



Meeting Minutes

May 3, 2023
Congregation Mikve Israel

In Attendance

Juliana Sims	American Prohibition Museum
Luciana Spracher	City of Savannah Municipal Archives
Kelly Zacovic	City of Savannah Municipal Archives
Chris Sergi	Andrew Low House
Ginger Varner	Andrew Low House
Elizabeth Srsic	Juliette Gordon Low Birthplace
Allison Beckelhymer	Juliette Gordon Low Birthplace
Billie Stultz	Savannah African Art Museum
Tara Kelsey	Massie Heritage Center
Wilma Wheten	Individual
Kelsey Chandler	Tybee Island Historical Society
Robin Gunn	Ossabaw Island Foundation
Deborah Johnson-Simon	African Diaspora Museology Institute
Christian Carr	SCAD
Micah Parzen	GUEST - Museum of US
Sarah Feldman	Ships of the Sea
Kathryn White	Juliette Gordon Low Birthplace
Joe Stahl	Botanical Gardens
Elyse Butler	GHS
Breana James	GHS
Erin Dunn	Telfair
Jeff Freeman	Davenport House
Rebecca Eddins	Andrew Low House
Adam Cusic	American Prohibition Museum

Anne-Solene Bayan	Telfair
Jamie Credle	Davenport House

New and Old Business

Institutional Introductions

- Institutional Updates have been moved to the end of the meeting to give time to our presenter.

Board Updates

- Approval of meeting minutes from April
 - Motion to approve – Joe Stahl
 - Seconded – Robin Gunn
- Treasurers Report
 - Attached
 - Motion to approve – Robin Gunn
 - Second – Billie Stultz
- Online Vote Results
 - Approval of Kiah Fund Distribution
 - Approved - Student Membership
 - Approved - Individual Members can vote
 - Approved - Organizational members are Weighted 3-1 against individual votes.
 - Approved - Membership Incentives Pilot Program
 - Approved - Membership Dues have been increased across the board
- Kiah Fund Committee
 - Sent out via Email. See Agenda
 - Changes are to be sent out via online vote with total modifications attached to the online vote.
 - Robin Gunn Motion
 - Christian Carr Second

New and Old Business

Nominating Committee Report and Approval of New Board Officers

- Treasurer - Adam Cusick - American Prohibition Museum
- Secretary - Anne-Solene Bayan - Telfair
- Nomination Committee - Presented by Robin Gunn of the above rotation of new board members.
 - Deborah - Motion
 - Billie - Second

PRESENTATION

Micah Parzen PhD
The San Diego Museum of US
Formerly the San Diego Museum of Man

Announcement: Dr. Parzen will be presenting at Arnold Hall at 5:00 pm tonight through SCAD!

Background Context of the Museum of Us

- Conceived as the great museum of the Southwest.
- In Balboa Park (18 museums and 9 other cultural institutions)
- “Smithsonian of the West”
- A Tribute to Colonial Endeavor
 - Spanish Colonial Architecture
- Kumeyaay Nation
- Important to ground the institution and respect that the museum is located on stolen Kumeyaay land.
- Aim to decolonize and antiracism in the museum institution.
- Kumeyaay people lived in Balboa Park before being forcibly removed from the land.
 - They migrated to Arizona and brought Pueblo Native Americans to Balboa Park to peacefully demonstrate
- Still grappling with colonial historical scars
- On the facade of the museum are the 9 colonizing white settlers of the southern part of California

Strategic Plan 2011 - 2015

- Mission
 - Inspiring human connections by exploring the human experience

- Vision
 - To be San Diego's dynamic place to go to learn from each other, reflect on our place in the world, and build a better community.

First Exhibit

- Race & Why are we So Different by The American Anthropology Association
 - Exhibited for 3 months
 - Visitor Experience - Introduced to an older woman who was on a bench in the exhibit, from Wisconsin, at 83 years old she said that this exhibit had clicked in her mind that race is truly irrelevant.
 - This exhibit forces one to look at oneself in the privilege we have from our institutional platform.
 - Addressing the history of racism as an institution.
 - 186 Indigenous Communities are represented and the museum acts as a steward of their history.

