welcome to come.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

I don't want to close your committee. What I want to do is hear Bill's and then I want to talk about the possibility of expansion in education. So, if we could leave your committee open.

**DR. PECORALE:**

Question. This is the revenue from August, which I remember we were going to get. Is there any chance that we can get an expense estimate as well? This is the revenue.

**MS. OLDRIN-MONES:**

Right.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

We could get that for you, sure. For the summer break?

**DR. PECORALE:**

Right. I would just like to know – I'm not suggesting that we wouldn't do the programs anyway, but I would like to just know about what it costs.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

I am confident they will be far less than the revenues.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Bill, can you tell us about your explorations?

**MR. MACCHIONE:**

At the Buildings and Grounds Committee we had a facility space report. The Building and Grounds Committee conducted a facility survey primarily for the purpose of identifying additional public use space. As we are all aware, the education building is inhabitable due to age and water damage. The anticipated completion date is in the first quarter of 2006. However, during the recent bidding cycle no general contractors attended the site visit. Therefore, the completion may be in jeopardy.

In the interim, we're recommending a number of changes. We're recommending some moves to increase the public use space to potentially increase educational programs. We are also looking to assist in reducing expenditures over the cold months.

Some of the recommendations are the curator's cottage/proposed mummy room. The construction on the proposed mummy room is not anticipated until the first quarter of 2006. At

present it is available for public use. It would require removal of supplies and perhaps some painting. The planetarium slide room, the slide room could be made ready for public use with relocation of the slide room to smaller quarters and perhaps painting. The people in the slide room would be moved over to office two. The people in office two would be moved over to office one, which is presently vacant.

We also have some recommendations for winter utility reduction. The education building we feel should be closed. Since the construction is backlogged, that will sit empty, so we might as well just close that and use that for storage.

Now, Gretchen mentioned about the trailers, which we're looking to eliminate on the property. We can move contents of the trailers over into the education building.

The dinosaur building we were looking to close except for bookings. This would stay closed until on or about March 20 in which it would just be reopened for the public.

The other proposed closing, which had some problems with it, is the powerhouse. The powerhouse is where the mechanics have their shop. If you close the powerhouse, the mechanics will not be able to repair all the equipment. The other thing is that in the powerhouse you have gasoline stored. You have a lot of paints that are stored. There would have to be a place – we would have to come up with a place that would solve that and give the mechanics a place to repair all the equipment. Also, the people that are in the powerhouse room right now would have to be relocated. We recommend if that happens, that they are all relocated into one area. This way there is some rhyme or reason that they can oversee their work and the people that work for them. Also in that, they would also need a break room or break areas.

The current capital projects update, you have the sidewalks, which are still continuing. You have the plumbing. Last week it was started. They are working on the bathrooms at this point. The HVAC contract, the bid is due in next week.

On the 2005 capital projects update, at the Normandy Manor you have \$30,000 that is awarded for planning. You have the façade restoration that is ongoing. You have two other areas, the waterfront and also the ADA compliance. They have just completed their environmental study. That has been completed and approved. That will move on to the next step.

In connection with Florence, we feel we have these two areas. The estimated cost for the proposed changes for these two areas will be around \$1,000. It would give you two more public use rooms in the meantime.

Are there any questions or comments?

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

I have questions. Would this give you the ability to have more classes?

**MS. OLDRIN-MONES:**

I think it would. When we talked about it in our Education and Exhibits Committee meeting, the educators seemed quite enthusiastic, especially with the mummy room conversion. I am very comfortable with that, but the concern is that so many programs do share collections. It would have to be worked out so that students could be moved in and out of those shared collection areas and then back to classrooms. I can't say for sure how many more people would be accommodated.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

But while you're filling that up, we can look for more. I think one of the things that is crippling us is the loss of the classrooms that we have always depended upon.

**MS. GRAY:**

That is not what I am hearing. What I'm hearing is that even though we might find you other classrooms, there is a logjam with the exhibits that they are using for teaching purposes.

**MS. ODLRIN-MONES:**

And that's something that is going to have to be worked out. I don't know exactly how it will be worked out. I know they do some pretty fancy traffic control right now moving kids in and out of shared areas. I'm guessing that there could be even fancier traffic controls done in the future if we have more groups moving through, but I can't say for certain.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Isn't it possible that the groups be clustered so that they are using the same exhibit materials in the same location?

**MR. MALLAMO:**

I think it's a question of their using the collection items. When they go in the invertebrate room there are baskets there or they hold shells and things like that. We're using the room to capacity. We can't put any more people in there. We're going to have to finagle.

**MS. LEBOW:**

Is the problem staggering the use of the room with going back to the classroom and doing some talking to the students that visit –

**MR. MALLAMO:**

Yes, they spend about half the time in the exhibit and half the time in the classroom. Providing more classrooms – there are times when we're at full capacity in the exhibits. We will have to find another way or develop a different program where we don't have people stacked up who are waiting to use it. Right now we kind of juggle. If we have three classes in three exhibit areas, one moves from one to the other, and they are right behind one another. If you now have four classes and three exhibit areas – I'm sure we can overcome it.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

We're a creative group. I thank the group of you who searched out more space, and I thank the group of you that will use the space.

