

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
LOUISIANA STATE MUSEUM
BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**Monday, June 13, 2016
12:30 PM – The Old U.S. Mint
New Orleans, Louisiana**

The meeting of the Board of Directors of the Louisiana State Museum was called to order by Dr. Lawrence Powell at 12:30 PM at The Old U.S. Mint in New Orleans. A quorum was present.

Members Present: Madlyn B. Bagneris; Julie F. Breitmeyer; Rennie Buras II; Tamra Carboni; Mary C. Coulon; Rosemary Upshaw Ewing; D. Lee Felterman; Janet V. Haedicke; George A. Hero, III; Fairleigh Cook Jackson; Kevin Kelly; Aleta Leckelt; Lawrence N. Powell; Anne F. Redd; Melissa D. Steiner; Lana Sonnier Venable; Gary N. Wheat; and William Wilton

Members Absent: Sharon Turcan Gahagan; Harry S. Hardin, III; and Carolyn K. Morris

Also Present: Ken Bellau; Gary Brewster, President of the La. Museum Foundation; Ruth Burke, President of the Friends of the Cabildo; Angelena Jones, Assistant Director of the La. Museum Foundation; and Jason Strada, Executive Director of the Friends of the Cabildo

LSM Staff Present: Yvette Cuccia; Melvin Gilbert; Dawn Hammatt; Marvin McGraw; Yvonne Mack; Faith Troxler; Robert Wheat; and Celestine Washington

Tenants Present: Charles and Kathy Cole, 515 St. Ann Street, 3rd floor
Dr. and Mrs. Jack Holden, 511 St. Ann Street, 2nd floor
Kevin and Haydee Mackey, 531 St. Ann Street, 3rd floor
Mr. and Mrs. Patrick McNulty, 810 Chartres Street, 3rd floor
Louis Sahuc, 515 St. Ann Street, 2nd floor

Call to Order

The LSM Board of Directors meeting was called to order by Dr. Powell.

Adoption of Agenda

Dr. Powell recommended amending the agenda as follows:

Dr. Powell requested that #9 on the agenda, LMF Report on the Jazz museum, be moved up to #6 after Committee appointments.

Anne Redd MOVED to adopt changes to the agenda as proposed by Dr. Powell. Seconded by Rosemary Ewing. After an opportunity for discussion and public comment, the changes to the agenda were **unanimously approved**.

Approval of Board minutes

The LSM Board minutes were distributed in advance of the meeting. Will Wilton MOVED, seconded by Rosemary Ewing, to approve the May 9, 2016 LSM board minutes. **Unanimously approved**.

Election of Officers

Lana Venable made a MOTION to elect Dr. Lawrence Powell as Chairman of the Board, Dr. Janet Haedicke as Vice-Chair, Julie Breitmeyer as Treasurer (and Chair of the Irby/Finance Committee), and Anne F. Redd as Secretary. Melissa Steiner seconded the motion. **Unanimously approved**.

Dr. Powell then appointed Madlyn Bagneris, Fairleigh Cook Jackson, and Carolyn K. Morris as at-large members of the Executive Committee.

Committee appointments

The board members had expressed their preference to be on the following committees, which Dr. Powell read as follows:

Irby/Finance Committee

Julie F. Breitmeyer, Chair

Anne F. Redd, *Vice-Chair*

Lawrence N. Powell, Ph.D., *Ex-Officio*

Madlyn Bagneris

Rosemary Upshaw Ewing

D. Lee Felterman

Janet V. Haedicke

Harry S. Hardin, III

Kevin Kelly

Aleta Leckelt

Carolyn K. Morris

Melissa D. Steiner

William Wilton

Gary N. Wheat

Collections Committee

Tamra Carboni, Chair

Lawrence N. Powell, Ph.D., *Ex-Officio*

Mary C. Coulon

Sharon Turcan Gahagan

George A. Hero III

Fairleigh Cook Jackson

Anne F. Redd

Lana Sonnier Venable

LMF report on the jazz museum

LMF President Gary Brewster and Campaign fundraiser Jeff Hale gave a verbal presentation on the proposed jazz museum.

Gary Brewster said the LMF was challenged to raise money for a world-class jazz museum at the Mint. He believes this can be achieved because LSM has the world's greatest collection of early jazz artifacts. The LMF hired Jeff Hale to be the fundraiser and he has opened many doors since the project began.

