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Smithsonian Institution

Office of General Counsel

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

July 7, 2022

RE: Your Request for Smithsonian Records (request number 408223474)

This responds to your request, dated and received in this Office on March 25, 2022, for the “meeting agendas and meeting minutes during Calendar Years 2020, 2021 and 2022 to date of the Smithsonian American Women’s History Museum Council.” The Smithsonian responds to requests for records in accordance with Smithsonian Directive 807 – Requests for Smithsonian Institution Information (SD 807) and applies a presumption of disclosure when processing such requests. The policy is posted on our website at <http://www.si.edu/OGC/Records-Requests>.

Enclosed are 14 pages of responsive material. Please be advised that certain information has been redacted from the enclosed documents consistent with SD 807. Information related to certain fundraising and donor-related activities has been redacted consistent with SD 807 under Exemption 4, where release of the information would likely impair the Smithsonian’s ability to raise private funds. Certain predecisional and deliberative information has been redacted consistent with SD 807 under Exemption 5. Finally, personal information, such as donor-identifying information, has been redacted consistent with SD 807 under Exemption 6, where disclosure of such information would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of the personal privacy of a third party with no overriding public interest.

This concludes the Smithsonian’s response to your request. Thank you for your interest in the Smithsonian.

Best Wishes,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "J. Sanet".

Jessica Sanet
Assistant General Counsel

Enclosure

You have the right to appeal a partial or full denial of your request. Your appeal must be in writing, addressed to the Smithsonian Institution Office of General Counsel at the address below, SIRecordsReq@si.edu, or (202) 357-4310 (fax number), and made within sixty days from the date of this response letter. Your letter must explain your reason(s) for the appeal. The Smithsonian Deputy Secretary and Chief Operating Officer will decide your appeal and will respond to you in writing. You also have the right to request mediation services from the Office of Government Information Services (OGIS), within the National Archives and Records Administration, to resolve disputes about the withholding of information. Your request for mediation should include language authorizing OGIS to make inquiries on your behalf, including the right to review all documentation that OGIS deems necessary regarding your request. You should note that you understand that any documents you provide to OGIS, except those provided in confidence, may be copied and forwarded to Smithsonian Institution officials as a part of the dispute resolution process.

SMITHSONIAN AMERICAN WOMEN'S HISTORY MUSEUM

Smithsonian American Women's History Museum

Council Meeting

Monday, September 20, 2021

1:30 – 3:30 p.m. E.S.T.

Zoom Information:

Ex. 5

AGENDA

1:30 pm	Welcome	Lisa Sasaki Secretary Bunch
1:40 pm	Introductions	All
2:10 pm	Bylaws	Secretary Bunch
2:25 pm	Governance	Secretary Bunch
2:30 pm	Director Search	Greg Bettwy
3:00 pm	Building Process	Nancy Bechtol
3:15 pm	Fundraising Congressional Update	Rob Spiller Congresswoman Maloney
3:30 pm	Meetings Concludes	Lisa Sasaki

Smithsonian American Women's History Museum

Council Meeting

Monday, September 20, 2021

1:30 pm to 3:30 pm

In attendance:

Committee members: Jane Abraham, Catharine Allgor, Ambassador Barbara Barrett, Mary Boies, Tory Burch, Lynda Carter, Jean Case, Melissa Fetter, Edna Kane-Williams, Billie-Jean King, Congresswoman Carolyn B. Maloney, Singleton McAllister, Craig Newmark, Assemblywoman Crystal Peoples-Stokes, Penny Pritzker, Abbe Raven, Vivian Riefberg, Martine Rothblatt, S. Mona Sinha, Cara Sylvester, Congresswoman Jackie Walorski

SI staff: Secretary Lonnie G. Bunch III, Rob Spiller, Lisa Sasaki, Nancy Bechtol, Greg Bettwy, Karri Brady, Jill Kennedy, Kat Armstrong [Executive Director and Global Practice Leader, Arts and Culture, Russell Reynolds & Associates]

1:30 pm

Housekeeping

Lisa Sasaki

Lisa Sasaki, Interim Director for the Smithsonian American Women's History Museum (SAWHM) welcomed all attendees to the meeting and invited Secretary Lonnie G. Bunch III to give opening remarks.