**MS. LEBOW:**

I have a question.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Sure, Susan.

**MS. LEBOW:**

How do the fees that are charged for our educational programs stack up against other entities in the fees that they charge?

**MR. MALLAMO:**

I would say we are competitive. We may be a little bit on the high side.

**MS. LEBOW:**

On the high side?

**MR. MALLAMO:**

But I think we have a quality program. We have programs that nobody else has. Generally they range anywhere from \$2.50 per student to \$4.50 or \$5, and we're in the upper range. If they do two programs, that will be \$10.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Anything else?

**MR. SEIDES:**

I'd like to say that I participated in the review of the buildings, and I photographed them. We have comments prior to the photographs. You are welcome to review that so that we have a record that we reviewed the buildings.

At this moment, I think it's appropriate for me to just bring up again the need for the delivery of the furnaces to possibly help our educational programming logjam. Our educational center is down. It's 100 percent down, closed, and the Hall of Fishes is heated with electric. I would just like to defer to Lance if you could just bring us up-to-date on where we stand with the delivery.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

Those are the bids that will be open next week. But as I think somebody indicated, we had a walk-through on the project on Monday. We were expecting we would have plumbers, HVAC people and a general contractor. We had no general contractors show up. DPW didn't rule it out, that somebody wouldn't bid, but they thought it was highly unlikely. We will need a general contractor to execute the project. We should keep our fingers crossed that somebody will bid on it, but unfortunately, particularly with these older buildings, a lot of contractors feel you don't know what's in the wall. You don't know what you're dealing with. That's why they really encourage the site visit so that they see firsthand what the aspect is. These are the issues that come up. I said earlier that we could have a surprise. We'll have to see next week when they open the bids.

**MR. SEIDES:**

Thanks, Lance. We'll remain hopeful.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

Actually, just to go into that a little further, since when we did the site visit, the educational building gave us one additional classroom. It's not in the best condition right now. It has peeling paint. It needs an overhaul. It's going to have major construction. That's why I supported or initiated, actually, the concept of even if we got it back up and running at some point in the winter, not even to restart it for use until we have another space available. I think we can save those costs. We don't know what heating costs are going to be this winter. We expect they are going to skyrocket. If we can save those expenses on that building and shift them to another building that we are heating, I would prefer to do that.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Anything else on that report? No, okay. Finance Committee.

**MR. SEIDES:**

The Finance Committee met this evening, and I was very pleased to see that almost all of our Board Members were in attendance. We had an open and honest roundtable discussion about financial issues here at the Vanderbilt. The Treasurer's Report is in your folder. Please review it. If you have any questions, please feel free to bring them forward. Please attend our next month's meeting. I would like to pass around the Check History Report for your review. I would like to request the need for an executive session. That's the end of my report.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Okay, we have a request for an executive session. Do I have a second?

**MR. LUECKE:**

Second.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

**Motion carries unanimously. (Vote: 13/0/0/2 Absent: Ms. Fuhrmann & Mr. Kleinberg.)** We will meet in executive session at the end of this meeting.

**MR. SEIDES:**

Thank you.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Nominating Committee should be in November according to the bylaws. I don't know why it's here on our agenda tonight.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

Yes, that was my mistake.

**DR. PECORALE:**

We have met. We are continuing to meet. We will have a report in November.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Personnel Committee, Deborah Gray.

**MS. GRAY:**

There was no report this month.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Director's Report.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

Well, as Bill Macchione said, the waterfront and the ADA projects received their environmental review this morning. It was a spirited meeting at the Council on Environmental Quality, but I'm pleased that they did approve both projects and would recommend such to the Suffolk County Legislature. So those will join the other two that we have in the hopper for appropriation of funds at the present time. They did request that the gazebos that are going to be built as part of the boardwalk to see the final design, which will be somewhat after the aviary behind the mansion. It's the small building there. We certainly can accommodate that.

We're very cognizant of our costs right now and are doing everything we can to bring our expenses down and to achieve some savings wherever we can for the rest of this year and for

2006.

That's my report.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Okay, I have no report. Old business?

**DR. PECORALE:**

I have a piece of old business. Donna Periconi was a former Board Member who has not been on the Board for approximately a year. Our past history has been to invite Board Members who have served to a meeting where we would present them with a print. Have we done that for Donna?

**MR. MALLAMO:**

I have done it several times. I have spoken to Donna at least quarterly. I love Donna dearly, but I tell you, she is so busy. She always says, "Oh, I'll do it in two months." I will try it again. I will give her another call. She wanted to do it when the weather was warmer. Then when the weather was warmer, she asked if we could do it when the weather is a little cooler. I know she is very, very busy. She has family obligations and also all that she is doing in Bay Shore, but she is aware of it. She wants to come back and receive it, but I will tell her that you brought the issue up again and we're very anxious to have her come in and receive her fish.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

By all means, Tony, if you would like to contact her –

**DR. PECORALE:**

I'm going to give Donna a call. I'm just sorry that I didn't think about it before the gala. That might have been the thing to invite her to.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Right.

