SUFFOLK COUNTY VANDERBILT MUSEUM

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

MINUTES

A regular meeting of the Suffolk County Vanderbilt Museum Board of Trustees was held on December 17, 2008, in the Planetarium Lobby, Centerport, New York.

The following were in attendance:
Dr. Steven Gittelman - President
Gretchen Oldrin-Mones - Secretary
Michael B. DeLuise - Treasurer
Daniel Olivieri - Trustee
David D'Orazio - 1st Vice President
Dr. Anthony Pecorale - Trustee
Noel Gish – Trustee
Dr. William Rogers - Trustee
Arthur M. Sillman, Jr. - Trustee
Carol Ghiorsi-Hart - Executive Director
John Pokorny - Staff
Barbara Oster - Staff
Lorraine Vernola - Staff
Jana Folger - Staff
Stephanie Gress - Staff
Lora Gellerstein - Aide to Legislator Jon Cooper
Lance Reinheimer - Budget Review Office
Peter Newman - Staff
Janna Folger - Staff
Beth Laxer-Limmer - Staff
Scott Driver - Friends of the Vanderbilt Museum
Emily Gittelman
Ann Marie Pastore - Stenographer

Absent:
Matthew Swinson - 2nd Vice President
Sarah Anker - Trustee
Susan LeBow - Trustee

(Dr. Gittelman called the meeting to order at 7:15 P.M.)

DR. GITTELMAN:
Good evening, everyone. This is a regular meeting of the Suffolk County Vanderbilt Museum Board of Trustees. Do we have a list of guests in attendance?

MS. PASTORE:
Yes.

DR. GITTELMAN:
For this meeting, I'm going to suspend the regular agenda that we normally go through and focus on a sequence of questions, which I did email to you this morning. I apologize for those of you who didn't see it. We have some issues that we have to deal with. They have to be moved to the front, so we will not approve the minutes or anything like that in this meeting. We will hold that for the January meeting, if that's okay.

Perhaps because it's freshest in my mind, let me try to bring you up to date as to where we currently stand. Last evening, a bill came before the Legislature to – an override came before the Legislature to override Mr. Levy's veto of the planned funding of the $800,000 that was earlier voted in by the Legislature to fund the museum for next year. Just to refresh your memory, the endowment is now invested approximately 50 percent at about one and a half percent interest. It has about 40 percent at higher interest but they are not stocks – if there is a residual stock, I'm not aware of it – there should be next to no stocks left of the endowment. Everything is in interest bearing commodities. However, it's very conservatively at low interest bearing rates, one and a half percent for half would be rather conservative.

The Investment Counsel and the Legislature went forward and have used a strategy of – they are trying to protect the principle for a couple of reasons, which I think we have to clarify here. I think that might help them with that. Based on $8.2 million, if you look at the mixed blend of income that they have, we may get $250,000 next year. It could be a bit more than that. I believe that Lance Reinheimer can give us more specifics on what they're projecting, but right away, that will be one of the areas that I wish to discuss with you, as to what our plea would be to the Legislature to consider in terms of how the endowment is invested.

The second thing is that the Legislature did pass, as I said, a bill that was put in by Legislator Viloria-Fisher for $800,000 to give us money for next year. That passed, but then to fund that $800,000 the mechanism that was proposed was to increase golf and camping fees. That failed in the sense that it passed but then later when it was vetoed yesterday by the County Executive, only ten votes were achieved and you need 12 to override. So we did not achieve an override.

One of the problems that we have is that the County Legislature is looking to us to come forward to them with a plan that shows them that we have the ability to raise money next year to keep this place afloat and that we can replace our reliance on the $1.2 million that we will not receive next year that currently will be $250,000, that I mentioned to you already. In other words, our income before was $1. 2 million.

On the short-term the flow of money from the endowment that was running at $100,000 a month stopped on November 1, as most of you are aware. The flow stopped in November 1, so we did not receive $100,000 on November 1. We did not receive $100,000 on December 1. That drained our coffers by $200,000 and pretty much used up the – we were going in with a good cash position into November and then we did receive, I think, it was $104,000 that was interest generated by the fund just a few days ago. That money will bridge us.

The other subject I want to go over, and I'm throwing out a bunch of subjects for your consideration because there is no formal agenda, is what are our cash flow needs? How far will the current cash carry us? What will we be able to generate in the next few weeks to build on that cash? What possibly might come in from the endowment? Are we really confronted with having to close the institution, and what do we do if we have to do that?

At this juncture, the Legislature is investigating the possibility of an offset, which might replace the need to finance the $800,000 through raising park fees. We can hope and pray that it happens. There are no guarantees.

That's an overview. The first thing that I want to address, if I can, and what I would like to do is ask Lance Reinheimer if he would address us, number one, on what he feels the income from the endowment will be short-term. Will there be an income? Will we get another check, for example, in early January? And what will be the flow of funds that we should expect for next year? Lance, would you be kind enough to help us with that and anything else that comes to mind? Thank you once again for coming.

MR. REINHEIMER:
A couple of things. The Legislative process is confusing and difficult to figure out where things are going. It's hard to really say for sure or for certain what the Legislature will end up doing. I have always said in the past that I have given up guessing because I'm generally wrong.

Let me just go over some of the things that happened last night. The budget was adopted. It has to be balanced. When we adopt the budget, we generally have an omnibus resolution, which covers multiple lines and multiple needs of the County. In the case of the Vanderbilt, we had a separate resolution that provided an $800,000 inter-fund transfer from the General Fund to the museum. In order to keep the budget balanced, we included increasing golf fees as the revenue source for the balancing purpose to support the transfer.

The budget taken as a whole -- park fees have no relationship to the museum. But because it was in a separate resolution, people are making that connection. The budget for the General Fund is $2 billion. Some revenues come in higher than we budget, some come in lower, expenditures are higher or lower and in the end we either end up with a surplus or a deficit. The transfers to various funds are not contingent upon revenue coming in. But because of the situation with the Vanderbilt, they linked the golf fees.

With that being said, the veto being sustained last night and not raising golf fees, the transfer to the museum is still in the budget and can still legally be made. The County Executive, in his message to the Legislature, said that if the veto is

sustained, he's going to present legislation to de-fund the museum, which means to amend the budget and delete the $800,000 transfer.

My personal opinion from just observing the Legislature, and it's my opinion only, is that I don't think that will have the support of the Legislature. My feeling from seeing the meetings that the Legislature has had is that there is support for the museum, but there isn't full support for raising golf, camping fees and other fees.

I'm optimistic about the future. It's a process. The easiest way to understand this is that it's a process. I'm optimistic. I don't hear any talk about closing the museum in any meeting. That hasn't been discussed. It's basically golf fees and the County Executive's philosophy that he doesn't want an inter-fund transfer to the museum. I am optimistic that we'll get through this. I also looked at Carol's projections on what it will take the close the museum next year, $800,000. That's a solid number. Within $15,000 we agree with that number. As a matter of fact, I felt that she understated the cost by $15,000.

There is still dialogue in the Legislature. I think there is still support for the museum. Don't let yesterday discourage you. I think it's important that you go forward and you keep going with your plans. The Legislature wants to see your plan. It's hard to put something together for certain as quickly as they wanted it, but plans evolve, too.

Going back to the question of the endowment, $250,000 is a pretty accurate estimate as to what the endowment would generate next year through income, through interest. I asked the Bank of America for a cash flow analysis because some of the investments don't come in. The interest isn't paid on a monthly basis. It comes in quarterly or different times of the year. I asked them to provide Budget Review with cash flows so that we would know what would be coming through approximately each month for the museum. What would be governing the endowment from this point on, from January on, is the will. It says that we can use income for the maintenance in support of the museum. January you won't get too much because I think the distribution was made around the 15th of December, so the January distribution for the museum would be interest accrued from December 15 to the beginning of January. We're talking two or two and a half weeks' worth of interest. I wouldn't assume that you'll get too much income from the endowment in January, just for a heads-up for cash flow.

On the other hand, I'm hoping that the County will be in a position to make the inter-fund transfer to the museum from the General Fund. That would start in January contingent that things fall into place. But right now the way the budget stands, that inter-fund transfer is there. The County has the authority to make that transfer. The County Executive may think differently. We will see how that plays out.

DR. GITTELMAN:
So $250,000, as far as the rate of flow, that's yet to be determined. One of the things that struck me in looking at this is that the way the endowment is currently invested, which I realize is not your decision, but, heck, you're here and it's good to talk to you about it, is a very safe approach to preserve principle, given that if they were to buy long-term at higher interest rates, the possibility of the market value of paper that they hold within the endowment might fluctuate bringing them below the $8.2 million threshold. I have suggested on a couple of occasions that they could

invest at higher rates. I am aware that rates of 6 percent are not unachievable at this point in the market. They could invest it at higher rates. For example, to get 6 percent with $8.2 million that would yield $500,000.

If the market conditions were to shift, and the value of the paper in terms of the market value of the paper – to drop the principle value below $8.2 million. I think the fear that was expressed to me by the Legislature was that someone in the family will come and take the endowment back because we would have gone below $8.2 million.

I think that one of the things that I would like to see considered is that the endowment be invested longer term and higher rates to achieve a higher return, that someone review whether or not someone could come in and say that they are taking it back, that they want the museum back because we've gone below the $8.2 million. Even if they did that, it would require litigation to do that, and that during the span of litigation the County could inject enough money to bring it above the $8.2 million threshold. By investing it long term, we could have a base of $500,000, as opposed to a base of $250,000, and that the danger of going below $8.2 million might be phantom. I realize this is not within your purview, but, heck, you're here. I don't want to put you on the spot, but maybe you have an opinion on this.

MR. REINHEIMER:
It's a good question. We're still, we, the Legislature and Legislative Counsel, are going to look into that. There is a question as to managing the fund and investing the fund in such a way as to have some growth and the possibility that if the investment fund dips below $8.2 million, that may not be a problem as far as we didn't take out and distribute from the principle. If we take a long-term approach and it does go below $8.2 million that may not be construed as invading the corpus because it's inadvertently due to the market.

My concern with that is that that's an approach you could take. However, you'd have to be very careful with distributions from the fund. In my opinion, it's questionable that if you have distributions from the fund while investing in securities that have a greater return, which means a greater risk, which means it could inadvertently go below $8.2 million, I think you'd have to suspend distributions from the fund for a period until you had a greater cushion between $8.2 million and the market value fund. It's something that was brought before a couple of Legislators, and it's something that we'll have to look into. I think it's important to look into that because we need to think of a future for the endowment and the future of the museum and try to grow the fund so that it can provide some income for the museum greater than $250,000. It's a good question. It's something that we're going to be looking into.

DR. GITTELMAN:
Given that at this juncture, the Legislature is struggling mightily – and I must tell you that the Legislature has taken this incredibly seriously – if they were to make the move, instead of needing $800,000, we would no longer need $800,000. Maybe we would need $600,000. Maybe that would be politically palatable.

MR. REINHEIMER:
In the short-term, though, if you suspend distributions while you are growing the fund, you may need more than $800,000.

DR. GITTELMAN:
Yes, if you're going to –

MR. REINHEIMER:
The problem is the short-term. How do we balance the needs of the museum today, the concerns of the County and the reluctance to provide more than $800,000? Those are policy decisions. I'm trying to choose my words carefully. I can only advise the Legislature of the situation of the endowment, the value of the endowment. Legal Counsel has to look into it, and the policymakers have to make decisions regarding how the future of the endowment would be governed.

DR. GITTELMAN:
Carol or Michael, I'm not wishing to put you on the spot, but I think one of the things that I want to bring up as part of this discussion is how much money we have left and how far do we feel that money will last us. What is the cash flow projection and analysis at this juncture, assuming no income from the endowment for 30 days.

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
Barbara did work on this today. As of today, our cash on hand is $37,000. We have projected revenue of $12,000. That's a total of about $49,000, as of January 1. These are expenses for all of December. It was $65,000. Our accounts payable are $17,000 as of today. So at of the end of December, we're projecting that we'll be $33,200 in the red -- as of January 1.

DR. GITTELMAN:
From a cash flow prospective, in other words, you have to make payroll. How far will the current cash flow – milking it the best you can –

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
For payroll we have one more payroll December 31, and if we don't pay anymore bills, which we don't have to, we can make that payroll because we have the money there. As we go into January, we will not have any cash to meet the first January payroll, which is January 15.

DR. GITTELMAN:
Assuming that you don't pay any bills, which I'm not so sure you can get away with –

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
We think through the first two weeks we would be sort of okay, until January 15. We're going to need to make payroll, which is about $35,000 that first payroll.

DR. GITTELMAN:
Can you make it through January 15?

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
We can't make the first payroll. We can make it to January 12, but we can't make it to January 15.

DR. GITTELMAN:
Lance, I know we can't ask you to do this, but would it be possible for you to look at our numbers tomorrow or some other time to see if we're making a reasonable cash projection?

MR. REINHEIMER:
I think what I would recommend at this point is that you notify the Legislature formally that this is your cash flow projection. This is cash on hand, projected costs or expenses, and to send a letter to the Presiding Officer informing them and the County Executive, too. I think it might be important.

DR. GITTELMAN:
I don't want to put you on the spot. I apologize.

MR. REINHEIMER:
It's just the case of time. I'm in tomorrow and that's about it. At this point, I have a meeting tomorrow mid-day that will probably take up the rest of the afternoon. It would be difficult to get here to check your cash flow between now and January 1.

DR. GITTELMAN:
It's just that you bring so much credibility to it when you do it. That's the only reason why I would ask.

MR. REINHEIMER:
I think that's why formally if you send a letter, they may respond to that letter. But your cash flow in the past has been accurate. Your projections as to what it costs to run the museum if you were to close it next year was accurate. You have the –

DR. GITTELMAN:
Credibility.

MR. REINHEIMER:
I think it's important to let them know now because the first formal meeting of the Legislature is the beginning of February because the Organizational Meeting, which is January 5, generally there is not a lot of business that gets done in terms of adopting resolutions and such. The wild card is how the County Executive is going to handle the inter-fund transfer for the museum in January. I think it's important that you make your cash flow needs known to the Legislature and to the County Executive so they can make informed decisions.

