

**MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE
AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY
PLANETARIUM AUTHORITY**

September 28, 2021
Zoom Conference Call
10:30 a.m.

Directors Present: Planetarium Authority Chairman Katheryn Patterson; Alfred C. Cerullo, III; Ross Sandler

Directors Absent: None

AMNH Staff Present: Dan Slippen, Executive Director for the American Museum of Natural History Planetarium Authority ("Planetarium Authority"); Jackie Powers, Pro Bono Counsel; Milton Yuen, Controller of AMNH; and Robert Hurley, Associate Controller of AMNH

Call to Order

Planetarium Authority Chairman Katheryn Patterson called the meeting to order and welcomed all those in attendance.

Approval of Minutes

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Directors in attendance unanimously approved the minutes of the September 22, 2020 meeting of the Directors of the American Museum of Natural History Planetarium Authority in the form included as part of the September 28, 2021 Board book, which was previously distributed to the Board.

Approval of the FY21 Audited Financials

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Directors in attendance unanimously approved the FY21 Audited Financial Statements for the American Museum of Natural History Planetarium Authority in the form included as part of the September 28, 2021 Board book, which was previously distributed to the Board.

Report of the Executive Director

Dan Slippen, Executive Director of the Planetarium Authority, reported on visitorship, programming and improvements to the planetarium over the last year, which was still being affected by Covid-19. He reminded the Directors that even though the Museum opened last September, all theaters, including the Hayden Planetarium, were closed per NYS regulation. He stated that 63,000 visitors viewed 26 virtual Hayden programs in FY21. When the Space Show, *Worlds Beyond Earth*, did open, it drew 37,600 visitors in FY21. It opened to 25% capacity in March 2021 and increased to 50% capacity in July 2021. In contrast, the Space Show is typically seen by 900,000 to 1 million people annually. During the pandemic, the Museum invested in transitioning to virtual programs online. Once shown, the Museum's online

programs are archived on the Museum's YouTube channel. Examples of topics covered include space volcanoes, satellites, space junk and the recent solar eclipse. The Museum has also been using the *OpenSpace* software program which takes viewers all over the universe. The Museum's Astronomy Online series was given a Bronze MUSE award by the American Association of Museums (AAM) which recognizes outstanding achievement in media and technology by museums, galleries, and libraries. The *Frontiers Lecture* series have continued online and included such topics as *Simulating the Risks of Solar Weather* and *Exoplanet Controversies*. The Planetarium also held its first-ever Mars Festival in July 2020, which included a *Scientist at Home* series, an online fieldtrip to Mars, and a *Space Comedy Jam* presented by notable comedians. The Isaac Asimov debate was held on September 8, 2021 and there were 700 tickets sold and there were 700 attendees online, as well.

Turning to improvements, Mr. Slippen reported that the Hayden Foundation generously provided \$750,000 to upgrade the Big Bang Theater, as well as new lighting in the Hayden Planetarium, and also funded a controller upgrade to improve astrovisualization in the Hayden's fly-through programming.

At this point in the meeting, Vivian Trakinski, Director of Science Visualization; Carter Emmart, Director of Astrovisualization, and Micah Acinapura, Software Integration Engineer, gave a joint presentation on *OpenSpace*, an open-source interactive data visualization software program designed to visualize the entire known universe and portray ongoing efforts to investigate the cosmos. During the pandemic, *OpenSpace* became a popular platform for online programming at the Hayden, as well as many other planetariums and science centers.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the Directors in attendance unanimously approved a motion, duly made and seconded, that the meeting be adjourned.