**DR. PECORALE:**

But I will call her. Donna was a very fine Trustee and did many, many things for the museum. I really would like to honor her.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

But it's not because we haven't called her.

**DR. PECORALE:**

I wasn't suggesting that. I was just wondering what the status was.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

You must have some old business.

**MR. OLIVIERI:**

Is anyone interested? We have pictures of the lions. I found them.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Up in Rochester.

**MR. OLIVIERI:**

Yes, up in Rochester. Actually, they had been moved. They are the moving lions, but we finally got them. I will pass the pictures around.

**MS. LEBOW:**

Now what? Are they receivers of stolen goods?

**MR. OLIVIERI:**

Not us.

**MS. LEBOW:**

No, but are they?

**MR. OLIVIERI:**

No, they are not.

**MR. MACCHIONE:**

Have they been sold?

**MR. OLIVIERI:**

No, they are still the same people who took them from this area.

The other thing is that I have been in touch with Bob Catell's office over in Key Span. I'm trying to get that credit accelerated. I wrote something a couple of weeks ago and e-mailed it to him. I gave Lance a copy. The Chairman's office got it but lost it. So I got it back up there yesterday and he now has it in his hand. I'm going to see if I can get that expedited. I guess, Lance, we're going to have to talk about what to do with our friends up in Massachusetts about our laser shows.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

Yes, we're just waiting for an electrical adjustment in the planetarium to be completed. They are claiming our voltage isn't correct for the system. We're doing what they're telling us we have to do. My technical person doesn't believe that that's an issue, but I think to verify that we had to install this regulator –

**DR. ROGERS:**

What were they asking us to do? What is not correct about it?

**MR. MALLAMO:**

They are telling us that we must maintain 208 volts at all times to run the system. Our voltage here because of the power issues in Centerport fluctuates between – what is it, Bill, 202 and 218? It doesn't maintain consistency. They are telling us it has to be consistent. So we are putting a regulator in. Is that completed?

**MR. DIECK:**

Not yet, but it is underway. He has been working –

**DR. ROGERS:**

Well, I question that to an extent because I don't know what kind of power supply they have, but today most power supplies and suppliers with electronic equipment and lasers and that nature are self-regulating. It sounds like they may be just looking for an excuse.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

I suspect you're right, Bill. That's what my technical person, David Bush, is telling me as well. But that's their claim. It was a relatively modest cost to have this regulator installed. I think once we do that – I have been working with Dan on the whole issue with this laser company. I think we have talked about it in the past. We feel that this is a repair that is covered by the warranty and that they have to maintain the system. I think, Dan, when we spoke I think we have a case. We can go back after lost revenue because the system has been down 50 percent of the time.

**DR. ROGERS:**

They should have been checking that out even before they installed it.

**MR. OLIVIERI:**

They didn't even want to come down here and look at it. They were trying to pass the buck. Now they have come down. They've got a broken system. They dealt with it, and they gave this last excuse, and they have to come back to fix it.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

They did fix it. It lasted a few days, then it was down again. That's the reason they're giving us now. I think once we get verified that it's not going to work when we maintain 208 volts, then we'll have to see where we go with this.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Despite the fact that the laser system isn't working, have we considered changing our programming on the laser shows to generate additional revenue?

**MR. MALLAMO:**

We've been running other planetarium shows in that time slot.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Okay.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

Which doesn't generate the attendance that the laser shows did. We have had certain people come in saying, "I thought it was a laser show. I want my money back." That has been a problem. Even when the shows were running and then in the middle of the show the equipment would fail, you have an audience full of people, and they're not happy. It has been –

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

What are the prospects of getting these folks down here quickly? It seems to go month to month and we're losing revenue that we need desperately.

**DR. ROGERS:**

Did we ever get a spec sheet from them or a technical spec sheet indicating what their equipment was all about, how they monitor it, and what their power supply is? It's a very simple problem. As I said, I think they're just using this as an excuse.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

I would say we did, Bill. I have all the contract documents, and that would probably be in there. Originally he told me that the repair wasn't on the warranty because it was a part of the system that he didn't manufacture. I said to him, "How would I know what you manufactured and what you didn't? You have warrantied the system." He said, "No, no, no." So I had Dan look at it.

Dan, you agreed that they warranted the system.

**MR. OLIVIERI:**

They warranted it, that's it. They have been down. They fixed it. The question that you pose, how quickly they're going to come back, is depending on when we say to them that the regulators are in now and we have the constant current. They should be down – I don't know, Lance, how long will it take them, a week or two?

