



**Lowell Observatory Advisory Board
Meeting of the Executive Committee**

Tuesday, February 2, 2021 at 2:00 p.m.

I. Introduction and Virtual Meeting Etiquette

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Michael Beckage. Present via ZOOM were Executive Committee Members: Leo Crowley, Donna Weistrop, Kay Corbin, Tom Ensign, John Giovale, Joseph Marcus, Pam Ross (Secretary), David Connell, David Chase and Drew Barringer. Also present via ZOOM: Sole Trustee Lowell Putnam, Brooke Miner, Palmer Nackard, Erica Broman, Dennis Hollars, Joe Marcus, David Price, David Eicher, Lisa Actor (Deputy Director for Development – DDD), Stephen Riggs (Development Manager), Anne LaBruzzo (Deputy Director for Administration - DDA), Michael West (Deputy Director for Science - DDS), Danielle Adams (Deputy Director for Marketing), Kyler Kuehn (Deputy Director for Technology) and Jeffrey Hall (ex-officio). Mattie Harrington took meeting minutes.

II. Millennium Fund

Beckage reported the Millennium fund balance as of Dec 2020 was \$2,191,167 after disbursements for 2020 totaling \$68,000. The Director made his first request of 2021 in the amount of \$8,980 to fund a new Firewall for the IT network. The request was approved.

III. Trustee's Comments

Trustee Lowell Putnam reported that financial strategies are being developed for 2021 and he is awaiting more information from BNY before moving forward. There is no planned draw from the Trust this year which will allow some growth in 2021. The current plan is to assess the trust balance against needs in 2022 - 2023.

IV. Director's Report

Director Hall gave a brief overview of current Lowell finances referencing the complete overview done during the Investment Committee meeting in January. Hall is taking input from BNY, Vigilant, the AB and LOF, and implementing as appropriate. He is watching the COVID numbers as they begin to decline. Predictions for what summer will bring are varied, so he will continue to follow the science and consider a possible phase 2 re-opening timeframe.

V. MARS Project

Tom Ensign gave a brief overview of the Marketing and Revenue Strategy team. He stressed the importance of delivering on the Brand Promise so that our message continues to support our actions. There were 3+ million viewers of Lowell Observatory content last year (2020) which led to extraordinary brand awareness. Brand equity needs to be protected with consistent messaging. Since the Lowell Brand Promise was approved more than 4 years ago, Danielle Adams (DD Marketing and Communication) will work with the MARS team to monitor our brand promise for continuity across all communications.

VI. Marketing and Communications

Danielle Adams gave a brief overview of the new website design. Expectations can be checked via the beta site where there is new content for all the webpages. The new website will link to the Lowell Observatory Foundation website and will include a link for researchers.

VII. Development

Lisa Actor reported there is currently 14.5 million dollars to be raised against the goal previously set for the Astronomy Discovery Center (ADC). The first issue of the Lowell Observer will be dedicated to the ADC, and the plan is to have the approved biographies for the Diverse Universe Wall ready on the website so donors will be able to see what is available.

The 31-inch telescope is no longer operational, and the astronomers are asking for a new 1-meter telescope to replace it. They would use the existing dome to house the new telescope.

Possible preservation of the Lampland Dome is being considered. The DON has funded a study to assess the cost of preservation and a campaign to raise the funds.

VIII. Putnam Collection Center

Joe Marcus reported that Lauren Amundson and Stacey Christen attended a virtual conference (Digital Directions 2020) and have begun training with the digital preservation software company Preservice. The fall fund raiser led by Rachel Edelstein raised \$22,000 to purchase a Zeutschel Zeta Book Scanner for digitization of fragile items. It will be used for Lampland's radiometry books and photographs and for Percival Lowell's handwritten manuscripts.

Stephen Levine and Lauren Amundson joined a group focused on the preservation, use and digitization of glass plate negatives. The monthly ZOOM meetings will feature the status of collections, opportunities for grant funding and digitization methods.

The PCC partnered with the Northern Arizona Heritage Response Coalition which resulted in a \$2,500 grant from the Arizona Historical Records Advisory Board to purchase and cache disaster response supplies.

Kevin Schindler and Lauren Amundson have prepared an article which features the Slipher-Hubble correspondence for an upcoming American Institute of Physics History Newsletter.

The Director is now including archives and history blurbs in his weekly updates to the AB and Staff. They are looking at further ideas to promote the PCC internally and externally. There is support for a history colloquium series. The Director also suggested presentations at Cosmic Coffees.

IX. Lowell Observatory Foundation

Donna Weistrop gave a brief overview of the state of the endowments as follows:

- 8/31/2020 balance of \$8.34 million
- 1/03/2021 balance of \$8.87 million
- 1/31/2021 balance of \$8.47 million
- 2/01/2021 balance of \$8.55 million

The Foundation board approved a four percent endowment disbursement for 2021 plus a 0.25% administrative fee to underwrite costs.

Two new subcommittees of the Foundation were formed:

- 1) Membership Committee: John Menke will chair the committee to review the size and composition of the LOF Board.
- 2) Strategic Planning Committee: Ginger Giovale will chair the committee to plan for future LOF endowment growth.

Joe Marcus Cometary Fund: Stephen Levine and Nicholas Moskovitz have been granted an extension for use of funds given in 2020 for work already begun but not yet completed. New Grants were awarded to David Schleicher and Amanda Bosh for 2021.

Trantow assets have been fully transferred to the foundation less \$1500 in anticipated fees.

X. Future Meeting Calendar, Other Business

The next Executive Committee meeting is expected be held at the end of April with date to be forthcoming. The June AB summer meeting is scheduled for June 24 – 26. There is no information yet as to whether that will be live or via ZOOM.

The meeting was adjourned.