

The Chicago High School for the Arts  
Board of Directors Meeting  
ChiArts, 521 E. 35<sup>th</sup> Street, Chicago, IL

### **Minutes for January 9, 2012**

**Present:** Duffie Adelson, James Alexander, Joo Youn Boe, Marge Collens, Elissa Efroymsen, Sondra Berman Epstein, James Gandre, Francia Harrington, Betsy Holden, Julie Hurvis, James Mabie, Kay Mabie, Susan McKeever, Sylvia Neil, Janice Posner, Ralph Rydholm, Charles Slamar, Steve Solomon, Neal Zucker and Laura Head via telephone.

**Absent:**, Carlos Azcoitia, Carole Brown, Amina Dickerson, Sandy Guthman, David Herro, Ramsey Lewis Terry Mazany, and Pam Strobel

**Others present:** Camille Kuthrell, Terri Milsap, Jose Ochoa, Dorothea Roque, and Howard Bimson via telephone

**Quorum:** Yes

This meeting of the Board of Directors of The Chicago High School for the Arts (“ChiArts”) was held pursuant to Call & Notice served on all Directors, a copy of which is attached to these Minutes. Board Chair, James Mabie (“Jim M.”), called the meeting to order at 3:06 p.m. and introduced ChiArts students: Elvia Carrion, John Gingrich, and Sophia Moran, who presented their art work to the board: and Marie Sommers, who won the visual arts category of the National Arts Schools Network Young Artist competition and will be recognized at its annual conference in Orlando, FL next week. Jim M. then conducted the meeting in accordance with the Agenda, a copy of which is attached to these Minutes.

### **Approval of November 14<sup>th</sup> Minutes**

James Gandre (“Jim G.”) moved to approve the minutes, Steve Solomon seconded, and the board unanimously approved.

### **Finance Report**

Joo Youn Boe (“Joo”) reported that the audit is near completion. She commended Dorothea Roque (“Dorothea”) for her diligence overseeing the process. The draft of the compliance audit was completed in November and will be filed while the finance committee awaits additional information from Chicago Public Schools (CPS). The financial audit, which was quite cumbersome this year, is complete and Jim M. and Joo reviewed it this morning. At the next board meeting, IRS Form 990 will be presented for review, as well as a summary of the audit findings and recommendations.

A revised copy of the budget was distributed and discussed, including FY11 year end results and FY12 budget revisions. Thanks to the development committee fundraising has exceeded budget projections. The subtotal for full-time and part-time instructional employees now reflects Jose Ochoa’s (“Jose’s”) efforts to reduce expenses; however spending for curriculum, stipends, and bonuses is still a bit high. Overall, actual employee expenses were close to projected figures. Currently, about \$150,000 of direct student expenses are outstanding, but once invoices are reconciled, budgeted student expenses will be

in line with actual expenditures. The net cash deficit (which is the fundraising goal) is \$1,942,683 and will result in a year-end cash balance of -\$332,000 which excludes \$600,000 of restricted funds from the total \$900,000 working capital fund.

## **Board Affairs**

James Alexander (“Jim A.”) reported that the committee is scheduled to meet at the end of this month to consider new board prospects and discuss revising the strategy for electing new members. Directors should send names of prospects to Jim A. and Pam Strobel (“Pam”) for review. Currently, the range of board members, as provided by the bylaws, is 20-30 members. Candidates will be vetted at the next board of directors meeting.

Betsy Holden reported on the board matrix, which is now complete minus parent responses. Overall, the skills and diversity of the board are strong. The matrix helped identify opportunities to improve the age diversity of the board, increase corporate representation, and fundraising. This may be a good time for directors who have sat on committees for a few years to reconsider committee assignments so skills and energies are maximized.

The board evaluation survey is complete. Pam and Jim A. are working on a summation, which will be presented at the next meeting. Jim A. thanked everyone who participated. At the next board meeting, the board affairs committee will review the Board Expectation document, the Employee and Volunteer Confidentiality Policy, and a proposed amendment to the bylaws of the Parent Support Organization.