**MR. MALLAMO:**

Probably, yes.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Let me bring up a different issue. In the past, and Tony will remember this and so will you, Carl, we have run laser shows at different hours using different content. If you change the hours and you change the content, you change the revenue stream. Given the current need for additional revenue stream, I think it's time for us to look at the content that will generate the traffic. We're not running the content or the time slots that will generate the traffic.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

We have scheduled that. We did schedule that this year. In fact, we even did live shows. We did a Led Zeppelin live concert on three Saturday nights here where we had a Led Zeppelin band play. They were great. We packed the house, and five minutes into the show the system went down. So we supplemented that with planetarium effects. Some people bought it; others didn't buy it. When the system is running, absolutely, it's great. During the winter months it's a perfect time to do that, and we're coming into the season to do it.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

There are Trustees who don't know – I have to clarify what I'm saying. There is content on laser shows that will bring in a packed house. They will pay a different pay scale from what the seven o'clock show might do. The midnight show, for example, will pack, it will draw, and it will raise money. We have avoided doing that for a long time. I think that given the current need for cash flow, we should consider it seriously. That's the first thing.

The second thing is that I think we should get a hold of these folks, and maybe this has to be handled like it would be if this was a crisis. I'm not suggesting you -- I'm just saying we have to handle this like this is a real crisis, get the regulator in, get the County Attorney on the phone with them, and get flying with this. Then we have to change our programming and the time slots we're willing to do it at. If I recall, and, Tony and Carl, if you recall, it was a big revenue generator for us.

**MR. LUECKE:**

Very successful.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Hundreds of thousands of dollars.

**DR. PECORALE:**

Steve, would it be worth it for us to try to see if we can get somebody in here to take a look at it ourselves and see if they can determine what the problem is? Does anybody know an electrical contractor that we might be able to get in to take a look at the system? If we could get this going, there is no question, it's to our advantage.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Well, there may be some warranty issues that might do it. We had a tough committee meeting. If you want an answer to your cash flow, in the past, we have used the laser shows. This is a great venue for laser shows. We just have to be willing to bring the traffic in, and you have to be willing to do it. Then we have to fix the system. There are two issues, fixing the system and changing our philosophy toward programming.

**DR. ROGERS:**

My question here is, I hear the statement that the system goes down. Is this system available and something I could look at? I don't know what you mean by going down.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

It doesn't project a laser.

**DR. ROGERS:**

It doesn't project a laser. So that either means that your power supply isn't functioning properly or there is something wrong with the laser end of it.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

Yes.

**DR. ROGERS:**

And when they talk about voltage variations, it sounds like it's a power supply.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

That's what they're claiming.

**DR. ROGERS:**

And the chances are that it's in their power supply and not in our source of current. But they did make the statement that they are not responsible for the power supply. Are there any markings –

**MR. MALLAMO:**

No, they made the statement that we must maintain a consistent power source to the equipment. It cannot fluctuate.

**DR. ROGERS:**

Are there markings on the power supply indicating what the power supply is supposed to operate on? Has anybody looked at this?

**MR. MALLAMO:**

My technician has. It's supposed to be 208 volts. Don't hold me to that number. It's 208 or –

**DR. ROGERS:**

They always permit any electrical variation –

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

It must be plus or minus.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

They claim that there is not a plus or minus.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Who are “they”?

**MR. MALLAMO:**

The company.

**DR. ROGERS:**

It’s impossible.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

That’s impossible. I agree with him.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

Well, my technician agrees with you, as well.

**DR. PECORALE:**

It’s a 220 line.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

But I will say that we have had major problems at the museum and in this building with a consistent power supply. There are times when the planetarium projector goes down because we don’t have enough power. There are other times like last week, where we didn’t have telephones here for four days because a power surge fried the equipment. We do get huge gyrations in electrical service. I’m not an electrician. Bill, you know more about it than I do.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

If you want to, you could put on something to track where your power has been and keep a record of that.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

And we have done that, and we have had LIPA do that.

**DR. ROGERS:**

But you can get the power company to come in here and –

**MR. MALLAMO:**

We have done that twice where they have come here and done it. Finally they told us the problem was that there was a transformer that blew a decade ago that they weren’t aware of, and they traced it back to this. They replaced the transformer, they assured us there would be no further problems.

It’s my understanding that there was another problem in the community because of a tanning salon that went in at the end of Little Neck Road that uses a lot of power. I think Deborah Gray acknowledged that there has been a lot of development up here, but the lines haven’t been replaced to keep up with providing enough power. I don’t think there’s enough power to provide to this peninsula. Dan, when you speak to Bob Catell, have him tell Richie Kessel that.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

But there are two separate discussions. One is equipment and getting it running and the other is the programming. If I can, I would like to entertain the programming piece of this.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

That's the more important piece. I can get the equipment running.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Get the equipment running. What I'm asking this Board to consider is to go to – and I'm going to call it – adult laser shows in the form of laser shows that attract people who want to hear certain types of music – and somebody help me with language here.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

Hard rock?

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Hard rock.

**DR. ROGERS:**

If I remember correctly, weren't there objections by the neighbors here or something?

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

We had objections many years ago. It wasn't to the music that was being played. It was to the people that they claimed were coming here. It was to the types of people that were attracted to these shows. I think that what we have to do is we just have to survive as an institution, and we will have to consider bringing in the traffic and making sure that we monitor the people the best we can.