Welcome

Secretary Lonnie G. Bunch III

Secretary Bunch welcomed attendees and thanked Lisa Sasaki for her leadership. He remarked that success of the National Museum of African American History and Culture (NMAAHC) rested upon the council—gifted people who opened doors and gave their time and energy. He added, the success of the SAWHM will be built on the council's success and engagement.

Secretary Bunch continued by saying the council and museum leadership are charged with a special duty: to turn our shared passion to the practical, sometimes mundane and challenging process of building a museum. Secretary Bunch said he hopes "this museum can be worthy of the history of the women whose stories we want to tell—stories that needs to be told."

He added that, in addition to building the museum, we need a collection undergirded by rigorous scholarship; a staff of visionaries; and to engage all Americans in this journey.

Secretary Bunch outlined three key actions required to build a transformative museum: first, create a powerfully engaged and connected council; second, hire a founding director with the council's guidance—Jean Case will represent the council on the search committee and brief the council regularly—and third, select a site informed and shaped by our shared vision.

The final decision on the museum’s site rests with the Board of Regents. Ambassador Barrett will serve as the council’s representative on the building committee and will brief the council regularly.

1:40 pm

Introductions

All

Ex. 5 Lisa Sasaki announced Ex. 5

She then invited council members to introduce themselves and answer the question: what inspired you to join this council?

Jane Abrams remarked that after 18 months of studying the untold stories of women as part of the Congressional Commission tasked with researching the feasibility of an American women’s history museum, creating this museum felt more urgent and important than ever.

Catherine Allgor shared that, as a historian devoted to the study of women and politics and a biographer of Dolly Madison, she is here for three reasons: as a woman’s historian; as a professional public historian; and as a board member of the National Women’s History Museum.

Ambassador Barbara Barrett stated that, based on her experiences ranging from work to increase women’s representation in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) to serving as the 25th Secretary of the Air Force and United States Ambassador to Finland, she has concluded that we need an institution as capable as the women it represents.

Mary Boise shared that as part of the Congressional Commission, she was originally opposed to a women’s museum—but realized that, in 200 years of history, we have not given women their due. She was inspired by members of the commission, who put aside political differences and showed that we can come together to make this happen.

Tory Burch was inspired by a conversation at her family dinner table in 1972, when she learned that her mother had just gotten a credit card in her name. She realized she wanted to change the dynamic for women in this country. In her work for the Tory Burch Foundation, Burch found the most inspiring stories came from women who are not known.

Lynda Carter shared that as a Washington, D.C. resident, she has spent so much time at the Smithsonian for nearly 40 years and wants to give back to the institution.

Jean Case remarked that the common thread throughout her career has been empowering women. She was inspired to join the council by her experiences as a woman in the world, traveling and realizing that women everywhere need to be empowered and recognized for their contributions.

Melissa Fetter stated that when one visits NMAAHC, one sees the joy and possibility of a modern museum built from the ground up—the technology and the voices we can incorporate as never before. Who wouldn’t want to be a part of a project like that?

Edna Kane-Williams is excited to represent older women in this country and do justice to the memory of AARP's founder, Ethel Percy Andrus. She sees the impact NMAAHC has had on all people and wants to build something like that for American women.

Billie-Jean King loves history, saying "the more you know about history, the more you know about yourself, and the more you can help shape the future." She added that the council is meeting on the anniversary [September 20, 1973] of her tennis match with Bobby Riggs at the Astrodome and thanked the council for including sports in this effort—an important platform for advocacy and change.

Congresswoman Carolyn B. Maloney has worked for decades to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment. She emphasized the importance of seeing women represented at the Smithsonian and on the National Mall—because nothing could be more unifying than recognizing the mothers of half the population of America.

Singleton McAllister remarked that, in her time at USAID, the missions that most impacted her included programs for women and children. These experiences inspired her to join the council.

