

The Chicago High School for the Arts
Board of Directors Meeting
Wm Blair & Company, 222 W. Adams Street, Chicago, IL
Minutes for May 13, 2013

Present: Duffie Adelson, James Alexander, Sarah Bader, Joo Boe, Marge Collens, Elissa Efroymsen, Sandra Guthman, Mirja Haffner, Francia Harrington, Julie Hurvis, James Mabie, Kay Mabie, Terry Mazany, Susan McKeever, Janice Posner, Ralph Rydholm, Charlie Slamar, Steve Solomon, Pam Strobel, Neal Zucker and Sandra Berman Epstein and Betsy Holden via telephone.

Absent: Carlos Azcoitia, James Gandre, Ramsey Lewis and Sylvia Neil.

Others present: Connie Calderaro, Camille Kuthrell, Terri Milsap, José Ochoa, and 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, Jim Mabie (“Jim M.”), called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. and then conducted the meeting in accordance with the Agenda, a copy of which is attached to these Minutes.

Jim M. introduced newly elected board member Sarah Bader (“Sarah”). Sarah is a principal at Gensler.

Approval of March 11, 2013 Minutes

Sandy Guthman (“Sandy”) moved to approve the minutes, Ralph Rydholm (“Ralph”) seconded and the board unanimously approved.

Parent Support Organization

Janice Posner reported on behalf of the Parent Support Organization (“PSO”). New officers were elected at the April PSO meeting for the 2013-14 school year. Kirti Patel was elected president, Lara Owen, vice president, Michelle Esfahani (“Michelle”), secretary and Jackie Bratland (“Jackie”), treasurer. Michelle and Jackie will also serve as the parent representatives to The Board of Directors.

Finance Report

Joo Boe (“Joo”) reported on the current state of the finance department. The finance director and assistant are busy reorganizing systems and records in order to provide a better understanding of our current financials; including revisions to the FY13 line items, which will provide a more accurate and timely view of the financials. This reorganization revealed a projected negative cash balance of \$965,000 as of June 30th. This amount will be reduced by an anticipated \$165,000 in “special reimbursements from Chicago Public Schools for “special reimbursements” for FY13 and received gifts of \$82,000, as well as a committed gift of \$48,000 to be paid before fiscal year end. José Ochoa (“Jose”) will make an additional \$200,000 of cuts (\$170,000 of which has already been made). An interest free letter of credit and The Genius Working Capital Fund will provide an additional \$200,000 of reductions.

Accordingly, the finance committee will prepare two budgets scenarios for FY14. One reducing the projected \$500,000 deficit over 1 year; the other reducing it over two years. These will be presented for Board approval at a special meeting in July.

Marketing/PR/ Special Events

Jim M. applauded the contributions of the entire Board in making Kerfuffle a success. Francia Harrington (“Francee”) asked for feedback about the format of the Kerfuffle and the incorporation of the arts partners into the event. The MCA has already extended an offer to ChiArts to host Kerfuffle at the museum again next year. The planning committee suggests returning to the MCA to build continuity and branding of the event. Francee noted that Pam Strobel (“Pam”) and Betsy Holden were instrumental in securing corporate sponsorships and that next year’s sponsorship efforts should begin earlier to garner more corporate support, as most companies finalize their budgets between August and November.

Mirja Haffner (“Mirja”) proposed creating more opportunities for the Kerfuffle guests to interact with the students next year. Sondra Berman Epstein (“Sondra”) highlighted the importance of follow-up with all attendees, especially those not in ChiArts database.

Development Report

Sandy reported that FY13 pledges and received contributions totaled \$2,569,965 (not including monies raises from Kerfuffle). Over the summer the development committee will focus efforts on generating ideas to encourage Chairman’s Fund contributors to renew their support once their 5 year commitments expires.

The graduation of the first class of students presents an opportunity for donors to see the full progression of students and graduation statistics will be a great means of enticing donors.

The board acknowledged Sandy’s tremendous fundraising efforts.

Principal’s Report

Teresa Milsap (“Terri”) reported that 11th graders took the Prairie State Achievement Exam last month-- there was 100% attendance on the first day and only 2 absents students on the second day. This is the second class to take the exam and again Terri maintains a goal of 21 for the composite score. Freshman and sophomore students will take the Explore and Plan tests later this month. The exam is administered in the fall and spring. Terri hopes to see a 2 point increase from the fall scores.