**MS. GRAY:**

That wasn't my recollection. If you recall, you assigned me to be on a community task force that one of the local Legislators, Mr. Cooper, was running. It wasn't to the clientele that was coming here. It was to the damage to the community when the clientele left here.

**DR. PECORALE:**

They were throwing bottles and garbage as they came and as they left. That was the big complaint. It wasn't so much what was happening on our site but what was happening on our roadways coming to the site and leaving the site.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

If you go back and look at our financial –

**DR. PECORALE:**

But I think that the answer is that we need a motion to state that if we have the operation going, that we go to an aggressive program to bring in revenue. I think we're at the point where we don't have much choice.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Do I have a motion to that extent?

**MR. LUECKE:**

I'll make a motion.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Do I have a second?

**DR. PECORALE:**

I'll second it.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Now I want to discuss it.

**DR. PECORALE:**

I want to make sure I understand the motion. The motion is to get the system operational and once it is operational, then to go into an upgrading of our programming to maximize revenue.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

That's correct, and then I would only add one caveat to that. And to also investigate how we can mitigate any problems that arise from the traffic that might come from that, that if it's a litter problem on the street, we have to send somebody down each morning to pick up the litter.

**MS. LEBOW:**

When you make a motion and you say upgrading, I don't know that that is necessarily what you're saying. You're saying –

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Modifying.

**MS. LEBOW:**

Produce programs that will bring in the largest number of well paying participants.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

That's right. We want to optimize our revenue from the laser shows, whatever that programming is.

**MS. LEBOW:**

And there is no problem – I just want to clarify – with a midnight show, that there is no problem with any kind of local ordinances about conducting a midnight event in terms of traffic or anything like that. That has never been a problem?

**MR. MALLAMO:**

The only issue I'm aware of is that there is an 11 p.m. noise ordinance, but this is an interior event. You would not hear this.

**MS. LEBOW:**

Laser shows do not permeate to the outside.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

No, it does not.

**MS. LEBOW:**

Just the traffic – there is no traffic noise.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

No, we have had many events go until midnight.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

If you were to look at the history, the financial history of this museum, the last time it had surplus capital was back when we used to run the laser shows.

**MS. LEBOW:**

Then we have to do them again.

**DR. PECORALE:**

That's the question I have. We were operating with a company who actually came in and produced the laser shows. It was our equipment, but they did the production. Is that not correct?

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

No.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

No, I wasn't there, Tony, but it was my understanding that it was their equipment, but we split the revenue.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Yes, we split the revenue.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

We are working with the same company right now.

**DR. PECORALE:**

It's the same company?

**MR. MALLAMO:**

Yes, it is.

**DR. PECORALE:**

Because it was Tony who actually brought them in.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

Tony Braun?

**DR. PECORALE:**

Right, Tony Braun.

**MS. LEBOW:**

And are these shows still popular enough to draw the same way?

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Well, if you go by what Lance said, which if I recall – Lance, why don't you just repeat it?

**MR. MALLAMO:**

They appeared to be, yes. When we were up and running, we had a good audience. As we advertised, we had a better audience. When we did the special event activities, it was really building. That's what concerned me. We were doing better and better each week. Then it got to the point where their equipment failed and now we had a big crowd standing in the lobby asking where the laser show was.

**MS. LEBOW:**

And bad publicity by word of mouth.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

But equipment failure is never going to be a good thing. Assuming that we can get the equipment going, if you want to generate revenue, the motion on the table is that we consider generating that revenue – that we optimize our revenue that we can get from the laser shows.

**MR. LUECKE:**

This is a tested method of increasing revenue. My recollection is that it was Kevin Rooney and Angie Carpenter who went out and got the firm that we used for the laser shows. They were the two people who –

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Right.

**MR. LUECKE:**

And the minute we put that in, the very first month, we started running in the red.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

It was an instant success. It was Angie Carpenter who suggested this to me last month.

**MR. LUECKE:**

She and Kevin, I believe, were the people who interviewed the different companies.

**DR. ROGERS:**

This laser equipment, how expensive is it?

**MR. MALLAMO:**

It's about \$80,000.

**DR. ROGERS:**

My reason for the question was if we have breakdowns, maybe we should have a back-up of some sort.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

I have a feeling that if we go to this company and we suggest to the company that we're working with that, we're willing to put in the higher revenue programming, we can restructure our arrangement. If we are making real money out of the shows, we probably can afford to pay them enough to keep it working.

**MR. D'ORAZIO:**

I think it's also important to take a look at, if we're going to take this aggressive approach toward these shows, to maybe take a look at our advertiser, our radio station that we're using.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Yes.