Craig Newmark has been inspired by his work with several tech-focused missions to elevate and empower women, including Wikipedia edit-a-thons, Girls Who Code, cybersecurity training programs and work with the Girl Scouts of America and Ms Magazine.

Assemblywoman Crystal Peoples-Stokes shared that, as one of the first women (and one of the first women of color) majority leaders of state government, she knows the value of history—it can help decrease the lack of civility in this country. As Malcolm X said, "it is history that is best qualified to reward our research."

Penny Pritzker acknowledged the under representation of women from her experience service on corporate and philanthropic boards over the years. She stated that it is essential to share the stories and impact of women in our country.

Abbe Raven remarked that the highlight of her time as A&E chairman was founding the History Channel, which provided an opportunity to work with the Smithsonian. As a board member and chair of the National Museum of American History, she has seen young people inspired and changed by the stories they encounter at the Smithsonian.

Vivian Riefberg was raised in a household with a grandfather who encouraged his granddaughters to go to college—she understands the value of women's educational and economic empowerment and has been gratified by helping women succeed.

Martine Rothblatt quoted Audrey Hepburn: "There is nothing really impossible—the word itself says I'm Possible." Secretary Bunch's efforts to overcome impediments and roadblocks to build NMAAHC inspire hope for the future of this museum, which creates a platform for stories like Pauli Murray and other icons of women's history.

S. Mona Sinha has been an advocate for women throughout her career including as chair of Women Moving Millions. She remarked that inequality is not a partisan issue—we need to do this work and together, we can get this done.

Cara Sylvester was inspired to join the council effort professionally—as a storyteller and marketer, who understands the power of *how* a story is told—and personally. As mother of two young girls, she cannot wait to walk the halls of the museum with her daughters.

Congresswoman Jackie Walorski remarked that she has voted for a museum dedicated to women’s history for nine years and ran for Congress because of her experience reporting on domestic violence. She discovered what it meant to advocate for people—and for women's rights in particular—and wants to continue that work.

2:10 pm

Bylaws

Lisa Sasaki

Lisa Sasaki introduced the bylaws for council approval, with one resolution for the council to vote upon. She stated that Ex. 5

Ms. Sasaki proposed the one change to the initial bylaws: to increase the number of council members from 25 to 29. The motion was moved, seconded and passed unanimously.

Ms. Sasaki introduced delegation of authority as stated in the bylaws: the council can make a resolution to delegate authority on key issues, including budget and staffing, to the museum’s founding director under Article II, Section 6 of the bylaws. The resolution to delegate authority under Sections 1-3 to the director was moved, seconded and passed unanimously.

Lynda Carter asked for clarification on the scope of the museum. Secretary Bunch responded that the museum’s purview includes all women that touched or shaped America, regardless of location, citizenship or historical period. In other words, the museum may include contributions made by women living in or from other countries.

2:25 pm

Governance

Lisa Sasaki

Lisa Sasaki asked that those interested in the role of Vice Chair or Chair of the council reach out to her directly to indicate interest and schedule a conversation about full roles and responsibilities. The council will vote on council leadership at the next meeting.

2:30 pm

Director Search Update

Greg Bettwy

Greg Bettwy, Chief of Staff to the Secretary, provided an outline of the hiring process and advised that there will be a separate meeting (to be scheduled) dedicated to conducting due diligence with the Council on the founding director position.

The Secretary holds ultimate authority on director selection, with guidance from Undersecretary for Science and Research Ellen Stofan who will be chairing the section committee. Under Mr. Bettwy’s leadership, the Smithsonian has formed a selection committee that will recommend two to three finalists. The council will have the opportunity to provide feedback through the due diligence process and through Jean Case, who is serving as the council’s representative on the selection committee.

Mr. Bettwy introduced Kat Armstrong of Russel Reynolds & Associates, who will help guide the search for candidates. She stated that, in addition to advice on experience and competencies, the search committee welcomes the council's feedback and advice to determine:

- What are the top priorities for this director?
- What specific attributes in terms of vision and/or strategy are most important for a founding director, who will define this role for the future?