DR. GITTELMAN:
Okay. Were there any other questions for Lance?

MR. GISH:
Should Carol delineate in the letter the fact that projections on mothballing have been accurate in the past?

MR. REINHEIMER:
No, don't confuse them with too many facts. No, I think the important thing now is these are our projections for cash flow needs the middle of January in order to make our payroll January 15, and we are notifying you that it's very likely that we won't have enough cash to make payroll. I think the sooner that you notify the County Executive and the Legislature, the sooner a dialogue can start as to what happens if you don't make payroll. Whose responsibility is it? That's a question that I don't think has been answered. If the Vanderbilt cannot pay its bills, who pays those bills? Whose responsibility is it?

DR. GITTELMAN:
One of the things that might generate cash is the Presiding Officer has set a new precedent by providing us with his list. He is having an event here on December 28. That event might pull us through that payroll. I think we all have to put ourselves to the wheel and drive traffic to that event and make sure that that event is a smashing success because we need the money. That money coming in on December 28 is critical if no other source appears. It's critical for us making the next payroll. If we're going payroll by payroll, here is an event that can do it for us. I plead with all of you to get folks to attend that event. Let's do what we can to make that a smashing success. If we had 100 people come to that event at $100 a ticket, and we were to make $10,000, and I realize I'm using broad strokes because I don't know what the expenses are, but that's $10,000. It can make all the difference in the world.

There is another proposal on the table. It would be unfair of me not to include the County Executive's proposal. And that is that the museum borrow against the endowment in some form. This has gone through a number of iterations. The latest one is that we would borrow not against the principle, but rather we would borrow against the income from the endowment. I am told that there are three banks that are willing to meet with us. Carol and I have been asked to attend a meeting tomorrow morning at the County Executive's Office to discuss what this proposal might be. I asked if there were any details or if they could give me an idea of what the structure was, and I could not get any details.

The one thing that was given to me was something about a 36-month period with the flow from the endowment being used as some mechanism here, and that the possibility existed and the preference of the County Executive was that the museum provide collateral but that the County Executive didn't realize that the other alternative was that the County provide collateral. I do not know what the details are on this issue. I cannot pass on whether it's, one, practical or, two, legal. I have no details to give you, but Carol and I will be meeting tomorrow morning. I certainly don't want to put anybody on the spot.

Lance, is there anything else that you feel that we should know?

MR. REINHEIMER:
No, I'll be here for the rest of this meeting, in case any other questions come up.

DR. GITTELMAN:
We are grateful for your attendance once again. We really are. Tony.

DR. PECORALE:
I have a couple of questions. The Treasurer's Report that we received tonight, we did not receive the $100,000 in October.

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
Normally we receive it the first week in November, but it's the October distribution so it goes in –

DR. PECORALE:
So we didn't get it.

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
Right.

DR. PECORALE:
And the numbers through the end of October are actuals, and we do not anticipate receiving the $100,000 for November, and the $100,000 for December.

DR. GITTELMAN:
That's correct.

DR. PECORALE:
With that, it appears, as you said, just by the numbers that are here, that you are going to make it through the end of December with your cash flow and your cash situation.

DR. GITTELMAN:
Yes.

MR. OLIVIERI:
That's not true. Wait a second; it's just going to be payroll. They have to pile up all the bills.

DR. PECORALE:
I understand that.

DR. GITTELMAN:
Excuse me. We will make it through the end of December. We're just saying December. It's two more weeks.

DR. PECORALE:
And using the actual numbers and taking away the $100,000 for November and the $100,000 for December, I think it's important to make certain that all of the Legislators and the County Executive realizes that even without receiving the $100,000 endowment for three months, the museum has met its payroll and its obligations through December 31, 2008.

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
Although we did receive –

DR. GITTELMAN:
Although we did receive $102,000.

DR. PECORALE:
So then if we said that $102,000 would be for October, we'd still be minus $200,000. I think that's an important note that everyone has to understand. The museum was on schedule with having a successful year with respect to cash flow and with respect to its expenditures. One of the comments that has been stated by a Legislator is that we've never been able to meet our needs on a yearly basis, and that's not true. This year for the year 2008, just by virtue of the Treasurer's Report that we have this evening, we have met the goal that was set a year ago to make certain that we were going to be in a positive cash flow by December 31. Had we not had this

disastrous turn of events, the museum would have met the goal that the Legislature had set for us a year ago.

DR. GITTELMAN:
One of the things that I've learned in the current situation is that defense is dangerous. It's not going to work. They simply do not want to hear from us any defensive explanations. They are interested, and I think it was Michael and David who pointed it out extremely well at the last meeting and it's been driven home to me, that they don't care. They want to know what we're going to do to fix things in the future. They're not interested in what the historic circumstances were in the past. They simply want to know how we are going to make this institution function next year without the money that we received in the past.

MR. OLIVIERI:
So what they are saying is, forget the endowment. We shouldn't even think about it. Raise our own money and operate this place as far as what we can raise for the year.

DR. GITTELMAN:
What they're saying is if they give us $800,000 – I am kind of speaking for them, but I think it's vacillated to some degree and what they're essentially saying now and the message now is, "We're going to give you $800,000. We have no intention of giving you anything else the following year. In 2009, there is a possibility that you will receive $800,000." In 2010, we will receive only the income from the endowment and nothing from the County. Michael.

MR. DELUISE:
I think, and not in defense, but what we've done over the last year is move things forward. In the last two weeks particularly, Carol and I have been working on some ideas. Carol will fill you in on it, that there are some ideas that we can really move this museum forward and be less dependent on some outside sources. If you look at just conservative numbers, say all that we have is $250,000 a year from the endowment, and Carol was even talking to the possibility of getting in a caterer who could bring in as much as $200,000 a year for us, that would change the way we do business, but it would also maybe increase admissions and add some opportunities for us. We're looking at our gift shop to not only bring us some money but to pay for some of our expenses. There are some possibilities for some grants that are very, very real, both corporate and some government grants.

I do think, honestly, that we could look at bringing in with conservative numbers – if the endowment is only $250,000 bring in, I think we could bring in over $1 million this year if we move on some things. If we change the way we're looking at things, we can make things happen. We proved it last year by taking what was a tough situation for us with the budget and moving it to where – except for the economic crisis, we would have been doing very, very well this year within one year. I think we have the ability instead of just sitting here saying, "What are we going to do," we have the ability if we can move on some of these things in partnership with the Legislature, the County Executive and the people who believe in the museum, to move it forward.

DR. GITTELMAN:
I'm going to add to what Michael said. First of all, the climate is completely different from what I have experienced in the past. There was a lot of dissention at the Legislature. There is no question that there are some Legislators who are looking at us annoyed. They want us to come up with solutions but they are willing to pitch in,

and they are willing to work with us to make it happen. That's going to make a huge difference.

We have never had the Presiding Officer say, "Here's my list. I will do a fundraiser at your institution. Here is the date. Let's go." We have never had Legislators giving us leads, like Legislator Cooper has, saying, "I know these people. Here, call this one. Call that one." We have never had, for example, Lora, Legislator Cooper's Aide, putting together the Friends of the Vanderbilt Museum for us. We now have a constituency out there that we need to work with.

We just cannot do it the way we did it in the past. I'm as guilty of it as anybody else, maybe more, but the point is we've got to do it the new way. We have to commit, as a Board, to raising funds. We can't leave ourselves out of the mix. It cannot be left to just a select few. We have to commit to raising funds, and we have to commit that fundraising is the most important thing we do. We have to do it.

MR. DELUISE:
There are people out in the community, our neighbors for one, who are really on our side. Our Legislators are on our side. We have made many phone calls. We called one of the TV stations and said can you help us and they said, "Yes. You give us a TV commercial; we'll run it for free." Do you remember we were looking for advertising money? Now we have a TV station running a commercial for free. Carol and I met with a TV production company on Sunday who would produce the TV commercial for us for free, too. We have eliminated the cost of marketing, or at least part of it. We can move forward if we all get into it. As Board Members, Gretchen, Noel and I met with Steve and Carol, Terry Pearsall from the Legislature, and we talked about how we can raise money, and what do we need to do. I wish some of you could have been there.

Raising money is simple. It's not easy, but it's simple. The first thing you have to do is this, and we've asked some corporations and they said, "It's a good idea. Maybe we'll do that." We're on the road to moving forward. As Board Members, I think we all have to get on board with this and say, "Let's make it work." Our neighbors – I've got to tell you, Lora, from Legislator Cooper's office has dedicated a tremendous amount of time to not only helping us out but bringing new people who I think would be part of what we're doing. I really believe that it's not as negative as everybody is saying, that there are some real positive opportunities here that we can make this place work long-term. Carol and I were talking that maybe this summer we would do a grand festival at the Vanderbilt and let everybody rediscover what we put together in the next few months. I think that's going to happen, if we want it to happen.

DR. GITTELMAN:
There are a large number of – I realize there is no structured agenda, but there are a large number of possible ways in which we can raise money that Carol has put together. You should all have that. As much of a struggle as it was, she has put numbers where we can. One of the first things is to increase museum admission fees. Before you is, point one, a program of increased admission fees.

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
I am proposing that we increase the mansion tour fees from $3 to $5, planetarium adult fees from $3 to $5, student fees from $3 to $5, to keep the children's fees the same at $3. My feeling was that we should keep the general admission the same in

part based on Budget Review's analysis of the area museums, the comparables, and their recommendation was that we keep it the same. Yesterday at the Legislature meeting there was a very strong feeling that we should look a little bit more closely at that.

In talking to some of the staff we feel that maybe we should at least go up to at least $8 for adults on the general admission. Again, typically visitors don't come and just do a general admission. They come and also go to a show or also do a mansion tour. If they're going to a show or a tour during the day, they must buy the general admission. An adult walking on the property now will spend normally $10. With the increased fees they would spend $12. If we also upped the general admission to another dollar to $8, they would be spending $13. Still a bargain for the wonderful day they have. I think I am going to propose that we go up to $8 for adults, $4 for children, and $7 for seniors and students.

MR. GISH:
As goofy as this may sound, what was our enrollment or our admission numbers, let's say, last year? What would just increasing the admission -- how would that affect our balance?

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
I think in this area it's a little hard because we do keep numbers. Obviously, I have the gross number of admissions, and then we have some breakdowns, but because we didn't break out a difference between adults and children on some of the things it's going to be a little bit harder. But I suspect ballpark figure in this is that we're probably talking – it could be $60,000 or so, assuming the numbers are the same. That's the other problem with the projections. We are going into a terrible economic climate, whether we're going to get more people or less people, I don't know. Assuming that is going to be the same, I'm thinking overall and averaging out we would be able to be taking in about 10 percent of admissions, if we increase the school programs as well.

DR. GITTELMAN:
The Legislature has made it extremely clear that they want us to increase our admission fees. I don't think that they have really left it as an option.

MR. DELUISE:
I have one question. Is there some way that we can offer for $15 an all-inclusive ticket or something like that? Have we ever done that before?

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
We haven't done it quite like that. What we do is try to sell the memberships. Again, if we raise the prices for – right now for $25 an individual gets everything inclusive for a year. So for $35, if we raise those fees, they will get everything inclusive for a year. We can discuss whether we want to do more ticket options, certainly, for the day. It they want to do multiple shows or multiple things, we could talk about that.

DR. GITTELMAN:
I think that we have a structure before us. I think we have to move expeditiously.

MR. DELUISE:
I make a motion that we accept these increased prices.

MS. OLDRIN-MONES:
Second.

DR. GITTELMAN:
Is there further discussion? All in favor? Opposed? **It passes unanimously. (Vote: 9/0/0/6 Absent: Mr. Swinson, Ms. Anker & Ms. LeBow. Three vacant positions.)**

What I am going to ask is that the Executive Director come back to us with a study if there is anything else that has to be tweaked on this. But I am going to also suggest to the Board that the Executive Director be given the power to make the changes mid-term between now and the next meeting. I'm pretty sure that we don't even need to vote on this. She can make these changes if she feels they are necessary.

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
These were the daytime fees. We really didn't talk about the nighttime admissions, but I think that we will also see some sort of increase on the order of 10 to 20 percent. Laser fees we will look at also. They are currently $10 at night for a 35 minute show. That's all you get. I think probably right now we don't want to go much higher than that because of the conditions.

Again, in a year from now when our new equipment is in, these fees will go up substantially.

DR. GITTELMAN:
I believe Budget Review did recommend that we hold fees until the new projector is in on the planetarium. Am I correct about that, Lance?

MR. REINHEIMER:
I think that was part of our recommendation, to wait until the new projector.

DR. GITTELMAN:
Assuming there is more fine tuning to come, I want to move on to the issue of increased site use fees. The first thing I want to bring up is that we received a letter from the neighbors very unhappy that we have not moved ahead with some form of continued discussion with them regarding how we're going to meet their demands. I feel that we do have to sit with the neighbors. I would say that things have been difficult in the past few months to spend time with the neighbors. We have to return to them and go back to them. They did agree to help in fundraising. I would like to seek from them additional assistance in fundraising. We had an issue, and Michael was involved in that. Who else was involved? Was it just you speaking to the neighbors?

MR. DELUISE:
Yes.

DR. GITTELMAN:
It's something that I would like to see progress. Let's get that group of neighbors. I think there were 40 neighbors that were concerned. Let's get them to join in with some form of fundraising. Let's make them friends, but I do think that we have to go along with the Executive Director's request to increase site use fees from $7,500 to $9,000. I am asking for a motion to that affect.

MR. DELUISE:
Motion.

MS. OLDRIN-MONES:
Second.

DR. GITTELMAN:
Any further discussion?

MR. SILLMAN:
So you want to charge a caterer coming in here $1,500?

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
We're not charging the caterers. That's the site use fee that the bride and groom will pay, and then they go out and bring in their caterer.

MR. SILLMAN:
And how many events were there last year?

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
Last year there were 16 weddings.

MR. SILLMAN:
At $7,500? So you're talking about another $20,000.