Jeff Hale distributed materials related to the proposed museum to the board. Starting out as moderately-sized, the proposed exhibit has grown over time. Modern exhibits need to have interactives and educational components. The exhibit and, consequently, the budget have grown apace—the current fundraising target is in the range of \$3-5 million, and the exhibit space currently envisioned now encompasses all 3 floors. So far, Mr. Hale has engaged Shell Oil and The Hearst Foundation; he has also talked with Patricia Clarkson, Trombone Shorty, and Jon Batiste. Very recently, Mr. Hale received a letter from Wynton Marsalis agreeing to be an honorary Co-chair.

Gary Brewster added that the location of the Mint was chosen because of its proximity to Frenchmen Street in the Marigny, a music hub located on the edge of the lower Quarter.

Janet Haedicke asked if there are other jazz organizations also trying to do put together a New Orleans-based jazz exhibit. Gary Brewster said yes, there is a New Orleans Jazz Restoration Society, which has a collection, but not a building. The LMF and the Restoration Society have met and are in discussions.

Museum Director vacancy

Rennie Buras said that a permanent Museum Director must be hired and that the bylaws give the Board authority to create a Search Committee to assist in finding candidates to fill the position. The Committee will be tasked to identify three candidate, which will then be submitted (unranked) to the Lt. Governor for approval. There are specific qualifications, such as a degree in Museum Studies or a related field.

As for appointing an Interim Director, the LTG's office has been cautious. LTG staff have been working with Robert Wheat on the budget, both the general State and Irby budgets. There has also been ongoing consultation with the support groups. The Board will be an integral part of that decision-making process. The LTG's office received several applications from people interested in the interim position, and hiring a search group is also a possibility.

Rennie Buras said Charles Lovell, Steve Maklansky, and Herman Meyer have all expressed interest in the interim director position. Rosemary Ewing asked if the interim director would be eligible for the permanent position, and Rennie Buras said the Search Committee will be authorized to make that decision.

Dr. Powell will appoint a Search Committee from members of the Board very soon.

Collections Report

Janet Haedicke MOVED, seconded by Madlyn Bagneris, to suspend the usual procedure so that Director of Curatorial Services Dawn Hammatt could put forth the motions needed to approve the report. **Unanimously approved.**

Dawn Hammatt summarized the items in the report as follows:

Section I contains information regarding the proposed conservation treatment. This dress will be used in an exhibit at Historic New Orleans Collection (HNOC) which will also pay for the conservation. Tamra Carboni MOVED, seconded by Anne Redd, to approve the conservation treatment. **Unanimously approved.**

Section II includes eighteen incoming loans that will be used for two upcoming exhibitions at the Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame and Northwest Louisiana History Museum in Natchitoches. Rosemary Ewing MOVED, seconded by Janet Haedicke, to approve the incoming loans. **Unanimously approved.**

Section III consists of one outgoing loan proposal, which is the dress for the HNOC exhibition. Rosemary Ewing MOVED, seconded by Janet Haedicke, to approve the outgoing loan. **Unanimously approved.**

Section IV outlines thirteen incoming loan extensions. This section includes objects that have been on loan to the Museum for specific exhibitions and the Museum would like to continue to have these objects available. Tamra Carboni MOVED, seconded by Lana Venable, to approve the incoming loan extensions. **Unanimously approved.**

Section V concerns two outgoing loan extensions. This section includes objects that are on exhibit at other institutions that would like to continue to have them for their exhibits. Tamra Carboni MOVED, seconded by Rosemary Ewing, to approve the outgoing loan extensions. **Unanimously approved.**

Irby Report

Residential rental rates

The spreadsheet with the proposed 25% increase in all residential units for the Lower Pontalba apartments was distributed to the Board for review in advance of the meeting. Included in the spreadsheet were the proposed rent increases for the three vacant apartments: they reflect the rates proposed in Geoffrey Lutz's rent study. The spreadsheet is attached to these minutes.

Rennie Buras said the LTG's office was sympathetic to the sticker shock response to the Geoffrey Lutz report; hence, the compromise of a 25% increase.