3:00 pm Building Process

Nancy Bechtol

Director of Smithsonian Facilities Nancy Bechtol outlined the Smithsonian's previous experience building two new museums simultaneously: The National Museum of the American Indian in Washington, D.C., and the Steven Udvar-Hazy Center. She expects that building the Smithsonian American Women's History Museum (SAWHM) and the National Museum of the American Latino (NAML) will be similar.

Site selection is a key next step. Ayers Saint Gross, in consultation with Moya Design and Gallagher & Associates, has been contracted by the Smithsonian to conduct a combined site evaluation study for SAWHM and NMAL. The evaluation study, begun in August 2021, will include focus groups, audience surveys and input from key stakeholders—a prime opportunity for council support.

The Smithsonian will have one year to determine the museum's site from 24 potential spaces. The Board of Regents holds ultimate authority on site selection; the committee will present site options to the Regents by late 2022 (summer).

Key challenges include a tight timeline: one year for building development; at least two years for program development; design; *then* construction—up to a decade of work.

Vivian Riefberg asked what it would take to do this in half the time, noting the need to recognize women today. Secretary Bunch responded by stating the need to prioritize the excellence of these museums and encouraged the council to find ways to be efficient when we have a site and a framework that we know will interpret the history and mission correctly rather than attempting to cut short planning, design, and construction phases.

Secretary Bunch urged the council to consider: What can we do in the meantime, virtually? What can we do by traveling across the country? How can we collaborate with other museums/institutions? Can we raise the money to hire strong and significant staff? These questions need to be answered, first and foremost.

3:15 pm Funding Update

Rob Spiller

Rob Spiller, Assistant Secretary for Advancement, outlined fundraising needs for the museum and estimated based off of the National Museum of African American History and Culture that Ex. 5

Fundraising is a function of engagement, and the council has an opportunity to engage and build an advancement plan that will reach out and connect with donors where they are. One key step will be building a membership program early in the process.

Mr. Spiller and the advancement team will provide more details on fundraising goals and strategy in future meetings.

Ex. 6

Appropriations Update

Congresswoman Maloney

Congresswoman Maloney provided an update on appropriations: The House of Representatives has passed a bill to meet the Smithsonian's request for appropriations—including \$2.5 million for salaries and expenses, and \$5 million to support the American Women's History Initiative, which will lay the groundwork for the museum. The bill is with the Senate for approval.

3:30 pm

Meetings Ends

Lisa Sasaki

Lisa Sasaki concluded the meeting with a few important updates: a contact sheet for council members will be circulated shortly and an orientation to the Smithsonian for council members unfamiliar with the institution's governance and acronyms will be scheduled soon.

She reminded council members to refer to the welcome packet for ways to handle incoming requests from those wishing to support the museum.

She concluded the meeting by asking council members to note key upcoming dates:

- Second council meeting: Monday, January 11, 2022
- Third council meeting: TBD March 2022
- Fourth council meeting: Monday, July 11, 2022

Meeting adjourned.

SMITHSONIAN AMERICAN WOMEN'S HISTORY MUSEUM

Smithsonian American Women's History Museum

Council Meeting

Tuesday, January 11, 2022

1:30 – 3:40 p.m. E.T.

Zoom Information:

Ex. 5

AGENDA

1:30 pm	Introduction	Lisa Sasaki
1:35 pm	Remarks Introduction of Leadership Vote on Council Chair	Secretary Bunch
1:45 pm	American Women's History Initiative Update	Jean Case
1:55 pm	Fundraising Update	Rob Spiller
2:05 pm	Site Selection Process	Nancy Bechtol Luanne Green Jessica Leonard
2:50 pm	SAWHM Virtual Museum + the Cooper Hewitt Smithsonian Design Museum's Interaction Lab	Carolyn Royston Rachel Ginsberg
3:20 pm	Women in Political History Video: American Women's History Initiative + Bloomberg News New Voices Program	
3:30 pm	Meeting Concludes	Lisa Sasaki

