



Smithsonian Institution

MEETING PROCEDURES

SCHEDULE

While by law the Regents are required to meet at least once a year in Washington, D.C., in practice they hold at least four meetings per year. Meetings are scheduled a year or more in advance and usually held on Mondays, in January, April, June, and September. The meetings ordinarily begin at 9:00 a.m. and finish by 4:00 p.m. Included are the Regents, the Secretary and his management team, liaison assistants to the Congressional and ex officio Regents, and members of the Office of the Regents. By Regents' resolution since 1846, the meetings are closed to the public and news media. Most Regents attend the meetings as there is by policy no provision for proxies.

MATERIALS

Regents' meetings are formal sessions and deliberations are based on a set of papers furnished to the Regents in advance of each meeting. Typically generated by management, the papers are first reviewed by the appropriate Regents' committee. If endorsed by the committee, the paper is then reviewed by the Executive Committee at a meeting in advance of the Regents' meeting. Once endorsed by the Executive Committee, the full meeting materials are distributed to the Board prior to the meeting for consideration. Resolutions are included in the papers and are adopted by voice vote and only rarely by a show of hands.

Assistants to the Congressional and ex officio Regents constitute a Regents' Liaison Group which meets with the Secretary's management team a few days prior to each of the Regents' meetings to discuss the agenda.

EXPENSES

The statute, as well as traditions of not-for-profit organizations, provides for the conditions of members' service on the Board of Regents. Members serve without compensation but may be reimbursed for expenses incurred when attending meetings on behalf of the Smithsonian. In practice, the majority of the Regents do not ask for reimbursement of their expenses for travel and lodging, choosing instead to claim these expenses as tax deductions for charitable activities. Some Regents invoice the Smithsonian for reimbursement and, as a matter of policy, are reimbursed for reasonable travel and lodging costs but not the expenses of Regents' spouses.