



**Lowell Observatory Advisory Board
Meeting of the Executive Committee (EC)
Tuesday October 31, 2023 at 10:00 a.m.**

I. Welcome, Millennium Fund, and Minutes:

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Michael Beckage. Present were Executive Committee Members Michael Beckage, Drew Barringer, David Chase, Kay Corbin, John Giovale, Jim McCarthy, Brook Miner, Palmer Nackard, Pam Ross, Donna Weistrop, Erica Broman, Leo Crowley, Joe Marcus, Pat Quinn, Executive Director Jeff Hall, and Sole Trustee Lowell Putnam. Also, present were Lisa Actor, Amanda Bosh, Christoph Keller, Kyler Kuehn, Anne LaBruzzo, and Stephen Levine. Pam Ross and Mattie Harrington recorded the meeting minutes.

Beckage reported that the balance in the Millennium Fund was \$2,008,097 at the end of September and \$83,991 is available for disbursement in 2023. Funding for projects totaling \$58,000 has been approved thus far. Amanda Bosh submitted a request for the \$25,991 in remaining funds to help offset the cost of a new snowplow truck. The request was approved.

Minutes for the Executive Committee meeting on 8 June 2023 were approved as written.

II. Election of Officers:

Beckage announced that he has accepted the role of Chairperson of the Science and Technology Committee of the Advisory Board and is retiring as Chair of the Executive Committee. Palmer Nackard was nominated as the new Chair of the Executive Committee. Pam Ross accepted the nomination for another term as Secretary. The election was held, and Palmer Nackard was elected Chairman with Pam Ross as Secretary.

III. Trustee's Remarks:

Sole Trustee Lowell Putnam thanked Michael for his service on the Executive Committee and for accepting his new role. He also thanked Palmer and Pam for accepting their roles. He provided some additional information on the Science and Technology Committee. It has become clear that technology is dependent on science, so science needs to take the lead as driver for that committee to make it more effective. A new science vision must be crafted for acceptance and support both internally and externally. The trustee will be working with Jeff and Amanda on

budgets for 2024. Pat Quinn and the Marketing committee will be developing a job description for the new lead Marketing position.

IV. Executive Director's Update:

Jeff Hall (Executive Director) is working on a framework for vision and direction to assist the Observatory following his retirement. Staff are working to build communication buzz around the Astronomy Discovery Center (ADC). Groups from the community have toured the site and are beginning to understand the scope, and there is great excitement from tourism groups. The 2024 budget is in process. Key issues for 2024 are cash flow (bills vs. pledge flow), and sustainability. It appears possible to manage next year without additional burden on the line of credit. There are some revised sustainability projections and Jeff will provide details at the Advisory Board and Investment Committee meetings which take place January 28-30 in Phoenix.

V. Operations and ADC Update:

Amanda Bosh (Chief Operations Officer) reported that an RFP (Request for Proposal) for a national PR firm is in the works to get exposure for the ADC. Cody Half-Moon (Marketing Director) is currently leading the marketing group while we look for a new Chief Marketing Officer. We are also searching for a new website provider as the one we were using is no longer in business.

Current major ADC projects include: convening an ADC joint Ops working group, hiring an ADC site/facility manager, getting the building weather-tight by December 2023 (Dave Sawyer), working on two films for the Lowell Universe Theater (Samantha Gorney), integration of Lowell history in the ADC, issuing contracts for the exhibits (Dave Noble), staying on schedule for completion of construction by October 2024, and planning lead donor previews on 8 November 2024.

We had a record number of 2200 on-site attendees for the partial annular eclipse on 14 October 2023. We are working on preparations for the April 2024 partial eclipse in Flagstaff.

Jelena Lane is taking on coordination of the ADC Opening celebrations.

Facilities update: Mars Hill Road is newly paved. Forest thinning is still TBD. There was a small brushfire on 10/28 behind the Marketing building. We are expecting another snowy winter and will add two new plow trucks to the fleet to replace the two retired earlier this year.

VI. Philanthropy Update:

Lisa Actor (Chief Philanthropy Officer) reported that the total funds raised year to date are \$11.1 million. The annual fund is at \$210,287 (60% of goal \$350,000). Membership is at \$314,110 (89% of goal \$350,000).

ADC Fundraising Status:

- \$57,260,897 (107% of construction and outfitting goal)
- \$3,877,262 for ADC Endowment (which is 55% of \$7 million goal)
- Includes \$5,600,000 from the State of Arizona

We have a challenge to raise \$1 million to sponsor the ADC dark sky lighting and dark sky lighting exhibit in honor of Jeff Hall. All funds raised will go toward the ADC endowment.

VII. Lowell Observatory Foundation (LOF):

Donna Weistrop provided an overview of the status of the Lowell Observatory Foundation Trust. The current balance is \$9.51 million, which is down from \$9.6 million in June 2023. The total distribution for 2024 will be \$378,879.

Vigilant Capital has reported that despite a business slowdown, they are optimistic for 2024.

Prospective new LOF trustees are under consideration. The next LOF meeting will be 20 January 2024.

VIII. Chief Philanthropy Officer (CPO) and Executive Director (ED) Search Committees:

Erica Broman reported that the CPO search is nearing completion. The CPO search committee hopes to recommend candidates soon with the goal of having someone hired by January 2024. The ED search committee is working to identify a search firm. Three firms are under consideration and the committee intends to make a recommendation soon.

IX. Other Business and Bylaws:

Beckage reported that proposed revisions to the Advisory Board Bylaws are still under consideration and will be on the agenda for future EC meetings. Any changes to the bylaws must be reviewed and approved by the full Advisory Board at the next annual meeting.

The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be held on 28 January 2024 at 2:00 p.m. in conjunction with the Advisory Board and Investment Committee meetings at the Wigwam Resort.

The Annual Meeting of the Advisory Board will take place on Mars Hill, Friday/Saturday, June 7-8, 2024. The Executive Committee will meet on Thursday, June 6 at 2:00 p.m.