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
Again, and this is where projections are difficult, last year we had 16 weddings. In December of last year, we had 14 weddings booked. Today we have four weddings for next year.

MR. D'ORAZIO:
And that's as a result of our popularity in the newspapers.

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
A lot of the brides in conversations, they're concerned that we will close. Even of the four weddings, I have talked to two brides who want their money back because they don't have the confidence that we will be open. I have assured them that we will be able to honor our contract and have a wonderful wedding, but they still are very nervous. I'm hesitant to do any projections on that because I think, in fact, we will not book 16 weddings. It will be less. I also must say that I think for the amount of energy and time, I was already thinking we should raise the fee.

In addition, talking to the neighbors, one of their suggestions was if we raised the fees and maybe not do quite as many weddings, we would still have the same amount of money. Given our current fiscal difficulty all the way around, there are a lot of reasons to do this. Although, given the current times, we might end up with only a handful of weddings.

MR. SILLMAN:
It's a real quid pro quo there because now you're talking about your relationship with the neighbors versus $20,000. You want to do less for more.

DR. GITTELMAN:
So by increasing it we'll do less.

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
Right.

MR. D'ORAZIO:
I think this is an area where the Executive Director should have latitude in pricing for next year, especially for fiscal 2009 because when she talks to these people on the phone after we straighten this all out, she is going to have to adjust the pricing according to whatever the market –

MR. SILLMAN:
I just want to get a better sense. Does the Board feel we should be doing more events or less events?

DR. GITTELMAN:
We need more money.

MR. SILLMAN:
I got that part of it. Does that mean you want to do more events?

DR. GITTELMAN:
What we want to do is to – my ideal situation, and I thought where we were was in the negotiations with the neighbors, we would settle on a comfortable number that they were comfortable with and that they would also become our Friends so that they could at least help us raise funds, so that we would have at least neutral revenue for the process. I think we have to bring the neighbors back to the table and negotiate that.

MR. SILLMAN:
And you would do that by holding out the olive branch by saying, "We raised our fees here, and we plan on doing less events."

DR. GITTELMAN:
If it's an olive branch, by all means.

MR. DELUISE:
But that's one possibility. Another possibility would be looking at a professional caterer who would eliminate the problems that the neighbors see. It would eliminate the sound problem. It would make it more professional. Then we could increase the numbers because it would eliminate the nuisance, which would bring quite a substantial amount more money.

One of problems that this facility doesn't deliver is food service. You can't sit down and have a sandwich or a cup of coffee. A professional caterer would be able to add that and be able to add satellite locations throughout. It would make it more of a better environment. Those are other things we could look at besides just raising the fees and having fewer events. You might even look at possibly having more events but not being a nuisance to the neighborhood.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Tony.

DR. PECORALE:
If we raise the fee, all the people who are booked now would get it at the new fee?
DR. GITTELMAN:
No, the old fee.

DR. PECORALE:
They would be locked in at the old fee.

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
Yes, if we have already accepted a deposit.

DR. PECORALE:
If we raise the fees and let people know that there is an additional fee involved, people who we have now might decide to stay.

DR. GITTELMAN:
Perhaps.

MR. OLIVIERI:
We're only talking four parties anyway right now.

DR. GITTELMAN:
We're talking four. Carol has been meeting with other people. That's one of the urges, "Sign up now because the fee may go up." If we increase the fee, and as David suggested, if we give Carol some latitude to negotiate, I think we have the best of both worlds.

DR. PECORALE:
When you say latitude to negotiate, you're saying that the number with respect to locking in is going to be somewhat up to Carol.

DR. GITTELMAN:
Yes.

DR. PECORALE:
It's not like we're locking in at a fee of $9,000. If the answer to that is yes, then you have my support. I think you do have that latitude. I think sometimes you might be better off taking the $7,500 rather than trying to hold out for $9,000.

DR. GITTELMAN:
I would agree, but pretty much the way it was was that it was $7,500 and that was it.

DR. PECORALE:
I understand that, but we're giving her the latitude to develop a varying price.

MR. D'ORAZIO:
But we don't know what the near future holds for the museum as far as fiscal independence. She will have a better idea a month from now what we can charge.

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
Along with that site use we do birthday parties or other site use fees that range, and roughly we're looking at about a 10 percent fee raise on these other site use fees.

DR. PECORALE:
And that has never been a problem with our neighbors?

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
No, that's all inside. It's smaller. Our neighbors are fine. It's just when it's every Saturday that they get a little concerned.

DR. GITTELMAN:
There is a proposal, and we had a motion on that. Are you prepared to vote? All in favor? Opposed? **It passes unanimously. (Vote: 9/0/0/6 Absent: Mr. Swinson, Ms. Anker & Ms. LeBow. Three vacant positions.)**

The question is to increase membership rates.

DR. PECORALE:
You skipped over school programs.

DR. GITTELMAN:
I'm sorry; the increase in school program fees is next. I think there is a limited threshold that we could increase these.

DR. PECORALE:
I just want to say something. I'm choosing my words very carefully. I haven't been to a superintendents meeting that was as depressing as the one that I recently attended in quite some time. I'd say if you increase the school fees, you're going to reduce your schools coming to the museum. It's not going to be because you increased the fees. It's because they're going to use that as an excuse for cutting back. They're complaining about the buses, even thought the price for gas has gone down. They're complaining about the fact that they're looking at taking a hit. If you read the newspapers lately, you'll see obviously there is going to be some sort of a hit. I just think that the school program has always been a good mainstay of the museum. I am not going to support an increase in school fees.

MS. OLDRIN-MONES:
I agree. I am very reluctant to do that.

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
I understand that.

MR. GISH:
I am absolutely opposed to increased fees for schoolchildren. However, I have been told by every single Legislator that I have spoken to that unless we increase our fees – and I said, "Well, I'm not going to increase the school fees." "You must increase the fees," is what they said. The statement is, "I want to see an increase in fees." We can make it a very, very firm stand dealing with education. I'm in favor of that, but I think if we are told by the Legislature that they want to see some movement on our behalf, we must make a move to increase the amount of money we're bringing in.

I know that's going to be hurtful, but to be very honest with you, Carol and I have sat down with this, and we went from $4.50 to $5. They wanted it doubled. It is only to show the Legislature that we are trying in every single way, whether it's a senior, whether it's a school group, whatever it happens to be, to increase our revenue to show them that we are also biting the bullet. As an educator, I want to see more young people coming here.

If we get to the point where we are where we should be financially, and the Legislature realizes that we have done everything that we possibly can, I will be the first one to recommend going back to the fees, or, in fact, having a free week for elementary schools or for BOCES. I will be the first one to recommend that. I want schoolchildren of all ages to come to the Vanderbilt. That is the reason I'm on the Board. No other reason. I have no big pockets. I'm a retired educator. I came here as a kid. I want kids to come here. The Legislature wants to see us doing something and not giving them excuses. They want to see the fees raised, period. If we don't do that, they'll say, "I told them to raise the fees, and they're not doing it."

DR. GITTELMAN:
Tony.

DR. PECORALE:
I have an option. I think I've prefaced this in the past. I think we should send a letter to every single PTA of all the schools on the Island and offer the PTAs membership in their school's name in essence saying that if they would join with a PTA membership for their school, we will give priority to their schools for visits to the museum. We would offer visits by the families of those PTAs a discount if they wanted to come to the museum.

I truly believe, and by the way, this is what they do at the Cradle of Aviation in Nassau County. They actually offer to the schools an opportunity for the schools to become member organizations, and they get special promotions and special discounts during vacation periods of time where if they wish to go as a family, they can go to that museum with a discount.

I think that we would increase the amount of dollars that we would have coming in rather than trying to go after increasing the fees for the students coming to a show and to a program here in the museum. I could be wrong, but I think if you check your data, you may find that it's down this year.

MR. DELUISE:
I have a suggestion. Whether we go to a corporate sponsor or if we could get the PTA or whatever, but I would suggest the corporate sponsor minimum of let's say a $40,000 donation and have price to the students still stay $4.50, but that $40,000 donation would be sponsored by the corporation, whether it was sponsored by Cablevision, *Newsday*, or a Long Island company, and give us until April to make that happen. If that doesn't happen, then we'll raise the price to $5.

I think we have to do something. Noel and I have talked about this. If we don't bring in that extra money, I think we have to say that one way or the other we're going to raise that rate. We have to do it. We just have to do it. If you go out to the PTAs, they might not respond. If we go to some of the companies who believe in us, some of our neighbors have companies, $40,000 to sponsor all the students who

come in here next year is not such an outrageous amount of money. We can put it on the brochures. That's my suggestion. I'm saying April 1 is a deadline. If we don't have that, then when we send out our brochures, they'll say that the rates are going to be $5.

MR. SILLMAN:
The rate is currently $4.50? How long has it been $4.50?

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
Three years. Let me just ask. Is it three years?

MS. VERNOLA:
Since 2005.

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
So it is three years. That's for a one-hour program. The rates go up from there.

MR. SILLMAN:
And the proposal is to raise it 50 cents. I hear what you're saying. I know what you're saying, but I think it's unrealistic to run a business and in four years you haven't raised the fees. That's 2 percent a year.

MR. GISH:
If we don't raise it, just give me the answer to the Legislators that are going to ask me that.

MR. D'ORAZIO:
If we don't raise them, they are going to be very unhappy with us.

MS. OLDRIN-MONES:
This is such the wrong year to raise them. Look at what's happening to educational –

DR. GITTELMAN:
I apologize, but David has the floor.

MR. D'ORAZIO:
This proposal is well written. In my estimation, it's an increase starting September 2009. I think we have to put this on the table tonight and approve this with the assumption that people on this Board find this very close to their hearts. We have to move on it. If they can find that donor like Michael had suggested or they can find a way to make up the difference of the shortfall, we can reexamine this in April or July or August.

DR. GITTELMAN:
David is pointing out something. This is for September of 2009.

MR. D'ORAZIO:
It gives this Board time to move forward with other –

DR. GITTELMAN:
We already have booked programs. We can't raise the fees –

MR. SILLMAN:
The only thing I will tell you is your proposal opens yourself up to criticism as a Board because now you're mixing apples and oranges. If you can go out and raise $40,000 for the institution, now you're taking that $40,000 and you're not applying it to the institution. You are applying it to an admission fees. You are circumventing what the Legislature has told you to do.

MR. GISH:
Initially I was looking at the idea of getting someone to go out and sponsor a week. Students would still be paying a fee, but they're going to be sponsoring and their logo would be on –

DR. GITTELMAN:
I'm going to call the vote here. I realize there could be other discussion, but I will say only one thing. The Legislators who were most vehement against our proposal were insisting we raise the fees. So I think if we're raising this fee beginning September 2009 and if we can come up with a better solution in the interim, we can enact that, let's do it. I believe that we have to raise these fees.

DR. PECORALE:
As of September 2009.

DR. GITTELMAN:
Yes.

MR. SILLMAN:
Giving time for that PTA letter to go out and see if they respond to that.

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
The planetarium is $4.50. That's what we were talking about. The museum programs are $6. Two-hour programs are $9. But, again, we are looking at roughly a 10 percent that we would add on to all the fees.

DR. ROGERS:
I think if you want to get the cooperation of the Legislature, you're going to have to pay attention to what they want. I think we have to raise the fees, and we have to raise them immediately to show them that we're conscious of what's going on. Maybe if they're seeing us move, they'll move. Raising it in September is not going to help you in the next nine months.

DR. GITTELMAN:
Any explanation I gave – I'm sure there are Legislators who would agree with those who want to keep the fees steady. There are those who would like to see more people come here and maybe this would eliminate some people. But the bottom line is that I feel that we have to raise fees and agree with this proposal. I'm going to call a vote. All in favor? Opposed? **It passes unanimously. (Vote: 9/0/0/6 Absent: Mr. Swinson, Ms. Anker & Ms. LeBow. Three vacant positions.)**

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
Just as part of that, I think your idea, Tony, was great. We have started a library membership program. We could start some sort of PTA or school program. We could get sponsorships just like Bank of America gives us a grant to pay for some schools from underprivileged areas. We could develop other grants that would pay.

DR. GITTELMAN:
I really want to take it into an action plan. Tony, I know you made a suggestion. You really are the person who is most in contact with what the superintendents think. Would you be willing to put this plan on paper?

DR. PECORALE:
I think I have sponsored these things in the past, and I'm not ever going to say that I wouldn't do it in the future, but I'm just telling you that I don't recall in my whole career seeing and hearing as much gnashing of teeth and unhappiness over what's happening to State aid to education as I've heard in the last four and a half, five months. I'm not talking about hearing it from teachers. I'm hearing it from superintendents and assistant superintendents.

DR. GITTELMAN:
I think my question is, Tony, will you help us put such a plan in action?

DR. PECORALE:
I said yes, that I've done it in the past and I'll do it again.

DR. GITTELMAN:
Thank you. We now go to membership rates.

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
There are two that are still sort of a bargain, but I think we're going to be having substantial rates in a year, and we still have issues. I don't know that we want to jump up that high, but I am proposing a family membership would go up $10 -- $65 to $75, a dual $50 to $60, and individual from $25 to $35.

MR. GISH:
I see no problem with that.

DR. GITTELMAN:
Discussion? All in favor? Opposed? **It passes unanimously. (Vote: 9/0/0/6 Absent: Mr. Swinson, Ms. Anker & Ms. LeBow. Three vacant positions.)**

MR. DELUISE:
Carol, one question. The Perfect Software, is that being used for general admissions too or just for membership?

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
That's just development membership collections.

MR. DELUISE:
Are we doing anything with general admissions –

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
Vista is a Ticket Master and that's what we're looking at for that.

MR. DELUISE:
I think that would help out tremendously.

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
We will do that. Those were sort of the easy fees to raise. Those are most of the fees that we can raise. There are some little fees here and there. We charge for archival help or whatever. We will be looking at fees there, too.

Sales in the gift shop, Michael and I have been talking to a toy store warehouse person in Connecticut. I did meet with them last Friday, and they are very excited about the possibilities on our site. Mike, did you want to talk a little bit about that?