**MR. D'ORAZIO:**

Their coverage is not nearly as good as some of the other rock stations out here.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

You're absolutely right, but we didn't have the revenue to hire the good station. Steve, just so I can clarify so there is no misunderstanding, we are leasing this equipment. We have a three-year lease. We are almost up one year. At the end of that, it's ours. We are not splitting with the laser company right now. All the revenue is ours.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Look, if this was my business – today my phones went down. I wouldn't survive without my phones. If I had to give away my left hand to get the phones, I'd get the phones going. You have to get the laser show going and get over it. We've got to get it done. If we're going to use this laser show to generate the revenue that we need, we're going to have to make sure that we cover the neighbors and make sure that we pick up the litter. We're going to have to make sure that we package the laser shows so that they are popular and we keep the equipment working. Somehow we have to get this maintenance company here happily as opposed to beating them with a stick. We have to get them down here and say, "Look, come down. We're changing this. This is what we want to do." We need to make them feel like there is something in it for them.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

Tony brought up a point. My immediate reaction when you said to bring someone else to look at it, I don't want to disqualify my warranty issue because the minute I do that, they're going to say that we can't be covered. The warranty is now expired. We're still working under warranty because this complaint was reported while it was in warranty. Once we get this equipment running again and we can keep it running, there is no reason why we can't find somebody local to maintain it. We're not locked in with this company to maintain it.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

If my phones were out, I wouldn't care if I had to get Santa Claus to fix it. Get it fixed. Then we have to look at the programming. Then we have to look at the kinds of people that we have to have here that make the programs really exciting. Maybe we have to have different kinds of ushers. We have to change our image. We have to maximize the programs. We're in the laser entertainment business.

**DR. ROGERS:**

How often did you run this?

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Every Saturday night, twice sometimes, and we kept it packed.

**DR. PECORALE:**

It was packed. I came here one night and it was packed.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

I came here five or six nights and it was packed.

**MS. FIGALORA:**

What happened? Why did they let it go?

**DR. ROGERS:**

It's a shame that it took us so long to find this out.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

What, that the laser shows –

**DR. ROGERS:**

No, I mean, here we are running a deficit problem and –

**MS. LEBOW:**

And you have a way of building revenue.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Let's fix the laser show. Let's get the programming in.

**MR. D'ORAZIO:**

Grand Central Terminal has a laser show. Is there any way of contacting them and finding out who their company is?

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Of course.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

I believe they use the same company, but I'll see if they've got somebody local that maintains it.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

They put it on the dome, too, but their stars are backwards.

**MR. D'ORAZIO:**

Yes, I noticed that.

**MR. OLIVIERI:**

I noticed from when I was reading that stuff and dealing with them, I don't think there are a lot of companies out there that deal with this stuff.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

No, there really aren't. There are maybe two or three.

**MR. OLIVIERI:**

I don't think you're going to find a local repairman for something like this.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

No, I think you have to go to the existing company and say, "Come on, what does it take to get this done?" They've got you, fine, but let's go now. What does it take? If we have to give them a small percentage of our revenues, we'll have to consider what it takes.

**DR. ROGERS:**

I'll take the job.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

What Steve is proposing is a change in the philosophy that we have had up to this point. We have done some rock shows, but we have kept them at eight o'clock in the evening. We haven't gone later.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

My son is 25, and he doesn't even wake up at eight o'clock in the evening.

**MS. LEBOW:**

No, the rock people don't.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

That's his nap time. He takes a nap from six to eight. At eight o'clock is when he first gets up. He's not going to take a girl to an eight o'clock laser show that is going to have which music? Which music is it?

**MR. MALLAMO:**

Led Zeppelin, Pink Floyd, the Beatles. The Beatles was very popular with older people. It was our generation.

**MS. LEBOW:**

What about something more modern for a different group? I can't recommend anything because I don't know.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

We can really do any show.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

We ought to all promise that we're not doing the programming. Maybe you can, David, but for most of us, we can't do the programming. But that's not the point. The point is that it can be a midnight show. It might be a 1 a.m. show. It might be a 2 a.m. show. It's got to be what we need to do to survive.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

The staff is very anxious to do this.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

I would strongly recommend that we pursue this, but we have to keep the neighbors in mind. We have to do the right thing by them.

**MR. LUECKE:**

We have a motion and a second.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Do we have a motion and a second?

**MS. PASTORE:**

Yes.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Do we have any more discussion?

**MR. D'ORAZIO:**

Only one addition. Maybe we should have an aggressive educational or somebody to tell these people before and after the show to please be courteous of your neighbors.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Wait a second, before we leave this meeting, who is running with this ball? What committee is going to take over laser shows? Is it fair to throw this on the Education Committee? Do we want it on Buildings and Grounds? Who is going to run with this ball, David?

**MR. D'ORAZIO:**

I believe it's a financial and development issue.

**MR. OLIVIERI:**

Why don't we have a different committee, a separate laser committee? Do you want to do it with me, Dave?

**MR. D'ORAZIO:**

Sure, I'll take it on with you.

**MR. LUECKE:**

I recommend Bill being involved because he knows about the electrical –

**DR. ROGERS:**

I'll be involved.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

That's a good committee. Is there anyone else who wants to join?

**MR. D'ORAZIO:**

It's the best thing that we have come up with so far for revenue.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

And David hit on it before, that the advertising really is key to making it succeed.

