

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

September 25, 2024
Zoom Conference Call
1:40 p.m.

Directors Present: Planetarium Authority Chairman Katheryn Patterson; Alfred C. Cerullo, III; and 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 for the Planetarium Authority; Richard Madonna, AMNH Senior Vice President and Chief Financial Officer, and Clarissa Dondero, AMNH Associate Controller

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 26, 2023 meeting of the Directors of the American Museum of Natural History Planetarium Authority in the form included as part of the September 25, 2024 Board book, which was previously distributed to the Board.

Approval of the FY24 Audited Financials

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Directors in attendance unanimously approved the FY24 Audited Financial Statements for the American Museum of Natural History Planetarium Authority in the form included as part of the September 25, 2024 Board book, which was previously distributed to the Board.

Report of the Executive Director

Visitor Attendance

Dan Slippen, Executive Director of the Planetarium Authority, reported on visitorship, programming, and improvements to the Planetarium over the last year. He reported that Museum-wide ticketed attendance in FY24 is 4.45 million visitors. For comparison, Museum ticketed attendance in FY23 was 3.77 million visitors. Ticketed attendance to “Worlds Beyond

Earth” in FY24 was 899,000, in FY23 was 897,000, in FY22 was 547,000, and in FY21 was 37,500.

Planetarium Capital and Content Improvements

A full replacement of the Hayden Planetarium Audio system has begun and will finish in February 2025, with the bulk of the work taking place in January 2025. The budget for this project is approximately \$1.5 million.

The 4th floor Supercomputer room Uninterruptible Power Supply (UPS) was replaced in June of this year, which replaced the original UPS that was installed 26 years ago in 1999. This system conditions and protects that power for many systems used to create and playback space shows in the Planetarium. The budget for this is approximately \$900,000.

The media storage capacity for the Space Show production was also increased, with an associated cost of \$277,830.

Frontiers Lectures and Astronomy Live and Online Programming

Mr. Slippen reported that during FY24, the Planetarium hosted 15 programs with a combined attendance of 6,224. The programs included:

- Astronomy Live: Earth, The Transiting Exoplanet - September 19, 2023
- Frontiers Lecture: A JUICE-y Journey to Jupiter - October 10, 2023
- Spooky Space - October 31, 2023
- Astronomy Live: Spanish Grand Tour of the Universe - November 14, 2023
- Astronomy Live: Grand Tour of the Universe - November 14, 2023
- Astronomy Live: Mapping the Milky Way in 3D - December 12, 2023
- Microcosms Showcase - December 18, 2023
- Frontiers Lecture: Parker Solar Probe - January 23, 2024
- Astronomy Live: Indigenous Astronomy - February 20, 2024
- Frontiers Lecture: Space Weather - March 12, 2024
- Astronomy Live: The Search for Life in the Universe - April 23, 2024
- Frontiers Lecture: Robotic Exploration of Mars - May 21, 2024
- Astronomy Live: The Performance of JWST - June 11, 2024
- Manhattanhenge - July 12, 2024
- Astronomy Live: The Future of Space Exploration - September 17, 2024

Open Space Program

OpenSpace is in its ninth year of a ten-year grant from NASA’s Science Activation Program. A proposal will be submitted early next year for an additional five years of funding that will focus on extending the reach of the software to underserved communities and those traditionally underrepresented in STEM.

The current version of the OpenSpace software is 0.20.1, which is still in Beta. The next major release, scheduled for spring 2025, is expected to be a cloud-served version of the software that will be accessible through the Web, enabling use of OpenSpace on low-end devices, like Chromebooks, without expensive graphics cards. To date, OpenSpace has supported more than 1000 programs at more than 100 institutions, reaching more than 2.5 million people. In addition, online content generated with OpenSpace has been accessed more than 70 million times.

OpenSpace is also being used by the Museum as a pre-visualization tool to support the rendering and design of the new Space Show. Carter Emmart, Director of Visualization, is blocking out shots by flying around them in OpenSpace and then handing over the flightpath information to artists who can seamlessly open them in Houdini, the primary production software program.

Upcoming Events

Mr. Slippen then described the upcoming events for the coming fiscal year:

- Frontiers Lecture: Parker Solar Probe - October 8, 2024
- Astronomy Live: 330 Hours in Space - November 20, 2024
- Astronomia en Vivo: Un Viaje por el Universo - December 17, 2024
- Astronomy Live: Grand Tour of the Universe - December 17, 2024
- Frontiers Lecture: The Vera Rubin Observatory - February 25, 2025
- Astronomy Live: James Webb Space Telescope - March 25, 2025
- Astronomia en Vivo: JWST - March 25, 2025
- Astronomy Live: Spinning Stars Reveal Ages - April 8, 2025
- Relaxed program: Grand Tour of the Universe - April 22, 2025 (neurodiversity friendly)
- Frontiers Lecture: LMC and SMC - May 20, 2025
- Frontiers Lecture: The Moon and the Artemis Program - June 17, 2025
- Astronomy Live: The Making of a Space Show - June 25, 2025

Space Show Funding

The Museum has received a Federal Earmark of \$1.5 million for the Space Show, as well as a \$1 million corporate sponsorship from Van Cleef & Arpels.

Adjournment

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