MR. DELUISE:
What's really good about them is they are very high-end science, hobby, good educational toy store. They are very big. They would look at stocking our gift shop, even some satellite locations around the facility giving us a percentage of the sales so we don't have to go out and buy the stuff as we do now.

And they're actually talking about paying some of our expenses beyond giving us a percentage. Carol is going to talk to them in the next few weeks. This is a very busy time for them, otherwise they would have been interested in putting something together a little quicker, but this would be – and I'm not using these numbers as real numbers – but we might be able to get 10 percent of the sales coming to the museum. They would stock it.

They would also set up a website that would look like it's right on our campus here, and you'd be able to order merchandise through there. For instance, the Vanderbilts were into trains. It could be a train set or it could be antique cars, little model cars, or telescopes, or whatever. It would go through them and out to us, and we would get our fee on it. Plus they would pay for staffing the gift shop, so a lot of our salaries and expenses would be taken care of. That's kind of the way we have been trying to think of doing things that don't cost us anything and bring in revenue. I think conservatively with the quality stuff they're talking about, probably $100,000 would come to us.

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
Those are the numbers they were talking about. They are also eyeing some of the other space on the property. We have multiple vendors eyeing the prime space, including ourselves. We're going to have to make some decisions soon.

I guess one of the questions is that I did meet with them. We showed them around, so they could come back to us with a proposal in the beginning of January. How do you want to proceed, if they come in with a proposal? How do you want to move forward?

MR. DELUISE:
My feeling is that there is no expense to the museum, and as a Director, that Carol should be able to make that decision and let us know what that is. Like ordering, if you're going to order stuff for the gift store, she doesn't have to call us. If this is something that's really viable, we need to be able to move fast, and it should be her decision. We trust her to run the place.

DR. GITTELMAN:
Then I would just say that that's the way we'll leave it. Yes, Noel.

MR. GISH:

I would not lock us into a long-term contract with them. Probably the shortest would be – and Michael might be able to advise you more on what would be reasonable, so that if it doesn't work out, then we could go to plan B and we could move to someone else. I think in any of these usually you give yourself a 90 day out or something like that. Maybe we should look at that.

MR. DELUISE:
They haven't made a proposal yet.

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
All of these, as we're going through on this business plan, these are the ones that I think are fairly stable revenue sources, once we get going, sort of predictable things.

The food service, we all know we need food service. We all know we have tried to get food service in here. I don't know the whole history of every attempt, but I know it's not been from the lack of trying. It is a new environment here, though. The vending machines were supposed to be in here yesterday, but tomorrow we do have two vending machines that are going to go over where the moon is now. We're looking further for coffee machines. That will get something going quickly. We have boxed lunches inside with freeze dried sort of nutty kinds of things, but we are trying to move forward on getting food in here. Again, Mike and I have had many long conversations with a local caterer that would be willing to help with the café, with carts, and with other kinds of food service if they were also the caterer on site. I have a fairly lengthy proposal. This is a major undertaking for us if we choose to go this route.

MR. OLIVIERI:
If we go that route, what kind of numbers are being suggested here?
MR. DELUISE:
The suggestion is that the first year, because it's going to be hard for them to book for the summer, so we're saying maybe by the second year, you're talking numbers at about $200,000 a year plus they would work to make sure that the neighbors were comfortable, that we would have facilities around the grounds that would serve coffee. If we were able to move on this, they would also be willing to actually start paying us rent early this winter. It would maybe be $100,000 this year, $200,000 next year at a minimum. That's not with a lot of events. The question is, how do we proceed? Can we move quickly to do something like this? They are legitimate caterers. They are local people.

DR. GITTELMAN:
I don't think there is such a thing as moving too fast on anything. We have to move fast on everything.

MR. DELUISE:
But they would be willing to start tomorrow.

MR. OLIVIERI:
That's fine.

DR. PECORALE:
If you're going to get vending machines, I strongly urge that you ask them for vending machines that take credit cards. I'm speaking from experience at Stony

Brook. The difference between the vending machines that take credit cards and the vending machines that take cash is more than two for one.

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
We'll look into that.

DR. GITTELMAN:
We need to move quickly. Does anybody have experience dealing with food services?

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
This is a major company. It would substantially change how we deal with –

MR. SILLMAN:
I did all the food service contracts for Hofstra University.

DR. GITTELMAN:
Would you be kind enough to do this one?

MR. SILLMAN:
Sure.

DR. GITTELMAN:
If you would run with this, we would appreciate it. Here are two copies.

MR. SILLMAN:
I have another suggestion. I think this is a terrific report, but Mike and I worked together at Hofstra. One of the other things that I did was I was in charge of all auxiliary services. I sent out a brochure to all the location scouts in the city and told them that my premises were available for commercials, TV shows, movies, whatever you want. In the first year we generate $150,000 -- ten days.

DR. GITTELMAN:
If you could give us the boiler plate for doing that, we would gladly do it.

MR. SILLMAN:
I haven't done it in 20 years but all you have to do is Google location scouts, New York City, send them a brochure and say, "Listen, this is what I've got," and they will call you.

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
We do deal with a lot of location scouts, but we haven't had the staff to really push this out. Maybe that's an area where our volunteers can help make the phone calls.

MR. DELUISE:
If I could interject on that for a second, I'll work with you on that. But I talked to Carol with the Huntington Cinema Arts Center. You're talking about bringing in things, they would love to co-op with us on a partnership and maybe do something with them. Maybe we could even do a film festival this summer on site and bring in some of those people. There are ways that we can do things here. I don't know if you've ever seen the movie "Crocodile Dundee, II," but that was filmed here.

DR. PECORALE:

In the library.

DR. GITTELMAN:
And also the courtyard.

MR. SILLMAN:
We did "Saturday Night Live," and we did all the Wheaties commercials.

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
We did "Bridezillas." But, again, because we don't have the staff, we haven't had the push that we really need to do. I think we're going to be working more with some of our volunteers. That's an area –

MR. SILLMAN:
It's such easy money.

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
It's not as easy for us. For a museum, it's not quite easy, but it's something we're looking at.

MR. GISH:
Maybe we need a Trustee to take up and do that, if you're not going to get a volunteer from the staff.

MR. SILLMAN:
I rented a hallway once for $2,000. Somebody has to be able to be on top of it.

DR. GITTELMAN:
Site use is an important issue, as far as the Legislature is concerned. Maybe we could – excuse me, please?

MR. OLIVIERI:
I said to go with it.

DR. GITTELMAN:
We need someone to run with it.

MR. DELUISE:
Steve, you're going to meet with the County Executive. They have a Film Bureau. You might want to ask them if they could help with that.

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
I might point out in the back of this report I started to do a spreadsheet with not only our goals, objectives, initiatives, and revenue, but who is going to be responsible for it, who is going to do it and the start date. This is our sticky part. The first part was the easy part, but now we're getting into the things that take time and personnel. This is our problem.

MR. SILLMAN:
Yes, it is. You're right. I know what you're talking about. It doesn't get done with smoke and mirrors.

MS. GHIORSI-HART:

We might have to make some choices. Do we devote our efforts toward the site use, do we go after the caterer, or do we go after new programs? So just be aware, there are a lot of great ideas but we're also going to have to think about who beyond my current staff – because the current staff is about as stretched as they can be. If there is someone in our Suffolk County resource, a neighbor who maybe has an expertise, or an acquaintance, we could use the help. That's going to be an important part of this.

DR. GITTELMAN:
I think that as a Board we have to come up to the plate and take on some of the responsibilities for some of these line items. Site use is critical. Site use was a big money maker for us in 2008. We can't let it fall through the cracks in 2009. Who can work with us on site use?

DR. PECORALE:
It depends on what you're looking for in site use. One of the areas that I have always thought would be a great possibility for this place for site use would be to try and get SCOPE to offer service courses here or get a college that might like to have an off-campus program here at this site. You have the parking. You have the facilities that they could use. The question is, who has connections with colleges? I could introduce you to SCOPE. The Director of SCOPE is a retired superintendent that I've know for years. It's just a question of, do you want to do something like that? It would mean Saturdays, having space on Saturdays and possibly during the week.

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
Anything that will generate money, we're going to look at. If it actually brings in money, yes, we're going to look at it.

DR. PECORALE:
What do you think, Mike?

MR. DELUISE:
I think we should be talking to everybody. I think tomorrow, Steve, when you talk to the County Executive, they have a structure in the County that looks for sites. We can let them know that. We can look at it, and I'll work with you on the catering situation. If a caterer comes in, I think it makes sense for us to look at one caterer so you can start doing more events. It will make this place more of a destination.

Are there other events that we can do here? Could we do concerts? Then we would have to think about parking, toilets, and all that other stuff. Could we do outdoor movies? Those are the kinds of things we could talk about promoting.

Carol and I talked to COX Radio. COX Radio was giving us a number of spots on the air, $18,000 worth of commercials. We're looking at Channel 55 for giving us free commercials. Those are the kinds of things we're looking at. If we found somebody who wants to present events in the planetarium, it would be very easy to do a concert in the planetarium for 120 people. If somebody felt it was worth doing it, we would be happy to do that.

MR. SILLMAN:
I've been down that road; 120 is not enough.

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
238.

MR. SILLMAN:
I used to work with Ron Delsner. He was one of the biggest promoters, and he didn't want that. We offered them everything at Hofstra.

MR. DELUISE:
If we did an event in here – we could do a cocktail party in here. It's on site. If we could do an event for $5,000 or $10,000, we could do that. There are a lot of opportunities because this is a great place. Parking, bathrooms, and all that stuff become problems, though.

MR. OLIVIERI:
Charge for it.

MR. SILLMAN:
At the end of the day, a lot of that stuff stretches your resources to the end, and you go home with $12.75.

MR. GISH:
That's why we need somebody else who is going to do it.

MR. DELUISE:
If you have a radio station that's going to sponsor the planetarium shows, you don't have to advertise. You have radio now that people are talking about giving us. There is television, where we're going to get some help. We're going to look at some print broadcast stuff. The County has offered to print posters for us and do some publications. If we could cut our costs, then everybody becomes our partner. They kind of bind into what we're doing.

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
You're right, though. I would like to have more events that generate revenue, but, in fact, it's very hard to generate revenue when you put all the time in. But we have our Friends group. There are certain events that they might be willing to put the time in, and we can start thinking a little bit out of the box, but there is a cost. Again, when our staff has so little time, we have to target where does our time go. Maybe thinking a little differently, we now have a telescope. That's an area we haven't really expanded on. Evening, weeknight parties, we don't have uses here now that we have a telescope, so we will be talking and maybe making use of this space at other times, new times, but again, it's hard to pin down what that might generate. We're certainly going to look at all those options.

DR. PECORALE:
You made me think of something. The aquarium out in Riverhead, my son decided to have a "Night at the Aquarium." We slept in the aquarium in our sleeping bags, stayed all night. I don't know what it costs because he took care of all of that, but why couldn't we have something like that, "A Night at the Planetarium?" You've got a telescope here. It wasn't just my son and his family and the grandparents. There must have been ten different organizations that were there that night. A Boy Scout troop was there at the aquarium in Riverhead.

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
It's something we're going to certainly look at. We're going to need more staff because if they work all night here, they're probably not going to work during the day. With the new equipment, we're looking at equipment where the well is going to shrink where potentially we're going to have seating that could be removed so that you could lie in there. That's definitely something we're going to be looking at. We talked about it a little bit. I do think it's something we have to investigate.

DR. PECORALE:
I could be wrong, but I think it was $52 a person.

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
That's what you have to charge to make it worth your while.

DR. PECORALE:
In the morning, we had breakfast. We had Egg McMuffins.

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
I'm not sure if Lorraine is going to start cooking us eggs.

MS. VERNOLA:
I don't cook Egg McMuffins.

DR. GITTELMAN:
We'll move on to the next item. Hopefully we have new Trustees that will be joining us that will give us some new blood that we can move on a few of these items, as long as all of us help out.

MR. SILLMAN:
Do you want me to look at your food service contract?

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
Okay, we'll talk with Mike, and we'll get going on that.

Obviously, we need a better corporate and private donor base. That could be a long-term stable thing that needs time to develop. We are starting this. Our private donations are coming in. Just from the newspaper articles people know we are in need. We have now our Friends, and we're developing that base. We have always had a membership, but we haven't really had that base, so we're going to be developing that and hopefully getting the names. That's going to be an important part, and could be an on-going thing. Mike, in development, knows how important that it.

DR. GITTELMAN:
Do you want to tell us about the Friends of the Vanderbilt?

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
The Friends is a very important base, not just for helping and volunteers but in spreading the word and starting to get to know us. As Mike knows, the whole rule of thumb in development is people don't give to causes. They don't particularly give to museums. They give to people. They give to people they know. They need that

little bit of connection. The more outreach we have, the more that we're going to be able to build. That's very important, too. We hope to do more networking professionally using our Board more in that capacity. I need to get business cards to all of you.

MR. GISH:
Just to let you know, Gretchen and I have committed to really move on the private and corporate donor-ship base. I'm putting my educational theme on the back burner, although I will still attend committee meetings and try to really work on our Ask 101, as Michael put it, to try to get some corporate donors significant amounts, whether it's to sponsor a week, whether it's to sponsor a traveling planetarium, whether it's to sponsor new rugs, or whatever it happens to be. We're going to try to do whatever we have to do – even a bench if we can get $500.

If it costs us $200 to put a bench on the property, and we make $300, we'll do it that way. We will try to have numbers on just about everything.

DR. GITTELMAN:
Now is the time for us to reach out to everyone we know and to start to bring in contributions, not to limit it to Noel and Gretchen, although I appreciate them very much for taking that initiative, but I think it should be an initiative of the whole Board.

MR. D'ORAZIO:
Carol, can you get us business cards like yesterday?

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
Yes.

MR. D'ORAZIO:
We really need them. People need to know that we are who we are.

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
And donor forms and stuff. We will get right on that.

MR. DELUISE:
Can you also get us something that will let us on the facility when we're bringing people around, so that security staff knows who we are?

