

Executive Board Meeting

8 6 2010

Agenda item no. 4

Prepared by: Scott Mitchell

Date: 01/06/2010

Topic: ICOM Executive Council Elections

1. Recommendation

That the Board confirm the approach to be taken by the Australian contingent to voting at the upcoming ICOM international elections.

2. Background

Richard West, has written to Frank Howarth to to ask support of his candidacy for the Presidency of the International Council of Museums (ICOM) during the 2010-2013 triennium.

3. Issues

3.1 N/a

4. Attachment

Attachment A Copy of letter from Richard West dated 18 May 2010

W. Richard West, Jr.
Washington, D.C. 20008
May 2010

Frank Howarth
Director
Australian Museum
6 College Street
Sydney NSW 2010 AUSTRALIA

Dear Frank:

I am writing to ask your consideration and support of my candidacy for the Presidency of the International Council of Museums (ICOM) during the 2010-2013 triennium. For your information, I have attached my biography and Vision Statement, and invite you to visit my website (www.rickwestforicom.org) and Facebook page (Rick West for ICOM President). In this letter and attached Vision Statement, I describe for your consideration why my particular experience, inside and outside the museum community, will advance our collective hopes and aspirations for the future success and progress of ICOM.

Experience in Building Institutions: The National Museum of the American Indian - As the Founding Director of the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI) for 17 years, I was responsible for all aspects of its development – envisioning the institution as well as the implementing strategies. When the

NMAI opened in Washington, D.C. in 2004, it marked the successful conclusion of a \$300 million US capital project; the establishment of an institution with three physical locations, 370 employees, and an annual operating budget of approximately \$40 million US; and a National Campaign that raised approximately \$150 million US in private, non- governmental funds.

During my tenure as Founding Director, the NMAI created numerous international collaborations. Partnerships with Native communities of the Americas were a direct part of the institution's Mission. In addition, the NMAI connected to the rest of the world through relationships in Africa, Asia, Europe, and Australia and Oceania.

Experience in the National and International Museum and Cultural Communities - During my career as a museum director, I served in positions of leadership in the United States and in ICOM, which provided insight into the connections between the national and international museum communities. I was the Chair of the American Association of Museums (AAM), and my focus in that position was often international. During my Chairmanship, the AAM convened "Museums and Sustainable Communities: Summit of the Museums of the Americas." I was the Chair and Vice Chair of the US National Committee of ICOM, and also served on joint task forces of the AAM and US National Committee of ICOM regarding AAM international programs and cultural property issues.

As a member of the ICOM Executive Council and as an ICOM Vice President, I have been active in the work of the institution. I have served on the Legal Affairs and Ethics Committees, as well as on special committees and working group assignments such as the ICOM Strategic Plan for 2008-2010 and the search for the new Director General. At the ICOM President's request, I also have represented this organization on special missions in the United States, Brazil, China, and the Caribbean.

My participation in the international cultural community has been extensive. I serve on the Board of Directors of the International Coalition of Museums of Conscience, with member institutions across the globe, where I have seen the exciting abundance of new museum development. As a Trustee of the Ford Foundation, my experience with cultural work worldwide is vast, including Russia, China, Vietnam, Indonesia, South Africa, Kenya, Chile, and Brazil, and has allowed a firsthand opportunity to engage donors and nonprofits on a global basis.

Experience in Governance and Fund-Raising - My experience in governance extends beyond the museum community and has included major foundations and academic institutions. I have served on a number of foundation boards where the focus has been cultural and international, including The Phelps Stokes Fund and, as noted above, the Ford Foundation. In addition, I have been active in the governance of academic institutions through service as a Trustee, including Stanford University.

Knowledge of fund-raising and its successful execution is a continuous thread in my professional life. The responsibility was direct at the NMAI and has been central to my governance duties on the boards of foundations and academic institutions.

Experience as a Lawyer on Issues of Cultural Property - Legal and museum work often have melded in my professional life. At the NMAI I was responsible for overseeing, with respect to the museum's vast collections, the application of the first national repatriation law regarding the cultural patrimony of Native peoples. In addition, my participation in the work of the ICOM Legal Affairs and Ethics Committees has drawn on my background as both a museum director and lawyer in applying UNESCO Conventions and the ICOM Code of Ethics.

In 2010, I remain actively engaged in the important work of the NMAI as Founding Director and Director Emeritus serving as its primary liaison and representative to the international museum and arts communities and as an ambassador to Native communities in the Americas. I now have, however, the requisite flexibility and the abundance of time that is essential to commit myself fully to the challenging, exacting, and exciting position of ICOM President. I am dedicated to ICOM and our global museum community in the 21st century, and I look forward to working with all of you as we move boldly and imaginatively, together, to achieve our mutual goals in the next triennium.

I am deeply grateful for your kind consideration.

Sincerely yours,