Name Change and Controversy

- Began with an anti-museum flyer from the San Diego Community in 1991
- The first-wave feminist movement launched a campaign to change the name of the San Diego Museum of Man
 - The majority of the Trustees voted against the name change
 - The committee was made up of 5 men and 1 woman
 - Brought to the membership, the membership voted no
- 2017 - Name change brought back to a vote
 - Project Renate a branding firm held a discussion with a multi-diverse audience of representation in the community to develop new names for the museum
 - Public members were allowed to give feedback
- The Community had not been as fully included as it should have been, and there were not strong relations within the community felt the members needed more autonomy to the members of the local community
- NYTimes "the Pandemic as a Portal"
 - The pandemic can help initiate growth
 - How do we emerge as a better version of ourselves?
- Director + Team + Board agree on using the pandemic to reinvent the San Diego Museum of Man
- Museum in motion and run a visible campaign
- Becoming a model to other institutions

August 2, 2022

- Front Page News
 - San Diego Union Tribune
 - Received an outpour of support from the community
 - "Inclusion and Belonging" was the main feedback from the community.
 - **Brightbart and Fox News** - Tore the name change apart and feeding into Cancel Culture
 - Best thing could happen because it allows for a larger platform to explain and expound upon the name change and what is happening at the museum. Use a negative platform and turn it into a loud speaker.

- Name change to be part descriptive and part aspirational
 - engaged and include all of the community
 - Start the change from the inside first
 - Address the history of sweeping the colonial history under the rug.
 - Many people resigned because of the pay deficit and the lack of museum unions during the pandemic.
 - The team compressed from a size of 65 people to 11 people during the pandemic.
 - Post Pandemic
 - Lift all wages of forward-facing staff up to \$25 an hr, full benefits, full-time employment + a 5% increase every year for 3 years.
 - Salary Cap put in place to shorten the gap between executives and other staff.
 - Holidays for all
 - New policies
 - Museum employees can swap holidays that don't apply and can trade it in for an employee holiday that doesn't take from your PTO
 - 3 days of paid community leave to build and support your community or another community.
 - These days are not counted against your PTO
 - No questions asked.

Membership on US

- Annual access for all!
- The purchase of 1 ticket, gives every ticket holder access to the museum as a free visitor for 1 full year.
- Prepandemic membership went from 1000 attendees to 40,000 attendees with this new membership campaign in the post-pandemic times
- The Institute for museum and library service awarded the San Diego Museum of US as a finalist in the national medal award. There are 3-5 Medalists per year. Will know in late May
- Now the museum has a staff of 30 and a budget of 3 million

Q&A

Anne-Solene Bayar: What happened to the old sign?

Dr. Parzen: It is displayed in the rotunda in a mini-exhibit that goes over the history of the museum and explains the change to the current name.

Dr. Deborah Jonson-Simon: How is the museum supporting the local African Diaspora Communities?

Dr. Parzen: Trustees are African American, indigenous, young, and diverse gender. They make a point to discuss all of the marginalized communities in the San Diego community. Addresses the untold African American history of San Diego.

Robin Gunn: Is the museum specifically an anthropological museum? Are the current exhibitions global or local to California?

Dr. Parzen: Moved away from being an anthropological museum. Inspired by anthropological institutions however not the core value as where it is more of a celebration of people, cultures, and creation. About human experiences and humanizing the human experience.

Robin Gunn: Are you going to eliminate the museum membership model? What is the plan moving forward?

Dr. Parzen: No going back and are having great success with the membership on us program. How can we engage those now 40k members? How can those members get more involved with the museum? It's about developing that one on one relationship with our members and becoming more part of the fabric of the community. Partner with schools and teachers for free admission, just have to flash your badge or academic ID. If you don't have money for a ticket we have a pay-it-forward program so that the museum is as accessible as possible to the whole community. The objective is more the marrier. The business model is not the responsibility of the visitors it is the responsibility of the administration.

Member/Institutional Updates

Juliette Gordon Low Birthplace	Kat	Masters Student looking for Work!
Massie Heritage	Tara	Massie 167th May Day Square Ceremony 800 Attendees Dr. Lavette's last may day.
Archives	Luciana	11:59 May 15 Savannah homepage Name change recommendations for Calhoun Square Name change. May 18 Ships of the Sea Beer School May 13 Spring Plant Sale
Savannah African Art Museum	Billie Stultz	May 20 Jazz Concert - Free to the public and community May 13 Mothers Day Workshop June 10 Fathers Day Workshop June 17 Juneteenth Celebration

Next Meeting

When: June 7, 2023, | 6:30 pm

Where: Savannah African Art Museum

Program: CMA Annual Awards Ceremony

Save the Dates

- June 7, 2023 - 6:30 pm - CMA Annual Awards Ceremony