Renne Buras also said the LTG understands tenant concerns regarding self-funded improvements to the apartments. As the spreadsheet indicates, the LTG plans to renovate and upgrade apartments where needed. Finally, according to new square footage computations of individual apartments, several units are larger than the rent rolls previously indicated. Tenants of these units have thus been receiving silent breaks on their monthly rents, often for many years. Even so, because of the rent

increases slated for this year, the LTG decided to defer adjusting upward the square footage base rent rates of affected units until the start of the next leasing year.

Discussion ensued by the residential tenants in attendance. Several objected to the rent increase, citing rodent problems, high crime in the area, and their perception their apartments were in poor condition.

Rosemary Ewing MOTIONED for the discussion to cease. Madlyn Bagneris seconded the motion, which was **unanimously approved**, and a vote was put forth to the Board.

Newly appointed Irby/Finance Chair Julie Breitmeyer read the motion. The MOTION is that the current occupied residential apartments at the Lower Pontalba building increase by a maximum of 25%, based on the current square footage. The new leases will be effective September 1, 2016 and expire June 30, 2017. Rosemary Ewing seconded the motion. **The motion passed with one dissenting vote by Will Wilton.** Will Wilton said he felt the 25% would be unfair to the tenants who moved in within the last 2 years or so because they already entered a lease with a higher rate per square footage than the tenants who have lived there for a longer time period.

Julie Breitmeyer MOTIONED that the rates for all three vacant residential units be rented based on Geoffrey Lutz' market rent assessment report. The three current vacancies are as follows:

503 St. Ann Street, 2nd floor
806 Chartres Street, 3rd floor
811 Decatur Street, 3rd floor

The report states that all 3rd floor apartments rent at a rate of \$1.87 per square foot and include the CAM charges. In addition, a flat balcony charge of \$250 per month for 3rd floor balconies will be assessed. The report also states that all 2nd floor residential apartments rent at a rate of \$2.01 per square foot and include the CAM charges. Since the 2nd floor vacancy is on a corner, the proposed balcony rate is a flat fee of \$800 per month. Anne Redd suggested the Board approve the 25% increase on the vacant apartments as well but the Board disagreed with that suggestion. They would like to see if the market will bear the rates proposed by Geoffrey Lutz. Rosemary Ewing seconded the MOTION, **which passed with one dissenting vote by Anne Redd.**

Lawrence Powell MOVED that, because the next Board meeting would not be until September, 13, 2016, the Executive Committee be given authority to review and approve or reject the residential applications for the three vacancies. Seconded by Madlyn Bagneris, the motion **unanimously approved.**

LSM properties report

Robert Wheat said the Mint is having all of the windows repaired, waterproofed and replaced. The Presbytere renovations are proceeding on schedule and should be completed by September 28th. The Cabildo renovations will be completed by mid-November and they are ahead of schedule.

Lawrence Powell asked about the moldy fascia on the Lower Pontalba building, which looks bad. Robert Wheat said LSM currently has no painters on staff so LSM will have to contract the work out.

New Business

Irby check signature authorizations

Listed below is a MOTION by LSM Business Manager Yvonne Mack to approve the following Board members for Irby check signing authorization:

A MOTION is hereby put forth to the Louisiana State Museum Board of Directors, to approve W.R. Irby signature authorizations for the following Board members:

RENNIE BURAS
JULIE BREITMEYER
JANET HAEDICKE

Currently, Robert Wheat and Dr. Powell are the only authorized people who can sign checks. Previously, Mark Tullos (former Director of LSM), Michael M. Davis (former Chairman of the Board) and Robert A. Barnett (former Irby Chair) were authorized to sign checks. However, they are no longer on the Board. If either Robert Wheat or Dr. Powell are unavailable to sign Irby checks, they cannot be processed.

Rosemary Ewing made a formal MOTION, seconded by William Wilton, to approve the above motion. **Unanimously approved.**

Signage in the French Quarter

Both Kevin Kelly and Ruth Burke suggested that LSM market their French Quarter buildings with better signage.

Rescue boat at the Presbytere

Ken Bellau spoke to the Board about what he feels is the importance of continuing to display the boat he used to rescue 400 people in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. Next to the boat is an informative and very popular video that explains the importance of the boat. Ken Bellau had heard that the boat might be moving, so he started an online petition to keep the boat where it is.

Madlyn Bagneris MOVED, seconded by Anne Redd, to adjourn the meeting. **Unanimously approved.**