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
Actually, it was a shock that one of them actually stopped someone and asked if they had an ID card. So we're doing some sort of ID card for people, too.

DR. PECORALE:
Are you making the cards yourself or are you having them –

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
We'll be printing them ourselves to save money. If someone really thinks they need 500, I will order them, but for now we will start with maybe 50 that we'll print on our little computers. I hope that's okay. That's what we've been doing.

DR. PECORALE:
I might be able to get card stock.

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
I love your paper. You are really good at paper. Thank you. That's great. Certainly there is more we can do in this area. Again, we need to develop this, but it's very hard, if not impossible, to put a number on this, but we want the Legislators and everyone to know that we do know what we need to do.

DR. GITTELMAN:
We can't leave any stone unturned.

DR. PECORALE:
I think we should approach NYSUT, New York State United Teachers.

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
Okay.

MR. GISH:
They are on the list.

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
We also need to expand some of our education and public programs. We're going to focus a little bit on – because we have a telescope in the winter. We can start looking at really neat things in the sky pretty early. Staffing is an issue, but I think we really need to look at how we can optimize the fact that we have a wonderful telescope here for maybe Boy Scouts or Girl Scouts in the late afternoon early in the winter. Sky parties, corporate functions, developing programs, a brochure for Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts for afternoon and weekend programs, target other special interest groups, the Red Hat Ladies, whatever, group tours and expand our tourism effort. Again, because we've lost so much staff, that's an area that's been difficult for us, but maybe with some of our new partners in the County we might be able to get some help there. That's important, too.

DR. GITTELMAN:
At this juncture, just to change the pace, I want to bring up an issue. One is that some of the criticism we received at the Legislature was that what we presented was not a business plan, that it was too informal. It did not have numbers. Does anybody have any idea how we can convert this into a more formal business plan? How can we go about it and get it done quickly, so that we can meet the demands of some of the Legislators? They have said that they want a formal business plan that addresses the issues, and that what we have here, although it's loaded with good ideas and good intentions, it doesn't give the numbers that they need in order to vote on our behalf.

DR. ROGERS:
I think you have to put the time factor in there, what you attempt to gain by it, and how much money you can take from it. A business plan is something that you want to follow through on and want to see develop. That's what they want to see. They want to see who is going to be doing the developing and that we're appointing certain people to follow through on it. Let them know what we're doing and how fast we're moving. That, to me, would constitute a business plan.

DR. GITTELMAN:
I think if I'm correct, they wanted us to come up with a projection --

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
They want us to show –

DR. GITTELMAN:
-- of a revenue stream that will be generated by these efforts. We had a problem. We found that difficult to deliver for them this week. I think it cost us dearly.

DR. ROGERS:
You did mention the increases of certain things, increasing certain admissions, and present it to them. You could just say, "This is what we anticipate." Do that for every item and get the totals.

MR. DELUISE:
This past year we put together a budget that I think was very realistic. In our forecast, we were almost right on target. I think if you did the same thing, forecasting what we realistically think we can get from the endowment, can we do some of these other things that we're moving on included in a forecast? It's not 100 percent guaranteed, but I would almost bet you, I would put up my money to say that you're going to hit it right on the mark. We were conservative with our budget this year, and we hit it right on the mark. Can we move forward with the catering? Can we do it or can't we do it. We need to make a decision on that fairly soon. We're raising our admission prices; you can forecast what the numbers are going to be.

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
That's the easy one.

MR. DELUISE:
The gift shop, is that a real thing? We'll know within two weeks, so we can forecast that.

DR. GITTELMAN:
Unfortunately, maybe Lora or Lance can help us with this, but the impression that I have is that we have to get something together within a week.

MR. DELUISE:
We could do it tonight.

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
I have the back page here, the spreadsheet. Revenue, start date, end date – if you guys want to help me with that, that would be helpful. How much private donations – I'm very conservative when I make projections. I usually use past performance. We don't have to do that if you don't want to do that here. It's a new day.
DR. ROGERS:
You just can't put numbers down there if you don't have the basis to back it up.

DR. GITTELMAN:
We fully agree with you, but the problem is that the Legislature essentially wants us to put numbers down that are our best guess. I think it's the best way we can put it.

DR. ROGERS:
I believe we're an intelligent group here. We can best guess this thing.

DR. GITTELMAN:
Let's do it because we need it done.

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
If you want to go to the back of the spreadsheet –

MR. OLIVIERI:
Do you want to do this tonight?

DR. GITTELMAN:
We need it done tonight.

DR. ROGERS:
You'll never do it tonight. You have to get some information and some facts.

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
If people could at least tell me what they need to help project – maybe Lance could come up again. We were there. We were really criticized for not having a business plan. One of the reasons -- I would have found a hard time projecting numbers that were near what they were looking for. I thought it was better –

DR. GITTELMAN:
Let me just explain to you why I feel we need it tonight, before Lance speaks to this. I'm going to tell you this. When I sat down with some of these line items, I really felt that we needed the buy-in of all of you, if you will, to help us. When it comes to raising corporate funds, I could put a number in there. We could sit down – we could all put a number in there. But I think we all have to put a number in there. I don't think we can wait. I don't think we can wait a month for the next Board meeting in January to put together something that the Board feels it has embraced.

DR. ROGERS:
Let's take that subject. How much corporate funds have we gotten in the past? How many different corporations have contributed?

DR. GITTELMAN:
Basically each year I'm going to estimate that our biggest contributors are Bank of America and Arrow Electronics. Between the two of them-

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
And Rainbow Corporation.

DR. GITTELMAN:
It's about $40,000 – and we'll exclude you for a moment, if it's okay. It's about $40,000 excluding Rainbow or you, Bill. You have been averaging about $60,000 a year. As a group, we're talking about $100,000. I would say if you want you and Rainbow Corporation, that's what it would be.

DR. ROGERS:
Now, my next question is, how many other corporations in the vicinity of the area do you think you could get? Say you get five or ten, but can we go to them and say,

"We need $5,000 from you." These are our estimates and then go after them. When you get a request for a donation from any organization, they will suggest $200 donation, but they will put other numbers there to check off. Maybe we could start off with higher numbers but then say anything you can afford. Start off with your highest number and put a scale in there, take these numbers, add them up, and you have what you think your corporate sponsorship could be.

DR. GITTELMAN:
That's one way of doing it.

MR. DELUISE:
Very conservatively I really believe that because of Arrow Electronic, because of our past history and because of a major national corporation we've been talking about, I'm confident that between a $50,000 and $75,000 grant we should be able to get this winter, I think that if we lowballed it and said $100,000 in corporate donations this year, we would be under-estimating what we could do. But I would be very, very confident in saying $100,000.

DR. GITTELMAN:
This is the process I feel we have to go through. We have to go ahead and we have to talk it out. Then there is another way of doing it. Is there some format by which Trustees will commit to raising money give or get?

MR. SILLMAN:
What does that have to do with a business plan?

DR. PECORALE:
In other words, you're saying either re-donate or we get somebody to donate.

DR. GITTELMAN:
In other words, in adding to the corporate component, the fundraising component, I sent out an email. I know it wasn't liked, but I sent it out. I'm kind of bringing it up and looking for a response.

MR. D'ORAZIO:
I'm going on the record, and it's the same thing I told you, I did not like the idea for several reasons. One is that some of the Trustees on this Board were not put on this Board with the assumption that they were going to be donating any amount of money as opposed to time. Some Trustees do a lot more here, as far as man hours or woman hours are concerned that people don't know about. They have made their contribution ten-fold already. Some haven't. As far as our commitment to going out there and getting corporate donors or private donors -- this Board does a lot with respect to Boards in general. Asking them now on top of going out there, stomping the streets, getting money, and now you're also asking them to give their money, I think is pushing the envelope. That's my personal opinion.

DR. ROGERS:
Let me put it another way. If each Trustee would undertake the responsibility of trying to raise from the outside $1,000 or $5,000, whatever number we come up with and you multiply that by the number of Trustees, then you would have some plan for how much the Trustees can bring in next year.

MR. D'ORAZIO:

Bill, that was my exact suggestion that I did make to Steve, that we divide the Trustees up with corporations and companies, and each one go there and make their pitch and do what they have to do.

DR. ROGERS:
I'm talking about the plan. If you think you can bring in $5,000 next year, we put that number down and each one of us puts a number in and then we turn around and tell the Legislature, "This is part of our plan. We're going to raise so much by each Trustee."

MR. D'ORAZIO:
And then if they don't come up to that number and they can afford to add to that number, then that's –

DR. GITTELMAN:
I never suggested anything – first of all, we're not empowered to remove Trustees. We don't do anything when it comes to picking Trustees. We don't endorse them; we don't ask them to remove them. We don't do a thing. What I'm talking about here is, are the Trustees willing to put themselves on the line to make a commitment to raise a certain amount of money each.

MR. D'ORAZIO:
I think I gave you my answer on that already.

DR. GITTELMAN:
You're not.

MR. D'ORAZIO:
Exactly. Not that I'm not, but I'm not interested in having it put on the Board to say –

DR. ROGERS:
What do you think is a good number for a Trustee across the board?

MR. D'ORAZIO:
I made a donation last year.

MR. SILLMAN:
Bill, I don't think that's a fair question. We're from all different backgrounds.

DR. ROGERS:
I don't mean in terms of –

DR. GITTELMAN:
I'm bringing up an issue. It may be unfair to say everybody has to put – what I put out was $5,000, by the way. I got mixed reactions. If $5,000 is unfair to some and fair to others, is it that we do not want to make individual commitments and we just want to do it as a group, which is one option. I'm raising it as a discussion point.

MR. SILLMAN:
I think that the answer is everybody should do the best they can.

DR. GITTELMAN:

In the past, that has added up very well.

MR. D'ORAZIO:
But $5,000 a person wouldn't even run this institution for a month. If it's closed down in March, and we all gave $5,000 next month, where does that leave us?

DR. GITTELMAN:
Last year the total that came from Trustees, excluding Bill Rogers and myself, was I think it came in under $15,000.

MR. D'ORAZIO:
I made a donation both years, but I don't want to be held to having to make a donation.

DR. GITTELMAN:
I'm not saying you're held to it. Your opinion is that this is not a good idea. I want to hear other opinions.

DR. ROGERS:
You're asking for a plan to present to the Legislature. Therefore, it's not a question of saying to each individual, "How much do you think you can raise?" I would say the Trustees could raise x-number of dollars, whether it be $50,000, $20,000, but there's a number that we need to put in the plan. If you want to ask individuals – I wouldn't put anybody on the spot.

DR. GITTELMAN:
Okay. What I basically said and what I'm saying is that I think we have to have this discussion. Michael.

MR. DELUISE:
We had our secret meeting for anyone who wanted to learn about fundraising 101. I started by saying that fundraising is simple. It really is simple, but it's not easy. It's very, very hard. What you do with fundraising is the first thing you have to do is say, "Can you help us?" And then you talk about what you need. For us as Trustees, it doesn't make sense to go to the Trustees to be the only fund givers because after you have given one year, what do we do? We're going to leave the dedication to the institution. After a while, we have nothing left to give.

MR. SILLMAN:
It's the difference between fundraising and raising funds.

MR. DELUISE:
Raising funds is what we need to do. In the past few months, I've had the most exciting time working with the museum with Carol, not only because what we're doing, but because people like John Cooper who would call up and say, "I have an idea for somebody you can talk to." The hard part is getting on the phone and talking to somebody you have never talked to before and at the end of the conversation having him say, "You know, I think I can probably get you $50,000 to $70,000." That's what we need to do. If anybody feels uncomfortable doing that, I would be happy to work with you. Some of the folks who were in that meeting with me are already doing that. They're going to make a hit. You might have to ask ten people for a gift, but the reward of that – Carol is out there doing this.

We had a man come in who has a television production company. Do you know what it costs to do a TV commercial? He is going to do a TV commercial for us at zero expense. What I would like you guys to do, and this comes into fundraising too, if anybody in this room, including people in the audience, have an idea for a Long Island personality who wants to do the voice-over for the TV commercial – if we can't get Billy Joel to do a concert, maybe Billy Joel will do a voice-over for a commercial for the Vanderbilt. That would be gold to us. That will open up a lot of doors. That's fundraising. That's getting him to be aware of what we're doing. It might then open up doors where he says, "I know somebody else that can help you."

It's wonderful that we take money out of our pocket and go to the gala and you may bring some friends to the gala and try to introduce them around. It's more important that we introduce those people to the Vanderbilt and –

DR. GITTELMAN:
It's not a question of what you give. It's what you can get and who you can network.

MR. DELUISE:
It's give or get. Most of the time it's getting.

MR. D'ORAZIO:
Your pitch is great. I appreciate it. But what's the point? The point was he's asking if we should give money.

DR. GITTELMAN:
No, no.

MR. D'ORAZIO:
But that's what he said. I can have the minutes read back.

DR. GITTELMAN:
If my verbiage is not correct, let me re-state it. Philosophically, many of us were appointed on this Board before there was a section in the legislation that said, "Fundraising itself was sufficient justification to be on the Board." Many of us were put on the Board because of our educational backgrounds or because of our civic relationships. But let's face it. In the past eight weeks, we have been hammered to death because we don't raise enough money. They aren't concerned as much with our passion for the institution as they are with how we put our passion into funds. It's really simply come down to can we raise money? I think that maybe I phrased it wrong. Maybe we have to agree as a body, number one, to raise money. Number two, that individually we have a responsibility to raise money – forgetting the amount.

MR. D'ORAZIO:
That I completely agree with.

DR. GITTELMAN:
We have to agree individually that our responsibility is not just to provide time or wisdom or education. It's also to raise money, even though we were not put on this Board, as you said, with the condition that we do so. We all must agree to raise money. Is that something that you find palatable?

DR. ROGERS:
Now the question is, what kind of number do you put in for your plan?

DR. GITTELMAN:
First of all, I want to have a philosophical agreement amongst us that we all agree that we have a responsibility to raise money individually give or get. We're not putting a number on it, but it's part of the deal. Right now the Legislature looks upon it as the major part of the deal. If we sit here and we just do great programming, and don't raise money, they will close this place.