## **Marketing, PR & Events**

Camille Kuthrell gave an update of PR efforts and progress with the Hill & Knowlton (H&K) team. Crain’s featured an article about the December 8<sup>th</sup> cultivation event hosted by Sondra Berman Epstein (“Sondra”) and Neal Zucker. José has given a number of interviews to local outlets coordinated through H&K. Publicity efforts for the second semester will focus on the Curtain Call Festival. ChiArts staff will continue to work with H&K to pitch relevant news stories to build publicity and drive attendance to performances and exhibits.

Francia Harrington thanked everyone for their efforts and contributions to the annual report and reflected on the high quality of the publication. Sandy Guthman (“Sandy”) recently hosted a meeting at Polk Bros. Foundation to discuss corporate funding and brain storm other potential sources of funding from corporations and private foundations.

Sondra discussed the idea of hosting a spring fundraising event to showcase ChiArts students at Victory Gardens. Planning is still in the beginning stages but the venue availability and layout are promising. She urged the board to start considering contacts for this event.

Sondra then thanked the board for their flexibility and understanding regarding the December 8<sup>th</sup> reception hosted at her home. The attendee list unexpectedly ballooned beyond capacity and she will host a separate dinner for the board at her home on March 13<sup>th</sup> to show her gratitude. Student singers were instrumental in the success of the event and donations are coming in.

## **Executive Director Report**

Terri Milsap (“Terri”) gave the principal’s report. Full enrollment is down 12 students but Terri hopes to fill some of these spots with transfer students. Attendance is a little lower than normal, though still above the CPS norm. A new computer science teacher was hired, Tsegaye Lobban, and today is her first day.

Dr. McCowen took several students on the first ChiArts coordinated college visit to Ohio State University. It was an overnight trip and a huge success. Dr. McCowen met with all the junior students and/or parents during the first semester to identify strong post secondary opportunities for the students.

The juniors took a practice ACT in the fall and the composite score was 18. Terri hopes to increase this by 2 points when they take the test again in the spring. Some strategies for improving scores include: offering at-school math preparation of junior students, scheduling another practice test in March, and providing junior level math instructors with professional development focused on ACT math strategies.

José discussed student recruitment and distributed a copy of the Admissions Report. The applicant pool is larger and stronger than the year before and will most likely continue the trend next year. The racial demographics are somewhat skewed because of the 35<sup>th</sup> Street location and the uncertainty of a permanent facility location. Peter Gaona recently resigned from his position as the student recruitment coordinator to continue his own schooling on a full time basis and efforts have begun to find a replacement.

José alerted the board to a few recent safety issues that have cause a need to increased security: a car was stolen, some female staff were verbally assaulted while traveling on 35<sup>th</sup> street to public transportation, and a student was mugged. In response, additional parents have volunteered for Parents on Patrol (POP) and surveillance cameras will be installed. Providing additional security measures has been difficult due to CPS financial constraints. Terri added that the new chief of safety and security at CPS, Jandine Chou, offered to meet with ChiArts parents monthly to discuss ongoing concerns and work toward solutions.

Three music students were selected to participate in the Illinois All-State Music Festival. Ramsey Lewis recently visited ChiArts and conducted a master class with some of the jazz musicians. Jose distributed a schedule of upcoming ChiArts events and performances and asked the board to attend and bring guests!

### **Chairman’s Report**

Jim M. reported the security issues have absorbed a good amount of staff time over the past few weeks. Nevertheless Terri and Jose are working intensively to make arrangements for sharing Doolittle East next year. Scheduling needs to be determined as soon as possible so CPS can move forward with the necessary building renovations.

Jim M. encouraged all to make use the annual report. It will be made available electronically and on the website in addition to paper copies. He recognized Jim A. and Charles Slamar for their continued efforts on the employee handbook, which is now very close to completion. He reminded everyone to complete and return their Conflict of Interest forms.

On behalf of Sandy for the development committee, Jim M. reported that December was a very successful month with \$400,000 raised.

There being no further business to come before the board, Ralph Rydholm moved to adjourn, Janice Posner seconded, and the board unanimously approved. Jim M. adjourned the meeting at 4:55 p.m. and then held an executive session.

**Executive Session**

Respectfully submitted,

Charles Slamar

Secretary