**MR. D'ORAZIO:**

Stations like WBAB and some –

**MR. MALLAMO:**

You really have to find the right venue.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

David can tell you a lot of things that – do you know what? If you think about what made that party successful, the party that we just had, I'm not talking about how much money it made. I had a good time. We all had a good time. There was a certain sense in that party, and I'm not talking about the hookah pipes. There was a certain feeling in that party that made it work. If we bring that flavor here just to a small extent and you bring that into a laser show, you're going

to pack the place. You're going to be able to sell those tickets over the web, through the web site, and you're going to be able to get good revenue. If we have the right crowd from this Board working with the right people, we can do it.

**DR. ROGERS:**

Let's have the vote.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

All in favor? Opposed? **(Vote 13/0/0/2 Absent: Ms. Fuhrmann & Mr. Kleinberg.) It carries unanimously.** Any more old business? New business?

Now I want to go back to the President's Report. There are ideas that we can put together to raise revenue. One of them is that we get some classrooms because we have great educational programs. Another one might be the laser shows. We might be able to maximize our gift shop a little better. I heard the words that we don't have the money to buy inventory, so we're looking for a concessionaire, which gives me the implication that somewhere along there, we are not maximizing our gift shop. I'm not throwing rocks. I'm just saying that's what I heard. It seems like the gift shop is not being maximized. The laser shows just weren't on the planet. The educational programs, which is our bread and butter, are being cheated space, the education classrooms. We're having some financial troubles because we're not making the best use of the place and in some cases, the place isn't available for us to use.

**MS. LEBOW:**

Gretchen made a very good suggestion, too, that we have the sale of books and things at the main building as well. She's right; people may not want to walk back here to buy things.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

I agree with you, and I'm going to tell you something else. When you're having Living History –

**MS. LEBOW:**

That's when you should sell your stuff.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

I mean, I've done it enough to tell you, that there are some things that we have skipped. We haven't had the morning shows before the Living History tours as often. Maybe they didn't make money, but I think we could charge a little bit more for our Living History tours because I know that our Living History is first-rate. I know what they charged up in Newport when I took it. It wasn't any better or as good as ours. I think we can generate more money in our Living History. I think we can generate more money as Trustees. We may generate more money as Trustees by raising money in the fundraising traditional fashion, but just by what you just heard, because I know David has got a good sense for how to make people have a good time. I know that whoever or however we put on this party together, it had a great feeling to it. We can earn our way out of a financial hole.

**MS. LEBOW:**

Have we appealed to senior citizen groups to set up Living History tours because they look for programs, all of these developments for senior citizens?

**MR. MALLAMO:**

Yes, we do a significant amount of group tours like that.

**MS. LEBOW:**

Do you put out flyers there and offer specials?

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

There is so much, Susan, that we could do. I'm sorry to interrupt, but this is important. For example, I have done it. I have taken 40 Russian ladies around, and they don't even speak English, and I have done Living History with them. They were laughing and giggling and pinching my daughter and all kinds of stuff. They had a great time. If we could get tour groups to come from Brooklyn, Russian ladies who don't speak English, and he knows I'm not lying, okay, obviously we've got a bigger reach than we're saying.

**MS. LEBOW:**

The libraries take their people and take them on tours to Connecticut. These are the local libraries. Why can't they take them here for a Living History tour and lunch?

**DR. PECORALE:**

I know a group that you ought to check out because I just did something with them. The Red Hat Ladies.

**MS. LEBOW:**

Yes, the Red Hat Ladies.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

Yes.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

I'm willing to bet you, and I did something strange with Lance two weeks ago. That was a bad lead-in, but Channel 21 did a fundraiser. What was it, \$1,500 a couple?

**MR. MALLAMO:**

It was \$2,500.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

I don't know, but I would guess they had five or six couples. Two didn't show, but they did get five or six. Lance and I did Living History. We took them around. In a sense we didn't do Living History. We did our version of a tour. Why couldn't we have target groups that come here at night that we do a Living History show? Maybe it is more expensive. We could use the mansion as an entertainment venue where you come here and we --we can come up with a lot of ideas. We don't have one foot in the grave. There are a lot of things we can use this place for. If we could get the ladies from Russia coming, we could use this place. We could have theater groups down on the south shore who might be interested. We could advertise. Anywhere that there is a theater you can come up here and see theater in the mansion, and I bet we can come up with some really wild plot lines. You haven't seen me fight with the cook.

**DR. PECORALE:**

How about a group to come up for the weekend and actually sleep in the house in the bedroom that the Duchess and the Duke of Windsor --

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

I'm not arguing.

**MR. D'ORAZIO:**

That you could auction off on E-Bay.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

But we would have a problem in that we have historic furnishings that we would have to protect with our lives.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

Yes, I can see Florence passing out in the back of the room.

**MS. OGG:**

I passed out a half hour ago.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

It gets down to how are we going to make this place revenue positive?

**MS. LEBOW:**

Do you have people on staff, Lance, who could contact all the local libraries for their library trips, the senior citizen groups, and the Red Hat Ladies?

