



**Lowell Observatory Advisory Board
Meeting of the Executive Committee (EC)
Thursday 8 June 2023 at 2:00 p.m.**

I. Welcome, Millennium Fund and Minutes:

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Michael Beckage. Present via ZOOM were: Executive Committee Members Tom Ensign and Drew Barringer. EC members present in person were: Michael Beckage, Donna Weistrop, Erica Broman, David Connell, David Chase, Leo Crowley, Palmer Nackard, John Giovale, Jim McCarthy, Kay Corbin, Joe Marcus, Executive Director Jeff Hall, and Sole Trustee Lowell Putnam. Others present were: Danielle Adams, Kyler Kuehn, Amanda Bosh, Lisa Actor, Christopher Ford, Angel Fuentes, Kent Colbath, Martin De Wet, Sarah Burcher, Allan Affeldt, Anne LaBruzzo, Christoph Keller, Marjorie McClanahan, Bruce Kosaveach, George Jacoby, Stephen Riggs, Stephen Brown, and Stephen Levine. Mattie Harrington recorded the meeting minutes.

Beckage reported that the balance in the Millennium Fund was \$ 1,991,099 at the end of May 2023. At the January EC meeting, a request for \$40,000 to support Philanthropy Department travel for the Astronomy Discovery Center (ADC) was approved. There are currently no new requests.

Minutes for the Executive Committee meeting on 9 March 2023 were approved as written with a minor correction noted.

II. Trustee's Remarks:

Sole Trustee Lowell Putnam welcomed everyone to the 2023 Advisory Board meeting and thanked them for coming. He noted that there is a lot to be discussed during meetings over the coming days.

III. Executive Director's Update:

Executive Director Hall noted that there are many updates since the beginning of 2023 and details will be provided at the Advisory Board meeting on Friday 9 June 2023. Hall offered congratulations for completion of the Astronomy Discovery Center capital campaign. The ADC is expected to open near the end of 2024.

Lowell Discovery Telescope partners M.O.U.s (Memorandums of Understanding) are coming up for renewal. Toledo will not be renewing their partnership. Hall noted that we need to hit attendance targets going forward to help with the sustainability scenario. A search committee for the Executive Director's position needs to be put in place so that the search can begin.

IV. Operations and ADC Update:

Amanda Bosh (Chief Operations Officer) reported that the Strategic Plan is a work in progress. Surveys indicated that shared values of the observatory are a high point. NPOI is currently in a no cost extension, which ends on June 30, 2023. Only basic maintenance is being performed.

Snowfall in 2023 was 310 inches. One of the snowplow trucks is out of commission and we will lose the service of another one that belongs to NPOI.

We are currently assessing candidate providers as the observatory looks to combine insurance and payroll. Insurance, specifically for fire protection, will be costly. We are looking into the Community Wildfire Prevention Grant process. The City of Flagstaff is offering \$100K as matching funds that are available, and the DON (Director's Opportunity Network) may have funding available to help.

A presentation on the ADC will be given at the Advisory Board meeting on Friday.

V. Marketing & Revenue:

Danielle Adams gave an overview of the status of Marketing. A detailed presentation will be given at the Advisory Board meeting. Adams stated we are meeting our goals/numbers that were previously forecasted. The observatory has been fully open for 15 months since closing for the pandemic. Sales in the gift shop are averaging a little over \$7.00 per guest. The target is \$9.00 per guest. Sales so far this year in the gift shop total approximately \$90K.

Adams noted that marketing for the ADC should include extensive promotion.

VI. Lowell Observatory Foundation:

Donna Weistrop (Chair, LOF) provided an overview of the status of the Lowell Observatory Foundation Trust. The current balance is \$9.6 million, which is up from \$9.3 million in January. Market gains are slowly bringing the balance back toward \$10 million.

There have been some changes at Vigilant Capital, the company that advises the Foundation Trust. Vigilant has been acquired by High Tower Investment. The Vigilant team that has been handling the Foundation Trust will continue to do so.

Discussion took place regarding the need to further formalize the procedure for transferring donor gifts to help ensure those gifts are applied where intended.

Donna Weistrop will be leaving the role of Chair of the Foundation, and Marjorie McClanahan will be taking Donna's place as Chair. George Putnam, III has agreed to remain as Vice Chair, and David Connell will be returning to the Foundation Board as a Trustee.

A motion was made to approve the changes to the Foundation Board members – Marjorie McClanahan as Chair, George Putnam, III as Vice Chair and David Connell as a returning Trustee. The motion was approved.

VII. Chief Philanthropy Officer Search (CPO):

Erica Broman reported that there were seven (7) search firms considered, and the firm chosen was Korn Ferry. Korn Ferry visited the Lowell campus in May and met with several groups at the observatory. They are now in active search mode and ready to move forward finding candidates for the CPO position. The firm expects to help us find someone to fill the position by the end of the year.

VIII. Bylaws:

Proposed revision of the Advisory Board bylaws was discussed. The changes are regarding the language of the diversity statement. Draft revised language was reviewed, and a motion was made to approve the changes. The motion was approved. Before any changes take effect, they must be reviewed and approved by the full advisory board at a later meeting.

The Bylaws state that the maximum number of members of the Executive Committee is 12, which we currently exceed. A possible change to this language was discussed.

IX. AB Business Meeting on June 10:

The agenda for the Advisory Board Business meeting on Saturday 10 June 2023 was discussed.

X. Other Business:

The next Executive Committee meeting is scheduled for October 25, 2023