DR. ROGERS:
I think the question is well put. Do we feel we have a responsibility to raise money? That doesn't mean that we have to personally give.

DR. GITTELMAN:
I didn't say to personally contribute. I'm saying to raise –

MR. OLIVIERI:
It was always that way. Even when we first got on this Board, except for maybe Tony, the long timer, all of us are four years or less on this Board.

DR. GITTELMAN:
The law was just changed.

MR. OLIVIERI:
It's not the law. Even when we first got here based on the educational background and civic backgrounds, it was said that we have to raise some money.

MR. D'ORAZIO:
It was in our interviews.

DR. GITTELMAN:
It may have been in our interviews, but it wasn't in our performance.

MR. OLIVIERI:
That might be true for a lot of various reasons. But we're here now, and we have to raise money. We have to put our heads together and try to get it done.

I have been sitting here very quietly. One of these things that we put in this budget, which is kind of upsetting me right now, is we should be sitting here looking at this as if we have to do this, we have to do it right. We can't just sit here tonight at nine o'clock at night throwing some numbers out and some guesstimates. We have hard numbers. We have numbers that we have historically gotten. You know we're already on it with the membership stuff and the admission stuff.

We have one page here that I've been looking at where we have special events, museum admissions, planetarium admissions and so on. An actual number in 2007 was that we had $863,000 and some change. We know what those numbers are now. We have to see what we have to go with as far as our projections for the upcoming year on our operating costs and what's the difference between those two numbers. That's what we have to have a goal for. That is our goal.

We can't worry about what this endowment is anymore. I mean, basically what we have been told is, don't look at it. Don't depend upon it. Make believe it disappeared. That's what they're basically telling us, the Legislature. We have to figure out what that number is going to be and how much we have to raise in the year 2009 and figure out a way of going about it. Raising stuff, our prices, memberships, yes, we know what those projections are. Those are easy. That magic number fundraising is that difference, that gap. That's what it is. We have to figure out how to go about doing it. Am I misspeaking, Steve?

DR. GITTELMAN:
No.

MR. OLIVIERI:
That's the way I view how to attack this. This is not a business plan yet. You have to take some time and some thought on this. I mean, we were sitting here looking at some of this stuff, but you can't do it in one night properly. I know what they want, but if you go in there and you give them something even half-assed, it's going to be even worse for everybody. Then they're going to look at it, and they're going to tear it apart or we're not going to reach the goal or whatever is going to happen. It's not the right way of doing it.

It just kind of bothers me that we're going down that road right now, and we've gone down that wrong road before. Everybody in this country got caught with their pants down in the last three or four months financially with the market. We got hurt really badly. Maybe we shouldn't have depended that much on the endowment in the first place. But now we're told, forget it.

I'll tell you something. My opinion is that in the future, let's get this thing straightened out, close the gap, and if that comes back, don't pay any attention to it. Let it build itself up, save it for capital improvements. Let it sit on the side. Who cares anymore on that. That's where we're at. As I said to Carol earlier, if we have to, we may have to make even more painful cuts in personnel or programs or things, just to bridge that gap for a while. That's what I haven't heard yet here tonight. Where are we going to be next week, next month, next quarter, next half year? Six months is where it's important because I think we may have enough to get by the last half of the year. But right now we had this cash flow problem. That's what we have to concentrate on.

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
I guess, Lance, you had something you wanted to share.

MR. REINHEIMER:
I just wanted to give you a brief timeline of what you can look at. I think it's important – I think you said it before, that you need to have a plan that is comprehensive, descriptive and make projections. The timeline is that the first meeting in February is the 3rd. If the calendar falls that way, the last week of January would be committee meetings. I think you can aim to have something by January 15, so that it's out before the Committee meetings and can be distributed to Legislators before the meeting, so that they have it prior to the meeting. You can come and address the committee. I think that's the timeline that you could look at. To do something faster I think is going to be difficult. Between now and the first of the year, the Organizational Meeting, I don't know how much Legislators are going to be around. I think you can aim for the 15th of January for a finished product.

DR. GITTELMAN:
I don't expect to get a finished product tonight. What I was hoping for is partially what I'm getting.

MR. REINHEIMER:
That's all I wanted to say. That's the timeline.

MR. OLIVIERI:
That's not what I was hearing here.

DR. GITTELMAN:
You heard from me that I want a plan tonight, if I could get it, no question about it. Let me tell you something. Lance – no, I won't put Lance on the spot. The truth is that we have been hammered because we didn't have a plan. The truth is that tomorrow morning I have to go to the County Executive. I have to be honest with you. I don't know what he's going to want from me.

MR. OLIVIERI:
That was one of the questions that popped up in my mind. What is his whole position? Does he want to close this place?

DR. GITTELMAN:
I can't read the man's mind.

MR. OLIVIERI:
I understand, but we have to find that out. I'm also going to tell you something. Whatever you do find out tomorrow, you guys are going to have to pump it out in an email to all of us and let us know. It's the same thing with this budget plan. Carol may have to just work on it the next week or two and make it more formal with staff and people. Even if we don't meet by the time of our next scheduled meeting, that plan has to be out to all of us, and we can sit there and give our thoughts by email. If you need it that quickly, you're not going to – when is our next meeting in January, the 15th or the 17th? Whatever it is, it's going to be a little too late from what Lance just said. We have to get it done before. We have emails now, and we all use it.

DR. GITTELMAN:
My average response on emails is that if I send out an email to all of you, I'm lucky to get three to four back.

MR. OLIVIERI:
That's okay because now –

MR. SILLMAN:
I don't respond to my email.

DR. GITTELMAN:
I noticed.

MR. SILLMAN:
I read them, but I don't respond. I failed typing. Please don't take it personally.

DR. GITTELMAN:
I don't take it personally.

MR. OLIVIERI:
But this time we're going to ask everyone to please respond and let's see what happens.

DR. ROGERS:
By the time I get through reading all the names on top of the email –

DR. GITTELMAN:
I really want to get there. I'll tell you what; I could have an automatic acknowledgement that you got the email. I can do that.

MR. SILLMAN:
I get all of them. I read all of them. Did you think I was ignoring you?

DR. GITTELMAN:
Tony.

DR. PECORALE:
In the past, and it had always been that you needed assistance with respect to a single item. For example, I'm going back to when we had to have some things done out in other languages. You were looking for people to take responsibility to making certain that that could be done and that the monies would be available. There was a time when we were getting things for the gift shop. There have been a series of things over the years, and I'm going to be kind of specific about me.

Today if it's not something that I see that I want to contribute to, I'm not willing to just lay it on the line and I'm willing to get x-number of dollars for the museum because I see the museum from the standpoint of activities and things that I would like to see the museum get involved in. Those are the things I'm willing to devote my time, energy and money to. I'm not willing to put myself on the line to try to get $10,000 generally for the museum anymore because I've seen that that doesn't get the thing done. If you want us to come up with some ideas and work on a project, I'm 100 percent in favor of that. I'm willing to do that. I wrote down a series of notes that I'm going to generate things for.

One year we wanted to have a meeting with the superintendents of schools. I think I sponsored the whole thing. Another time was to do something with a group of teachers. I think I did that. The things that we wanted to do in different languages – I think it was just the two of us.

If you're saying that you want me to put $10,000 or commit to getting $10,000 for the museum generally, I guess I lost my taste for trying to do that because there are specific projects that I would be willing to work for and kill myself for to get done because that's the only way I see progress in the direction I want to see the museum go.

DR. ROGERS:
Those projects that you're interested in doing, will they produce any revenue?

DR. PECORALE:

I can't answer that question because we did have superintendents and assistant superintendents come to the meeting. I think that we got more school visits that year. I think that there was an opportunity for us to go further, but for one reason or another it wasn't able to occur.

I have said this many, many times. I wanted to see the basement of the museum back to the days when we were able to have visitation, the habitat. I remember taking my sixth grade kids here as a brand new teacher on Long Island. I was looking for a place to take my kids on a field trip, and I happened upon this place, and that's how I got the love for this museum.

DR. ROGERS:
Excuse me for interrupting you. But the product of that is revenue. People have come in there to see the habitat, and they pay for a ticket.

DR. PECORALE:
But you're asking me, and unless I'm reading it wrong, you're asking me to make a commitment for x-number of dollars for the museum.

DR. GITTELMAN:
No, Tony. I'm the one who asked. First of all, what I said was that I didn't tell you how you had to do it. I basically wanted everybody to understand that part of the need of the institution now is that we all accept our responsibility to raise money for the institution. I think we have done that. Tony, it could be through superintendents. It could be through added educational programs that work. But we all have to accept the responsibility of raising money. The message is that we have to make up the huge gap. We have to make up a huge financial gap. Whether you do it through doing an event or bringing in somebody else, let's just all agree that we accept raising money. Apparently, it's not the right approach to say that each of us agrees to a certain amount of money.

DR. ROGERS:
I happen to agree with you. My feeling has been that I want to create something that eventually the children will enjoy. It will enhance the beauty of the museum, but at the same time it becomes revenue producing. It does both. I don't particularly want to donate money for operating expenses because if you donate money for operating expenses, you're never going to get ahead. We have to create something that will increase the money that you need for operating costs.

MR. OLIVIERI:
But right now we have a budget gap.

DR. GITTELMAN:
The Legislature is being asked to give us $800,000 for operating expenses. I have to disagree with you, Bill. The point is that we have to replace $800,000 in operating expenses, and we can't take the position that we don't want to raise operating funds.

DR. ROGERS:
I didn't say that. I said that I understand Tony's feelings, but we are faced with a crisis now, and we have to raise money for operating expenses.

MR. OLIVIERI:

I have a question. Have we ever thought about trying to sell naming rights to this planetarium?

DR. GITTELMAN:
That's one of the items on our list to discuss. Understand that my statement that I want a plan tonight is overstated, but I still want a plan tonight.

MR. OLIVIERI:
Let's get to the core. Try to name this place on a ten or fifteen year basis and charge x-amount of dollars, which we will have to figure that out, and that's why we have to know what the gap is.

DR. GITTELMAN:
I will take one second to explain, and I could be off. I don't know what's going to happen. I don't know if an offset is going to be possible in the budget. I do know that I want to give the Legislature every reason to find that offset. That may not be something that happens in the next – it may be something that when they read these minutes, and by golly they are reading these minutes, when they understand the way that we're approaching it, whatever it is they want, I want to give them. And I want to deliver it in the future. They have asked for a budget. They have asked for numbers. I want to give it to them as quickly as I can. If tomorrow morning when I'm speaking to the County Executive I can say, "We made an earnest effort to give you whatever we could and whatever has been asked of us," I know that I can say that after tonight. That's basically where I'm trying to get. I'm trying to get where we can look them in the eye and say, "We're doing it. We got it, and we'll get there."

DR. ROGERS:
Very well put.

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
I don't know if you want to skip a little ahead to under "increased fundraising," but naming is clearly a big nut here.

MR. OLIVIERI:
A big nut because if we could get somebody to adopt this place, stick a name on it, and write the check on a yearly basis for ten years, that goes a long way.

MR. GISH:
This has all been discussed, but we need somebody to come up with a name. We have to figure out exactly what is a five-year commitment for this planetarium.

DR. PECORALE:
We once had entry into the owner of Cablevision.

MR. GISH:
Yes, and we're going to revisit that.

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
And there are a number of naming opportunities here. I can go through them. I have some examples from other museums, universities, different places you could name. The biggest one here that I see is the planetarium, the such and such planetarium at the Vanderbilt Museum.

I recently went to Japan to visit planetariums, as some of you might know. I had the opportunity to talk to five other planetarium directors and consultants. We got on a subject. The consultant who is very familiar with this place said that it's a $3 million naming opportunity. From his experience, that's about what you would put up here.

DR. PECORALE:
$3 million for how many years?

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
You could work it how you want payment, but that would be a fairly permanent name, not a leasing. If you were going to sell the name so this is for 50 years or whatever –

MR. OLIVIERI:
Like they do at baseball or football stadiums.

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
Yes, this would be a long-term thing. Some of the directors of the smaller institutions were saying, "That sounds sort of high. Maybe $1.5 million," but I think we're somewhere in that range.

MR. DELUISE:
The first thing we need to do is to go out and meet those people who could help us because the naming rights are going to be negotiable. We were all appointed by a Legislator. We need to go right to that Legislator and say, "Can you introduce us to some people who can help us?" That only can help.

MR. GISH:
If 15 of them gave us one person in their district –

MR. DELUISE:
If each one of us Trustees could recommend, I will help. We have a team ready to go out just to introduce us to people. Nine out of ten of those people are going to say, "I can't do it right now. I'll think about it." But do you know what? They call fundraising development because you develop those relationships. Some of them we have to continue over the years. We need to see the people.

MR. OLVIERI:
Mike, do you know what we need? We need the numbers now before you can even talk to somebody. Once you have that information of what we're talking about – because you're looking for big numbers, and you're going to look for a certain corporation that's going to want to have a stake in this place at least over the next ten years. They're not just going to stick a name up there because eventually they're going to look around and want to have it fixed up a bit more. That's what we're talking about. We have to know what the number is.

MR. DELUISE:
Dan, I can tell you. In a serious conversation, if they are interested, we can work out that kind of arrangement over lunch or dinner.

MR. OLIVIERI:

You guys aren't the only ones who go out and talk to all the corporate bosses. I have been talking about this for quite a few years around here. Because of the way this thing was structured, like there are going to be capital improvements, don't have this corporation come in here and clean all this up because we have money coming in from the County for this and that. And now it didn't play out at all. Now give us the number, let us go out and do it.

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
We can work on some of that. You can name just the lobby, the dome–

MR. OLIVIERI:
I want to see some numbers. Get us the numbers, we'll get it done, and then stop fooling around.

MR. SILLMAN:
Numbers for what?

MR. D'ORAZIO:
The value of the planetarium's name, the value of this lobby's name –

MR. OLIVIERI:
We need to figure out what the value of naming this type of planetarium is, and we could figure out a few other places around here.