SMITHSONIAN AMERICAN WOMEN'S HISTORY MUSEUM

Smithsonian American Women's History Museum

Council Meeting

Tuesday, January 11, 2022

1:30 pm to 3:30 pm

In attendance:

Council members: Jane Abraham, Catherine Allgor, Ambassador Barbara Barrett, Mary Boies, Tory Burch, Bridget Bush, Lynda Carter, Jean Case, Rosario Dawson, Edna Kane-Williams, Becca Damante (Legislative Assistant to Congresswoman Carolyn B. Maloney), Singleton McAllister, Craig Newmark, Assemblywoman Crystal Peoples-Stokes, Jennifer Tuttle (Assistant to Assemblywoman Crystal Peoples-Stokes) Penny Pritzker, Abbe Raven, Vivian Riefberg, Martine Rothblatt, S. Mona Sinha, Cara Sylvester, Alice Walton

SI staff: Secretary Lonnie G. Bunch III, Rob Spiller, Lisa Sasaki, Nancy Bechtol, Greg Bettwy, Karri Brady, Jill Kennedy, Maya Colorado, Eduardo Díaz, Elise Walter, Rachel Ginsberg, Blake Schreiner, Carolyn Royston

External: Luanne Green (President, Ayers Saint Gross), Jessica Leonard (Planning, Architecture, Ayers Saint Gross)

Welcome, Lisa Sasaki

- Lisa Sasaki welcomed council members and introduced Smithsonian staff members including Eduardo Díaz interim director of the National Museum of the American Latino (NMAL)
- Sasaki gave a brief preview of the March meeting, which will be in person in Washington, D.C., in celebration of Women's History Month
 - March 29: An informal reception at council member Ex. 6
 - March 30: A full day of meetings and site visitations as well as a dinner hosted at the Smithsonian Castle by Sasaki and Secretary Bunch

Secretary's Remarks, Secretary Lonnie G. Bunch III

- The Secretary thanked Sasaki for her exceptional work and the council for their commitment and dedication to this project
- He welcomed Bridget Bush and Alice Walton, new members joining today and formally welcomed Craig Newmark for joining since the last meeting
- The museum is a top priority, and cannot be accomplished without this council and the important guidance they provide

- This is a tremendous opportunity to rethink what museums look like – a new blend of tradition and innovation that shines a leading light in the 21st century
- The Secretary acknowledged and commended the vote on Penny Pritzker for Council Chair – emphasizing the importance of strong council leadership with a strong executive committee
- He acknowledged the proposed Vice Chairs: Exs. 5 and 6 [REDACTED]
- Pritzker thanked the Secretary for his exemplary leadership and expressed her commitment to diversity, nonpartisanship and responsiveness
- **Sasaki requested a vote for Council Chair; Mary Boies moved, with multiple people seconding the motion (Catherine Allgor, Abbe Raven)**
 - According to pending by-laws, the chair is approved with Majority council vote, then confirmed by vote of the Board of Regents
 - **Penny Pritzker was unanimously approved as Council Chair**
- Sasaki explained that Ex. 5 [REDACTED]
- Sasaki is working with Ex. 5 [REDACTED]

American Women’s History Initiative (AWHI) Update, Jean Case

- As the current co-chair of the American Women’s History Initiative (AWHI), Case shared highlights of AWHI
 - It was created in 2018 to lay the foundation for the Smithsonian’s work in women’s history and a head start for a possible museum. It is also a catalyst to keep work across the Institution going
 - The initiative has raised nearly Ex 4 [REDACTED]
 - Groundbreaking AWHI work includes exhibitions *Girlhood: It’s complicated* at the National Museum of American History and *Votes for Women* at the National Portrait Gallery; a book on women’s history; and ongoing Wikipedia edit-a-thons
 - Tey Marianna Nunn was hired as the initiative’s director and will serve as important bridge to the Institution’s work

Fundraising Update, Rob Spiller

- Spiller thanked the council for their commitment to this country and this important work
- He noted that Ex. 5 [REDACTED] for SAWHM and NMAL, including:
 - Ex. 5 [REDACTED]
 - Ex. 5 [REDACTED]
 - Ex. 5 [REDACTED]