**MR. MALLAMO:**

Yes, we have a group tour coordinator. She does that. We have the Red Hats come. We go to the bus tour conventions. They have them periodically during the year.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

But you know what, Lance –

**MS. LEBOW:**

They could contact the libraries and ask them if they want to schedule a Living History tour as part of their –

**MR. MALLAMO:**

And historical societies.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

This is still on the President's Report, so I still have the right to dominate.

**MS. LEBOW:**

Go ahead.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Okay, so what I'm saying to you is that maybe I'm not good at going out and saying to my next door neighbor, "Would you give \$500 to the Vanderbilt." I can teach Carl how to do Living History stuff. There is something that every one of us can do here to help this place make more money. I was thinking this evening, what am I going to say to you guys, that we need \$5,000 from each of you to make it through the month, kind of thing? If you want to have a good vital Board and if you want to have a good vital institution, let's do it and earn the money. Let's raise the money. Figure out what you can do, and if you don't know, and you don't have an idea – one thing is for certain. We are not marketing this place worth a damn. We don't have – I've got to be honest with you. I know that we are not calling around and saying, "You know, I sent you a

mailing and I didn't get a response." We don't have people manning the phones saying, "We have vacancies here. We have this choice of stuff on the web that you could look to. Would you just look to the web to go look at our programming?" We don't have people selling. We don't have anybody selling this place. We advertise it passively. We wait for people to call in and we book.

**MS. LEBOW:**

Do you have volunteers who would be willing to do that? You have volunteers to come here and want to volunteer. Do you have volunteers who could do that?

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

I think you're looking at some of us.

**MS. LEBOW:**

I don't mean on the Board. I mean you have community volunteers that are interested in this museum and come here and volunteer their time. Could they be trained to do some of this stuff?

**MR. MALLAMO:**

We could certainly ask. Our volunteers tend to have very particular interests. They tell us what they want to do.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

I'm willing to bet you that if you take – what's her name, Debbie, that does the booking?

**MR. MALLAMO:**

Yes.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

I would assume Debbie's time is at least 70 percent occupied, maybe 100 percent occupied, maybe 120 percent occupied, but if she's got any spare time at all, there could be a list of places that she can begin to call where we haven't gotten responses.

**MS. LEBOW:**

I think that is realistic. If each of the Board members could come up with recommendations where she could do the follow-up calls.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Well, let's say that she had an hour a day or two hours a week, maybe that's two hours that we're missing because we're not saying – and Lance is going to say to me, "Steve, are you out of your mind? Why did you say that? She is so overwhelmed with work. You're out of your mind." But maybe when it comes down to it, maybe we have an educator who has a class cancelled and she could call the schools that she knows and say, "You didn't book with us." I know that I'm throwing stones in a lot of different directions, but I'm just saying that maybe there is a Board member sitting in this room who knows school districts, maybe a past Superintendent. There's a possibility or maybe you go to your temple group and say, "We'll do a 50/50 with you," or your church group and you say, "We'll do a 50/50. If you bring 50 people here, we're going to have food. It's going to cost you \$50 or \$40 for the night, \$20 goes to the museum, and \$20 goes to the church. Come on down." Then we give a Living History tour. I'll be here that night. I'll give Living History. I can take any section of the mansion you want. I think we have to start doing stuff like that. Maybe we have to come here and go to our own programs and see what they are like. Maybe I should be working on the dinosaur program. I think that's how we should deal with

it. I've said my piece. New business?

**DR. PECORALE:**

I just wanted to pass something along to you. As most of you know, my wife owns a gift shop. The biggest raiser of money that she has in her store every year is a Christmas ornament for a particular thing. The one that raises the biggest amount of money was she did one for Argyle Park in Babylon. It was the lake, the section that's down on Montauk Highway.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

With the waterfall?

**DR. PECORALE:**

Yes, by the waterfall. She did that. She put it on an ornament and advertised it. It sold for about five years. She sold them out. But it has to be something. I was just thinking, how about if we made a Christmas ornament with the –

**MR. MALLAMO:**

Bell tower?

**DR. PECORALE:**

And then advertise it and put it in the paper as a fundraiser. They sell. I will tell you that she sold 10,000 of them.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

You couldn't have come up with a Chanukah menorah, huh?

**DR. PECORALE:**

You could do it for Chanukah too. It's an ornament, and they sell. I'm really serious. Every year Williamsburg has one. They have the Williamsburg ornament for each year. It's \$60. I bet it doesn't cost more than \$10 to make. Have any of you seen the Williamsburg ornament?

**MR. MALLAMO:**

Yes, Stony brook Village has them, too.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Maybe we should make a model of that hatchet that Florence has.

**DR. PECORALE:**

Fine, but if you can get something like that that we could get made that's unique and don't sell them any place other than your store – I'm going to take this home and ask my wife if she has any ideas.

**MS. LEBOW:**

Are we going into executive session?

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

I guess so. We had a motion and a second to go into executive session.

**(Executive Session: 9:50 p.m. to 10:05 p.m.)**

**(Dr. Gittelman adjourned the meeting at 10:05 p.m.)**

**SG/ap**

**Attachments**