MR. DELUISE:
The budget gap is what, $1.5 million a year?

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
It's about $1 million.

DR. GITTELMAN:
Are you all right?

MS. PASTORE:
Yes, but please speak one at a time. Thanks.

DR. GITTELMAN:
Let's do simple arithmetic. This year if they had not taken away the $1.2 million and we finished the year, we would have finished with approximately $150,000 surplus. They take away the $1.2 million from this year. We have a $1,050,000 deficit. They give us back $250,000 from income from the endowment. We have an $800,000 deficit. Are you with me? We do not know that any of the initiatives we put on the table will even balance out the loss in revenue that we currently are experiencing due to the fact that we only have four weddings versus 14 weddings. If you don't mind my saying that the added increases in fees may be wiped out already. We, therefore, have an $800,000 deficit. Let's make believe that we get that money this year in 2009. That's what we've got going into 2010. It's either we have it in 2009 or we have it in 2010. We have an $800,000 gap. So quite frankly the stars are the limit to how much we need to raise because this institution has never raised more than $100,000 – I'm sorry. Two years we brought $300,000.

DR. ROGERS:

So take the deficit number. Take the different things that you're planning on doing, and put a percentage number and make this happen. I know it's very difficult, but we're zeroing in on something. Do you think you could get corporate sponsors to give you $100,000? Now you have to raise $700,000 from other sources. Do you think by increasing the dues you're going to increase the income by $50,000? You know you have with the corporate – you have $150,000. And go down the line. This is where your plan is. Of course, it has to be reasonable. It's got to make sense.

DR. GITTELMAN:
We will put together a plan like that, but allow me to express that if we put together a plan that says, "We've now got it to balance based upon our best dreams," you better double your best dreams because half of them may not come true.

MR. OLIVIERI:
Part of this has to be cutting expenses and costs.

DR. GITTELMAN:
You can look at cutting expenses and costs, but I am going to tell you that the expenses here are extremely low. The staff is extremely underpaid and we are extremely short of staff. Our largest expense is labor. I don't know where you're coming up with major cost cutting before you lose – we've cut into the bone to the point where we can't function.

MR. SILLMAN:
What's the timeline on the $800,000?

DR. GITTELMAN:
Just define timeline for me and I'll give you an answer.

MR. SILLMAN:
Until January 15 you don't have $800,000?

DR. GITTELMAN:
We are not going to have $800,000 come January 15. if we're lucky, we will have a stream that will equal $800,000.

MR. SILLMAN:
What do you really need to push the envelop? You don't need $800,000 on January 15.

DR. GITTELMAN:
If we have $250,000 coming in, and we get $800,000, then one-twelfth of $800,000 on January 15 will probably tide over for one month. Let's get ahead of the game. Is there anyway that we can come up with a plan to raise that $65,000 ourselves in one month?

MR. OLIVIERI:
Historically we've never been able to do that.

DR. GITTELMAN:
We never did it. But now let's do it. We have to start. We have the Presiding Officer who is willing to do a fundraiser. That gives us maybe a $10,000 shot in the arm. If we bring in 50 more people, it's a $15,000 in the arm.

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
Well $65,000 might pay just payroll. It won't pay anything else.

DR. GITTELMAN:
Is there any plan that we can take on a short-term – we have to get ahead.

MR. OLIVIERI:
What about selling some air rights to put up some wiring cell tower?

DR. GITTELMAN:
I think it's a great idea. I want you to know that as Tony was about to say, we spent almost a year debating that issue. We may be able to get permission now because of the current climate. But when we raised the issue before, we ran into a problem with the County because we do not own the grounds.

MR. SILLMAN:
The other thing is that I'm not sure that cell towers are needed anymore.

MR. OLIVIERI:
In this area, definitely.

MR. D'ORAZIO:
In this area it is.

DR. GITTELMAN:
I realize that some of the things I'm asking for sound preposterous, but to some extent they have to become reality. Can we come up with some way to approach the $65,000 or even half of $65,000? What can we agree we will do in the next 30 days because the truth is that now, number one, we have to show good faith. Number two, we have a major cash flow crunch. We have to pull it out.

MR. DELUISE:
Well, we have already started by increasing admission fees.

DR. GITTELMAN:
The admission fees are – that's wonderful, but we estimated that that might increase $60,000. That might get us $5,000. That's great. So now we're up to $10,000 to $15,000. We still have a $50,000 shortfall.

MR. OLIVIERI:
Do you know what it is? We're going to have to look at something a little desperate, some type of fundraising drive where it's like "Save the Museum" type of theme, and we'll have to just use whatever free TV or whatever free we can get, just beg for donations. Because do you know something, we're –

DR. GITTELMAN:
We've got the promotion.

MR. SILLMAN:
I don't agree with him at all cutting staff.

DR. ROGERS:

I don't think we have to raise –

DR. GITTELMAN:
Wait a minute. I have two cross conversations here. What did you say?

MR. SILLMAN:
I said I don't agree with him about cutting staff. This is absolutely the wrong time to cut staff.

DR. ROGERS:
I don't think you have to raise $800,000 by January 15.

DR. GITTELMAN:
No, we're only saying let's raise funds and get ahead of the curve a little bit.

DR. ROGERS:
What I'm saying is that you have to come up with a plan that you're going to raise sufficient funds and let the Legislators know that we're going to be able to carry the ball here on our own. Once we get on this plan, we get donations, we get corporate sponsors and we get a cash flow, I'm sure if they're convinced that we can do this, somebody will help fund it until we get to that point.

DR. GITTELMAN:
But look at the reality. The reality is that it's not that I need the plan tonight. We need it in 30 days. We need to prove to the Legislature that we're damn serious about this. We have got to show progress in the next 30 days so that the Legislators who are doubting that we will do it because we haven't done it will say, "All right, they're doing it. I'll vote for it this time." Thirty days from now, if we haven't done anything, we're going to be so strapped for cash, we won't have another 30 days to roll out. We may not get the vote if you don't convince them. We have to do something now. We have the beginning of a long-term plan. What's the plan? You said it before, one month, three months. What's the one month plan?

MR. OLIVIERI:
The one month, two month, three month plan has got to be "Save the Museum." There is no other way. We can't put dinners together. We can't put a gala together. It doesn't generate enough money, and you can't get it done that quickly. That's the fastest way to earn money traditionally. Unless there is somebody who can go out there and get some kind of corporation or a group of people to just write a couple of big checks for a couple of months to tie us over, that's great. But I think we need a small "Save the Museum" campaign, getting smaller contributions from as many people as we can.

DR. GITTELMAN:
We're going to approach our friends.

MR. OLIVIERI:
An internet type of situation from – we have plenty of friends who can do that. Stuff we can start bombing out on the internet saying, "Hey, please send us $5 or $10." Let's get a hold of these schools, Tony, and ask all these school kids to help save the museum.

MR. DELUISE:
There is an event on December 28.

DR. GITTELMAN:
Yes, I mentioned that. On December 28 the event is critical.

MR. OLIVIERI:
How much is it per head?

DR. GITTELMAN:
$100 a head.

DR. PECORALE:
So you're asking each of us to see if we can get three people. You said you wanted another 100 people. There are how many of us?

DR. GITTELMAN:
There are going to be 15 of us. If each of us brought in six people, I think that would be great.

DR. PECORALE:
That's three couples.

DR. GITTELMAN:
That's right, each of us bring six people. Do we all agree to bring in three couples? Is that a doable deal? Do you know what? Bill Lindsay is there, and Bill Lindsay is the Presiding Officer. I want Bill Lindsay to know that we're going to do our best. There is a start.

MR. OLIVIERI:
I hope we do better with this one than we did with the one last Saturday.

DR. GITTELMAN:
That's in the past. We're not dealing with the past here. We need instant money.

DR. ROGERS:
Well, that's a good start. If we could show something for that date, it would be a wonderful start.

DR. PECORALE:
How much did you raise last year during the week you were closed in February?

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
That was a huge –

DR. PECORALE:
Can you replicate it?

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
Probably not.

DR. PECORALE:
What do you mean by probably not?

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
It was a huge success because there was a lunar eclipse, and we had a brand new telescope. We got huge publicity. We could try.

DR. GITTELMAN:
We had huge publicity, and we have that week coming soon.

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
We are planning –

DR. GITTELMAN:
And we have the week coming up next week.

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
Yes, we have Arrow week.

DR. GITTELMAN:
We are going to be deluged with people on the Arrow week. Isn't that a week when we're going to have 800 people here? If we can get volunteers, if we can get our friends to be here, and to get help from our Trustees to be here whenever they can during Arrow week to try to get people to sign up for memberships to save the museum. That's the week to run the "Save the Museum" campaign.

MR. OLIVIERI:
Just have containers out there. Let them shove a few bucks in there out of their pockets.

DR. GITTELMAN:
Whatever we have to do, let's make that week count.

DR. PECORALE:
So now you have two weeks.

DR. GITTELMAN:
There are two events.

DR. PECORALE:
Now you have three. You have the two weeks, the week with Arrow week and the week that schools are closed.

DR. GITTELMAN:
But that week is after the 15th, and this is the one-month plan.

DR. PECORALE:
Do you mean February is too far away?

MR. OLIVIERI:
No, because we're talking about raising enough money in 30 days to tide us over to the next month to get us through 30 days.

DR. GITTELMAN:
Tony, you're 100 percent right. We have that February week, and we have to make that count. We have Arrow week, and we have to have a target for Arrow week.

How can we maximize Arrow week? One, we can talk to the world about what Arrow did, and maybe get other people to do it, too. We could come here and beg people or try to get people to volunteer. We could tell them, "Come in and stay a while and help us raise money." We could get people to show interest. We could help the staff. We could volunteer to be here, or we could get our friends to be here. If we know somebody, let's get them to be here. By the way, this is the time if anybody does want to make a personal contribution or has somebody that you could bring in, this is the week or this is the month to do it.

DR. ROGERS:
Or if you can't attend, make a contribution.

DR. GITTELMAN:
Do something, no minimum, just help out.

MR. D'ORAZIO:
Is this Board opposed to a "Save the Vanderbilt" campaign?

DR. GITTELMAN:
No.

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
No, actually I met with a graphic –

MR. D'ORAZIO:
I want to just quickly follow up with something. I had met last year with the MTA and Todd Shapiro. We had a meeting at Grand Central Station with regard to using Vanderbilt Hall on their off days. I could probably get together with them right away and see if they will allow us to put up a kiosk "Save the Vanderbilt" at Vanderbilt Hall in Grand Central Station with the Board's approval that we're going to do a campaign like that, if they have no problem with it. I'm not sure how we would lay it out, whether there would be a telephone number to call or –

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
I think it's wonderful. I have applied and I got permission from New York State Charities to do on-line contributions on our website. You press a button, and it goes to New York State Charities. It's free.

MR. D'ORAZIO:
How quickly can you have that up?
MS. GHIORSI-HART:
In two days they said it should be up. If we give our web address on the kiosk or posters, people will be able to go the web and donate on-line.

MR. D'ORAZIO:
I think we could probably get together with them pretty quickly. There is a lot of travel and flow there.

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
I think that's great. I think we had discussed that we had met with a graphic designer from a student from BOLIs. We want to do a "Save the Museum" or "Save the Planetarium" sort of a 50's theme – or "Save the Galaxy Vanderbilt Museum," or "Save the Whales Vanderbilt Museum."

DR. ROGERS:
Excuse me, what is the fee for these events in the next few weeks?

DR. GITTELMAN:
The one for the 28th is $100.

DR. ROGERS:
And before that?

DR. GITTELMAN:
That's free. The Arrow week everybody can come here for free. What we have to do is get them to come here and contribute. Come here for free but give us money anyway.

MR. OLIVIERI:
Can we charge them for parking?

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
We don't charge for parking, but they pay a fee for planetarium shows. So we actually do very well.

DR. GITTELMAN:
What are the dates on Arrow week?

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
The 26th through the 31st. Arrow made the contribution.

MR. D'ORAZIO:
I think Arrow might be upset by that -- it's free but you have to pay for parking.

DR. GITTELMAN:
I don't think Arrow would be upset by us going up to people and asking them for a donation. If there is something we can do to sell them – if we can have hot chocolate tables or whatever it takes -- $5 for a cup of hot chocolate.

MR. SILLMAN:
Who is the contact at Arrow?

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
Actually we have a neighbor who works there, Jackie. We have a nice contact.

DR. ROGERS:
I would put up signs or posters showing what the museum does for the children of the community and so on. Post them all around and let them know that because of the financial difficulties, you people can help us by making a contribution. Bring it to their attention. Then somehow figure out whether you have a credit card thing for them to give you money or put a box to put money in.

DR. GITTELMAN:
Other charities are raising money by taking in cars, taking in vehicles.

MR. SILLMAN:
It's usually through an agent.

DR. GITTELMAN:
It doesn't have to be, but it usually is.

MR. SILLMAN:
Do you want to be in the business for taking in old cars?

DR. GITTELMAN:
I want to be in the business of raising money. Does anybody have an old car? It doesn't have to be an old car. It could be a car that you're not using anymore that maybe we could sell as a used car.

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
Our Friends are very involved in the Arrow week. They will be here with membership tables. We need a lot of volunteers.

MR. OLIVIERI:
The volunteers that are really going to save this place is when they get people here, they're going to have to help out in the sense of getting people to sign up and donate money. The staff professionally doesn't have enough bodies to keep doing this.

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
Our staff, because we have such huge attendance that week, the mansion is open and we station our people throughout. Our staff is going to be stretched thin. That's why we're so happy to have the Friends involvement because they will be able to do what our staff isn't able to do, and that is to work with membership and possibly push some other programs. I know Lora has been thinking about that and had some other ideas.

DR. GITTELMAN:
What's that website My Face?

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
My Space or Face Book.

DR. GITTELMAN:
There is a Face Book group that some kids who work here started. They had over 1,000 kids, in high school age, who joined in support of the museum. They would definitely be willing to have booths here during Arrow week. I'm sure they're all on vacation that week. They could go to malls or whatever and have booths and get members that way. I can contact them, if you need me to.