Junior and senior students recently returned from a school sponsored trip abroad to Spain and France. In addition, a number of senior students attended the national “Grad Bash” celebration in Orlando, Florida. The trips were funded by the students by the students or travel planning agency.

ChiArts students have been accepted to 200+ colleges and universities. The top 10 colleges ChiArts graduates will attend are:

1. Columbia College Chicago
2. School of the Art Institute of Chicago
3. Roosevelt University
4. Minneapolis College of Arts and Design
5. DePaul University
6. University of Illinois Urbana- Champaign
7. Point Park University
8. Cornish College of Arts
9. Western Michigan University
10. American Academy of Dramatic Arts (NYC/LA)

Martin Down, the inaugural valedictorian, will attend Northwestern University and Rachel Otero, salutatorian, will attend Simmons College (Boston, MA)

25% of the seniors still have not finalized their post-secondary plans as they are awaiting financial aid and scholarship decisions. Already \$1.2M has been received by ChiArts students and more is expected once students report this information.

137 seniors are on track to graduate on time. The graduation rate will be finalized once seniors who are participating in credit recovery, complete their courses. At minimum, we expect a 98% graduation rate.

Executive Director Report

The inaugural graduation is set to take place on June 7th at 7:00 pm at the Harris Theater for Music and Dance (which Harris Theater donated). Herbie Hancock will be the guest of honor, delivering the commencement address and, hopefully, a performance. Graduation will include traditional and non-traditional elements. A special reception for ChiArts Founders will take place in the donors lounge at the Harris Theater before graduation to honor the individuals who helped make the school a reality—in particular, Jim Alexander (“Jim A.”) and the co-trustees of The Elizabeth Morse Charitable Trust, The Elizabeth Morse Genius Charitable Trust, the Polk Bros Foundation and the McCormick Tribune Foundation, which is the sponsor of the class of 2014. Jim A. and the co-trustees of The Elizabeth Morse Charitable Trust and The Elizabeth Morse Genius Charitable Trust will also be recognized at the ceremony as honorary graduates. Former ChiArts students, (Tim He (music) and Houston Thomas (dance)) referred to as “leap outs”, will also receive honorary ChiArts diplomas.

Looking forward to next year, José will continue organizational efforts for the finance department to ensure systems are in place for better transparency and operating. Once the finance department is stable and consistent, attention will focus on streamlining and organizing other support positions. Formal goals for FY14 will be presented at the next meeting of the Board of Directors.

Chairman’s Report

Jim M. gave his final report as Board Chair in which he reflected on his time as Chair. Jim M. thanked the entire Board for their contributions, especially Kay Mabie (former Co-Chair) who advocated for them to become involved with ChiArts.

Board Affairs

Pam reported on behalf on the Board Affairs committee. Through the recommendation process, the Board Affairs committee has generated a new list of candidates for the Board to consider for election. Pam presented the names of Board candidates for feedback. Pam then circulated the board matrix and asked the Directors to provide demographic and expertise information. This tool helps inform recruitment efforts and build Board capacity.

The Board Affairs committee accepted the resignation of James Gandre as he departs from Chicago to become the new President of the Manhattan School of Music.

Sandy moved to re-elect members of Class 2 to a new 3- year term; July 1, 2013 through June 30, 2016. Francee seconded and the Board unanimously approved. Class 2 members are Jim A., Sarah, Elissa Efroymsen, Mirja, Julie Hurvis, Jim M. and Ralph.

On behalf of the Board, Pam thanked Jim M. for his contributions and leadership of ChiArts. She then opened the floor for officer elections. The election slate includes; Marge Collens (“Marge”), Chair; Steve Solomon, Vice Chair; Charlie Slamar, Secretary; and Joo, Treasurer. Pam moved to elect the slate of officers, Ralph seconded and the Board unanimously approved.

Board Chair-Elect, Marge remarked on the high caliber of ChiArts’ Board of Directors and thanked Jim M. and Kay for their all their contributions. She then invited the Board to attend the end of year celebration for ChiArts staff/faculty on June 12th and highlighted the list of proposed board meetings for FY14.

Public Comment

There were no public comments.

Executive Session

There were no topics for discussion at Executive Session.

There being no further business to come before it, Ralph moved to adjourn, Kay seconded, and the Board unanimously approved. Jim M. adjourned the meeting at 5:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Charles Slamar

Secretary