- Karri Brady reported that fundraising is at Ex 4
- This includes new commitments from Ex 6
- An end of year mailing was sent to thank all donors who have given since the legislation passed and to ask for their continued partnership
- Brady reviewed a council member toolkit with a one pager, talking points and templates for member use
- Brady reminded members that the director search was underway and that the process still welcomed suggestions from council members
- Council questions and discussion confirmed that:
 - Wikipedia efforts will continue as part of museum programming
 - SAWHM is seeking funding for both bricks and mortar and programming
 - There will be opportunities for cultivation events, tours and dinners as the world opens back up and council members will be encouraged to attend and host
 - Please reach out with questions or ideas to staff for additional materials that could support the council's outreach on SAWHM's behalf

Site Selection Process, Nancy Bechtol, Smithsonian Facilities

- Bechtol provided an overview of site selection process:
 - 24 sites identified for study, including two named by legislation (Monument site, South Capitol site)
 - Architecture and engineering firm Ayers Saint Gross has now moved into focus group and evaluation phase
 - Goal: Ex. 5
- Progress to date toward goal includes:
 - Refined list of sites based on evaluation criteria
 - Early analysis of the Arts and Industry Building (AIB)
 - Conducting stakeholder outreach to identify needs of expected audience
- Next steps: Ex. 5
- Bechtol introduced Ayers Saint Gross, the architecture and engineering firm contracted for site selection

Luanne Greene, President, Ayers Saint Gross

- Ex. 5

SAWHM Virtual Museum + the Cooper Hewitt Smithsonian Design Museum’s Interaction Lab, Rachel Ginsberg, director of the Interaction Lab at Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum (CHSDM)

- Introduction of team: Carolyn Royston, Chief Experience Officer, CHSDM and Blake Shriner, Digital Project Manager for Interaction Lab/CHSDM

The Interaction Lab will be working with SAWHM to Ex. 5 [redacted]

- Key questions:
 - Ex. 5 [redacted]
 - [redacted]
 - [redacted]
 - [redacted]
 - [redacted]
 - [redacted]
- Interaction Lab is an open and participatory process to develop prototypes that reimagine the museum experience; includes modeling evolving museum experience, commissions, interactive discussions, thought leadership
- The goal Ex. 5 [redacted]
- The Lab Ex. 5 [redacted]
 - [redacted]
- Discussion: Ex. 5 [redacted]
 - Ex. 5 [redacted]
 - [redacted]
 - [redacted]
 - [redacted]
 - [redacted]
 - [redacted]
 - [redacted]
 - [redacted]
- Interaction Lab’s process Ex. 5 [redacted]
 - Ex. 5 [redacted]
 - [redacted]
 - [redacted]
 - [redacted]
- How to get involved
 - Schedule interviews with individual council members

- Share thoughts by email
- Expect further updates in upcoming council meetings

Meeting Final Q&A

- If council members **Ex. 5**
- At March meeting, **Ex. 5** an effort will also be made to ask members for topics to cover at future meetings
- It was recommended council members should watch the 60 minutes interview on AI generating conversations with Holocaust survivors [\[LINK\]](#)
 - Consider: **Ex. 5**

Meeting Moment: *Women in Politics* video created for Bloomberg New Voices and American Women’s History Initiative event. [\[LINK\]](#)

Lisa Sasaki, interim director of SAWHM, adjourned the meeting.

KEY FUTURE DATES:

Washington, D.C., Council Welcome Reception

Evening of Tuesday, March 29, 2022

In person, Washington, D.C.

SAWHM Council Meeting #3 + Museum Site Visits

Wednesday, March 30, 2022

In person, Washington, D.C.

SAWHM Council Dinner

Wednesday, March 30, 2022

In person, Washington, D.C.

SAWHM Council Meeting #4

Monday, July 11, 2022

Virtual

Fall SAWHM Council Meeting

Tuesday, October 18, 2022

Virtual