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
I think using the internet My Space, Face Book or You Tube that's a whole different direction we're going to have to go. We have another campaign "Save the Museum," "Save the Galaxy," or "Save the Whales" campaign but in talking to some of the professionals they said what a difference this museum has meant to many people. It's really like "It's a Wonderful Life." It's a wonderful museum, and I think this time

of year is perfect for that. I would like to start a campaign, "It's a Wonderful Museum" and reach out through the internet to alumni associations because we know as we have all heard people tell us, "I came here when I was a kid and it kept me going. It got me interested in astronomy. That's why I became a physicist." We're going to try to collect those stories and work with our volunteers, using the internet, talking to Lora, and going to the Huntington Alumni Associations. These are two campaigns we want to work on. But the internet is really going to be a whole new avenue that we have to look into.

MR. OLIVIERI:
Well, that sounds great. Can I make a suggestion? I think everyone puts stuff together. I'd like to see a more formal business plan budget with real numbers that are honest numbers. Somewhere between now and the beginning of the year or the first week of January that stuff could be distributed through emails to everybody so you don't have to mail and work so hard. We can comment back and forth from all the Trustees on it. Then I think what we're going to have to do now, because we can only meet once a month, I think we're going to have to start communicating with emails and have informal –

DR. GITTELMAN:
We could meet every week if we wanted to.

MR. OLIVIERI:
Do you want to meet every week?

DR. GITTELMAN:
No, I'm not suggesting that we meet as a Board but committees are supposed to meet in between Board Meetings.

DR. ROGERS:
Dan, we can have sushi every week.

MR. OLIVIERI:
That's right. You and I will go to the sushi restaurant every week.

DR. GITTELMAN:
There is no reason why we can't get together. We have a crisis.

MR. OLIVIERI:
What we're talking about is a Committee of the Whole Board, not just a few here and there. Three people can't do everything. She can't do everything by herself, either. Quite frankly, if you start getting everybody to come to meetings weekly, they could become very difficult weeks, but emails can work. It's very easy.

DR. ROGERS:
Then do both.

MR. OLIVIERI:
Do you want to have a meeting earlier than January 15 or 17? It's going to be tough this time of year. It could be tough on some people. But I don't know what to do right now. If we adjourn now and nothing happens until January 17, I don't know where we're going to be.

DR. GITTELMAN:
That's why we had to make something happen.

DR. PECORALE:
We all should be here for December 28.

MR. OLIVIERI:
Do you want to have a quick meeting beforehand? I don't know if we need to have the whole formal meeting with –

DR. GITTELMAN:
To some extent, if everybody makes it a target to do something – and this is what it comes down to. You don't want structure. You don't want to say, "I commit to this." Let's do it. Let's be able to come back and say, "I did it. I did it in the 30 days. It had to be done." Each of you knows what you can do. Do something to get us to that $65,000. Let's get as close as we can. If it's bringing 12 people on the 28th, spending all of the week here or whatever it is that you can do, it would be great. If it's one morning – whatever it is you can do, let's recognize that we have to do it.

MR. DELUISE:
Just a point. It looks to me that January 21 is our next meeting. Is that the date?

DR. GITTELMAN:
It should be the third Wednesday of the month.

DR. ROGERS:
Could we put out a questionnaire, a spreadsheet with blanks on there with one column of topics such as fundraising for increase in ticket value, fundraising for corporations? Maybe we could have each individual to their best judgment fill out what you think could be the amount you could raise over whatever period of time you want to specify. Then when all these sheets come back in here, they can be analyzed so that we can come up with a composite of what we think can be done and that could be done immediately?

MR. OLIVIERI:
I think what we need to do more productively is put a quick outline out of what some of these ideas were and then try to give some dates on when we're going to do some of these things, like maybe develop the "Save the Museum" campaign. We just have to start getting things done and doing things concrete. I still say we need all those numbers on the budget.

DR. GITTELMAN:
I agree, but now is the time – I agree that would be great to have that list go out. I really feel like tonight is the night for people to commit what they are going to do. That's what I feel. Are we going to put out a memo, and then it doesn't get back and I have to chase people down?

MR. OLIVIERI:
Commit to a table for the dinner. I'll do that. Whatever that is.

DR. GITTELMAN:
Is that the way you want to structure it? Do you want to say what we will commit to now?

MS. OLDRIN-MONES:
I will commit to bringing at least six people with me on the 28th.

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
There are no tables. It's a cocktail party. It's low cost. It's fun. Lora, do you know anything more about –

MS. GELLERSTEIN:
I have a couple of answers to your questions. Here's what we would like to do. We would like to do our Paper Icon Program. We're going to try to kick that off in the beginning of December. That's the paper, little pieces of -- they will be in the downtown stores, we'd sell them for $1, and then you get the money back. That's really labor intensive. We have volunteers who are willing to do that right off the bat. All we need is the paper icon and the letter to go with it, which Carol is developing right now. We can theoretically – and my group has already committed to doing that the beginning of January. Those are like $1 a piece. It's not a big deal, but it's a start. I think it should be "Save the Museum" on the icon. We can start that in two or three weeks. It's $1 a piece.

Our Friends list is already up to 120 people. All of those people are going to be doing a Friend to Friend letter. I haven't gotten commitments from all of them, but if they do 10 letters or 20 letters to their Friends to get email addresses and ask people to donate to save the museum, that could be very helpful. We will be asking them, "What resources do you have? What talents do you have?" We're doing all these things right now. We're developing those letters. Those letters will go out hopefully by the beginning of the year.

We are working with Carol for Arrow week. We have volunteers who are scheduled to come to do crafts, to do memberships. We raised a little bit of money. We can spend that on "Save the Museum" bumper stickers or the kinds of stickers that kids wear, which might say, "I visited the Vanderbilt, please help me save it." We can do those now. It might take a week or two to order, but we can do those right now.

Some of those things the Friends have already committed to doing. We had our raffle basket. We only raised a little bit of money, but I got ten more Friends, two of which are musicians. They are willing to do concerts for free, to perform in the courtyard or whatever. These are people who live around here in Huntington and Northport who are willing to do this. I have their names. We just need to get dates. We're waiting for a calendar from Carol. Those things can move pretty quickly.

We had our tree sale. None of them have been decorated but it's been cold and bitter, and a lot of people have told me they are coming this weekend to decorate. We have made a little bit of money but a lot of Friends. Those people are telling other PTA women, and the word is getting out there. We have a couple of Friends who are committed to doing press. That was a big discussion at the last Friends meeting, that a lot of these things aren't getting advertised as well as they can. We have Friends who are willing to do the press, willing to send stuff out, willing to get pictures in the paper. We have an article tomorrow about the Friends and helping the planetarium. Some of these things are happening as we speak.

MR. OLIVIERI:
The very first thing you spoke about, that went by a little too quickly for me.

MS. GELLERSTEIN:
Do you know that the March of Dimes has these little paper icons that they put up in delis and bars and banks, we're going to put together those packets. We have commitments from 20 ladies who are willing to go out with ten packets each and pitch it to local bars, local stores, local delis. They will collect the money for us. We will go back and get the money, and it's just a local drive to Save the Vanderbilt.

MR. OLIVIERI:
Tony, can we put that thing through schools, too, or would that be too difficult?

DR. PECORALE:
I need to talk to Gretchen. I think one of us should be able to get to Dick Iannuzzi. If we could get to him, then we could get to all the school districts on the Island. We'll get back to you on that. I'm talking about trying to see if I can get Dick Iannuzzi to sponsor a day where the teachers can come here and the union would pay for a day at the museum.

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
I did this at Smithtown, but it's so labor intensive that without –

MS. GELLERSTEIN:
It was Carol's idea. We're just running with it.

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
It's an idea that I couldn't do without the help I'm receiving. But it has the potential to spread all over the Island in a little way. One dollar or maybe $5 for a gold color, it can spread and not only get the money in but raise awareness.

MS. GELLERSTEIN:
That's what is integrally missing. Everyone I talk to, we've been talking to people for weeks, and they had no idea. They were here as kids, as Carol was saying. They had history here. They just didn't realize it was in such trouble.

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
It would help Lora out actually if we can do the mailings. I know in the area that I did before, the banks were critical. They would do it on their drive-thrus and maybe collect money.

MR. OLIVIERI:
I have a guy down here.

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
Do you have contacts?

MR. OLIVIERI:
Yes, I do. In fact, I have a regional guy right here that takes care of all the Chase/WaMu business.

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
If we could get to all the Chase or the WaMu banks, we're good.

MS. GELLERSTEIN:
We just need the icon and the letter, and we're good.

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
There is a little bit of an expense in the die-cut and the paper and the mailings –

MS. GELLERSTEIN:
I won't commit Jon to anything, but we know people who could do that sort of thing.

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
Again, this is something that is a perfect Friends kind of project. They are really going to run with it. It's exciting.

MR. OLIVIERI:
Send me that email with this stuff so I can go down and talk to the bankers that I have. If we can get them to run with this, we could have a lot of branches all over the Island do it for us.

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
That would be great. The idea is to get children to participate as well. They are the ones who love us the most. Let them help us and contribute.

MR. GISH:
Is there any possibility of having that ready for Arrow week where they could pick it up at a table?

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
I'm going to try.
MR. OLIVIERI:
One of our problems with this stuff is that it does cost some money to seed this.

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
What we can do, and we're going to have to go mass production, but what we can do ourselves is cut out and have some stars ready for Arrow week.

MS. GELLERSTEIN:
I just want to say two other things. I met with Noel and we were talking about how he wants to reach out to corporations, our Friends group again, what I did was I sent it out and some of you forwarded it other Friends of yours, and what I'm going to do is ask them if they have contacts with corporations or companies that might be willing to help us out or might want to donate in some way or do a matching gift program.

I get feedback every time I send out emails. It's very helpful. People are very positive. I'm going to ask them to send it out to five Friends. It's amazing how infectious that is. People from all over that I haven't heard from have sent me back positive feedback. As I get information, I will funnel it to you guys, but I think it's helping. Can you get those petitions for us? I have volunteers and interns who can call and get the email addresses for them, and we will add them to our Friends list. We will get them on an email blast. There are things that are moving forward. I just wanted to share that.

MS. GHIORSI-HART:

Thank you for everything you have done.

DR. GITTELMAN:
I will donate a Lincoln Navigator.

DR. PECORALE:
I will bring three couples on the 28th.

DR. GITTELMAN:
I'll donate my Lincoln Navigator. Emily will have to drive me home. It's got a full tank. It's all set to go. I will sign it over, plus $1,000. That should bring me above $5,000, and I'll make sure I get way above that. I have to empty the car before you get it. It's only about $4,000 in the Blue Book.

MR. SILLMAN:
Here's my watch. Even she laughed.

MS. OLDRIN-MONES:
I already said I would bring three couples and I will volunteer for Arrow Week.

DR. GITTELMAN:
I volunteer Emily.

MR. GISH:
I won't be here.

DR. GITTELMAN:
And we need computers for the staff.

MR. OLIVIERI:
How many?

DR. GITTELMAN:
We need good ones. Not junk. We need about five.

DR. PECORALE:
Do you want them to work in Windows or Macs?

MR. GISH:
We have a commitment from Legislator Cooper to get us computers. I have already spoken to him. I spoke to you about it and then when I spoke to Lora about it at our last meeting, she committed to give us the computers that we need to upgrade our system.

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
I do have to buy one or two new computers.

DR. PECORALE:
Are the buildings connected?

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
No.

MR. GISH:
And there is no way to put in wireless because I have already checked.

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
There might be some expenses that we have to do.

DR. PECORALE:
Has anybody talked to Cablevision about getting the buildings all connected?

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
I haven't recently.

DR. PECORALE:
They originally said they were going to do it.

MR. GISH:
Do you want that on the list? That's fine with me. I will approach Cablevision on hardwiring the site. If you have talked to them before, I will revisit them again.

DR. GITTELMAN:
Previously I donated that thing, the shell, the outrigger. It should be free to be auctioned on E-Bay if you want. We have to start considering items that we can auction. It's not part of the collections. It's not accessioned. It was actually collected by Mr. Vanderbilt's first mate when he was on the 1931 voyage. It's a model this big of a outrigger canoe that I bought for the museum. But instead of keeping it, we can sell it.

MR. OLIVIERI:
Please, let's not start having that kind of fire sale. Let's give a shot of everyone doing what they can do before we have a fire sale. Who knows what a canoe is going to bring, $100 on bucks on E-Bay.

DR. GITTELMAN:
It will bring $1,000 or more.

DR. PECORALE:
What about our sarcophagus?

DR. GITTELMAN:
There are items that are not accessioned in our collection.

MS. GHIORSI-HART:
Tony is talking about a gift shop item.

DR. GITTELMAN:
Oh, okay. There is a tobacco store Indian that may not be accessioned that is worth probably $75,000. I beg to differ with you.

MR. OLIVIERI:
So what? $75,000 is one month. That doesn't have a sustained plan that we need. We're talking about saving the museum and stop-gap measures.

MR. GISH:
I think there is a long-range concept that some of us have and mine is that I'm not going to do all the corporate donors in January. I will tell you right now that Gretchen and I will try to take care of January and February. Hopefully over that year period we can raise enough capital for that long-range plan. If we can get a shot, and I'm not saying good or bad idea, but if the cigar store Indian is not in the collection, and it's not part of our mission, the planetarium or what Vanderbilt had, then that could be considered. But a de-accession, from what I heard, takes a lot of time. If we have two old cars, which I think are the only two things I can think of that I have looked at that we may not have formally accessed as part of the museum, I will agree to that. But ethically you run across a problem when you de-access something of losing our –

DR. GITTELMAN:
We totally agree. Anything accessioned, we are not touching. We have a motion to adjourn and a second. All in favor? Opposed? **It passes unanimously. (Vote: 9/0/0/6 Absent: Mr. Swinson, Ms. Anker & Ms. LeBow. Three vacant positions.)**

(Dr. Gittelman adjourned the meeting at 10:10 P.M.)

SG:ap