

The Chicago High School for the Arts  
Board of Directors Meeting  
**The Chicago Community Trust, 225 N Michigan Avenue #2200**

### **Minutes for June 17, 2015**

**Present:** Duffie Adelson, Jim Alexander, Joo Boe, Jackie Bratland, Warren Chapman, Marge Collens, Elissa Efroymsen, Michelle Esfahani, Sandra Guthman, Mirja Haffner, Francina Harrington, John Hart, Betsy Holden, Julie Hurvis, Al Jagiello, Shruti Jayaraman, Jim Mabie, Kay Mabie, Sylvia Neil, Charles Slamar, Steve Solomon, Pam Strobel, Neal Zucker

**Absent:** Sarah Bader, Sondra Berman Epstein, Jay Franke, Ron Grais, Ramsey Lewis, Terry Mazany, Susan McKeever, Zarin Mehta

**Others Present:** Daniel Abdalla, Jose Ochoa, Doug Ray, Jessica Ramirez

**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, Marge Collens (“Marge”) called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. She conducted the meeting in accordance with the agenda, a copy of which is attached to these minutes.

### **Approval of Minutes for March 24, 2014**

Charles Slamar (“Charlie”) noted the minutes should be corrected to reflect that a quorum was indeed present to conduct business, but not the “super quorum” required to change by-laws or elect directors. Kay Mabie (“Kay”) moved to approve the minutes as corrected. Francina Harrington (“Francee”) seconded. The board unanimously approved.

### **Approval of Minutes of Electronic Meeting (March 25 through April 2, 2014)**

Sandra Guthman (“Sandy”) moved to approve the minutes. Steve Solomon (“Steve”) seconded. The board unanimously approved.

### **Finance Committee Report**

Joo Boe (“Joo”) reported that May finances have not been finalized, but April finances have projected that the budget will remain steady. Partly due to the success of “*Kerfuffle!*”, there is sufficient cash flow.

Work progresses on the annual budget: due to Chicago Public Schools (“CPS”) on July 17. We continue to reduce the deficit created in FY2013. We anticipate eliminating the deficit by June 2015. The budget also accounts for the current facilities move. Although the exact cost of the move is difficult to predict, we have identified an anonymous resource to help manage these costs.

The finance committee has approved the changes recommended by Carrie Stewart and incorporated in our Financial Management Policy and Procedures. Betsy Holden (“Betsy”) moved to approve the changes; Joo seconded; and the board unanimously approved.

Sandy moved to give Notice of these changes to CPS;, Francee seconded; and the board unanimously approved.

The finance committee has also been working on the upcoming audit. Because most of the audit information is boxed up for the move, the finance committee has asked CPS for an exception to their deadline.

In addition, in order to improve our auditing process and tax reporting, the committee recommends changing our auditors from Desmond & Ahern to Ostrow, Reisen Berk & Abrams (“ORBA”). ORBA’s experience with CPS and non-profits makes them better equipped for the unique circumstances of ChiArts. James Alexander (“Jim A”) moved to approve the change; Kay seconded; and the board unanimously approved.

### **Board Affairs**

Pam Strobel (“Pam”) introduced the board’s three new members: Warren Chapman (“Warren”), Shruti Jayaraman (“Shruti”), and Al Jagiello (“Al”).

Pam moved that the following be elected as officers for the coming year: Marge, chair; Elissa Efroymsen, vice chair; Charlie, secretary; and Joo, treasurer.. Betsy seconded; and the board unanimously approved.

Marge thanked Steve for his service as vice chair this past year.

Pam moved to elect the directors of Class 3 for a three year term. These are: Sandy, Kay, Terry Mazany, Sylvia Neil (“Sylvia”) Charlie, Steve, and Neal Zucker. In addition, Pam moved that the new board members (Warren, Shruti, and Al) be added to Class 3. Sandy seconded and the board unanimously approved each.

Sylvia will be the new chair of the board affairs committee. The committee will continue to work with the board to identify new candidates for directors. With the passing of Ralph Rydholm and the non-reelection of Ramsey Lewis, the board now has 28 members: the minimum specified by the by-laws.

Ron Grais will be the new chair of the Development committee.

Rosters of the committees and conflict of interest statements were distributed to the board.

### **Remembering Ralph Rydholm**

The achievements and contributions of late board member Ralph Rydholm were recognized by Steve, Marge and Jose.

### **Constituent Communications**

Kay reported that the committee is working with Bottom Line, a charitable organization that helps low-income and first-generation-to-college students get to and through college.

## **Development**

Sandy provided the new Development Dashboard that reconciles development results with our financial reports. The current report reconciles gifts received through April 30. Total contributions for the fiscal year are projected to be \$2,931,008.44; \$431,008.94 in excess of our fundraising goal of \$2.5 million. This surplus is due in large part to Jim Mabie (“Jim M”) securing a special donation of \$489,000.

Sandy reported that \$310,000 that was raised by “*Kerfuffle!*”. This year’s success will necessitate a new venue with a larger seating capacity.

## **Facilities**

Deferred to the Executive Director’s Report

### ***“Kerfuffle!”* Wrap Up**

Francee also recognized the accomplishments of “*Kerfuffle!*”. She acknowledged the work of Jessica Ramirez, director of development; Kelsie Thompson, development associate; Pam; Jose; our arts partners; and the board at large. The event was a major success both artistically and financially, as well as from a public relations standpoint. Next year, the subcommittee will focus on finding new opportunities for fundraising.

### **Parent Support Organization (“PSO”)**

Jackie Bratland reported that she and Kirti Patel will continue as officers of the PSO. Stacie Stevenson and Leslie Batterson are joining them in the other officer positions.

The work of the PSO was commended by the board.

### **Executive Director’s Report**

Jose noted that Darius Malone was not offered a position with DanceWorks Chicago as was reported in our most recent newsletter. Imani English was accepted as reported.

Assistant Principal Gia Orr resigned on June 11 after two years in the position.

On June 13, ChiArts effectively left 521 E. 35th Street. Over the last two months, Daniel Abdalla has been leading a moving and packing project in order to keep the construction project on schedule.

Renovation of the upcoming facility is on track, and we expect to be in the building on August 11. Although we plan to host Freshmen orientation there, we do need to remain flexible. Nevertheless, as long as we have access to the new building before the first day of classes on September 2, programming should run smoothly.

Our board meeting on September 8 will begin at noon in the new building. Lunch will be served and at the conclusion of the meeting, tours will be held.

Nicole Fishman is our new principal. Most recently she was with the Central Office of the Waukegan Public Schools. Past experience includes being a principal at a high school and junior high school. Nicole is working to fill the Assistant Principal position, as well as redesign the academics at ChiArts.

The school's graduation rate is currently 92% and is expected to reach 95% by the end of the summer. We now have 3 ChiArts alumni who are Posse Scholars. A student from last year's class was recently awarded a Fulbright fellowship and two members of the class of 2014 were YoungArts finalists.

Graduation was a success. Highlights included: Jim and Kay receiving special recognition in the form of honorary degrees and Founders' Awards; and Charlie Barnett of the Chicago Fire television show was the graduation speaker; he had attended an arts high school and The Julliard School.

### **Public Comment**

David Vitale, Mario Rossero, and Paul Sznewajs discussed the CPS Arts Education Plan and how ChiArts could partner with it.

Marge concluded the meeting by recognizing the achievements of the staff, students, and board over the last year.

There being no further business, Jim M moved to adjourn, Charlie seconded, and the board unanimously approved. The meeting was adjourned at 5:25 pm.