

The Chicago High School for the Arts
Board of Directors Meeting
William Blair, 222 W Adams St, Chicago, IL 60606

Minutes for November 9th, 2015

Present: Duffie Adelson, Blake Batterson, Sondra Berman Epstein, Warren Chapman, Marge Collens, Elissa Efroymsen, Ron Grais, Sandra Guthman, Mirja Haffner, John Hart, Francia Harrington, Betsy Holden, James Mabie, Kay Mabie, Sylvia Neil, Sandra Saucedo-Falagan, Steve Solomon, and Alan Jagiello and Shruti Jayaraman via telephone.

Absent: Carlos Azcoitia, Sarah Bader, Joo Boe, Evette Cardona, Lori Faversham, Jay Franke, Carol Friedman, Terry Mazany, Pam Strobel, Neal Zucker

Others Present: Lana Beardslee, Karin Nangreave, José Ochoa, Jessica Ramirez, Michael Wang. First 10 minutes only - Celeste Coleman, Alexis Ochoa, Alia Walston, Maria Sales, Sydney Smith

Quorum: Yes

This meeting of the Board of Directors of The Chicago High School for the Arts (“ChiArts”) was held in pursuant to Call & Notice served on all Directors, a copy of which is attached to these minutes. Board Chair, Ron Grais (“Ron”), called the meeting to order at 3 p.m. He conducted the meeting in accordance to the agenda, a copy of which is attached to these minutes.

Approval of Minutes of June Meeting

Ron moved to approve the September 21st 2015 Board meeting minutes. Sandy Guthman (“Sandy”) seconded. The Board unanimously approved.

Chairman’s Report

Kay Mabie (“Kay”) thanked Mirja Haffner (“Mirja”) and Elissa Efroymsen (“Elissa”) for hosting the Fall Salon. José Ochoa (“José”) read a letter of thanks from ChiArts senior Darien Payton wrote to Sylvia Neil (“Sylvia”), thanking her for hosting a development event at her home. Kay also shared a questionnaire that was given to three ChiArts students that addressed some frequently asked questions from tour guests.

Kay announced that since Jim Alexander has resigned from the board, the position of registered agent for the board of directors needs to be filled. Kay asked for a resolution to elect Ron Grais as the registered agent and have his address (30 N. LaSalle Street, Suite 3000) be the registered address. Sandy moved to elect and Sondra Berman Epstein (“Sondra”) seconded. The Board unanimously approved.

Kay reminded the board that ChiArts is asking for donations to purchase outdoor signage. Two of the signs have already been donated and 4 more are needed. Kay asked the board to look for

any contacts who may want to donate to the cause. Kay then directed the board's attention to their packets which contains a copy of an exercise the board completed at the last meeting, listing words and/or phrases they felt represent ChiArts. Kay pointed out that there was very little repetition in the answers and that the board needs to dedicate time this year to creating a more specific and shared vision for ChiArts.

Performance by ChiArts String Quartet

Joseph Haydn, Quartet no. 74 Op. 77 No. 1

Maria Sales Violin

Alexis Ochoa Violin

Celeste Coleman Viola

Sydney Smith Cello

Executive Director's Report

Jim Mabie inquired about the non-instructional employee evaluation tool included in the Executive Director's report. José created this tool using resources from the Society for Human Resource Management's website and will use it to evaluate all non-instructional staff.

José informed the board that the first ChiArts Backstage Pass of the season was held on October 17th which is a recruitment event that 8th grade students interested in ChiArts attend. Francia Harrington ("Francee") asked what ChiArts was doing in regard to recruitment with Chicago Youth Symphony Orchestra, Merit School of Music, and The Music Institute. José replied that since the students at The Music Institute and the Chicago Youth Symphony are primarily suburban it is difficult to partner with them. José shared that we are working on some ideas for long-term partnerships with those organizations that could lead to higher participation from Chicago students. ChiArts has had a long history of collaboration with Merit as our department head of music Betsy Ko, used to work there.

Principal's Report

Michael Wang ("Mike") shared his report with the board, noting that two of the goals this year are to improve attendance and to encourage positive student behavior. He is also working on a method of evaluating student growth in teacher evaluations, using some models from Chicago Public Schools ("CPS").

Mike shared that ChiArts received a 1+ from CPS's School Quality Rating Policy. ChiArts was the only CPS school to jump 2 grades this year. Mike reminded the board that the rating categories are changing next year and so there is no way to predict a similar score for next year. Our major point of growth for this year was our growth rate for Hispanic and African American students which jumped from 10% in 2014 to 70% in 2015. We also received our 5 year graduation rate which is 87.9 percent.

ChiArts counseling department is working with Barr-Harris Children's Grief Center to give students access to trauma and grief counseling. Director Elissa suggested bringing the executive director of Barr-Harris to speak to the school. Currently we have about 10 students who are in

need of their services. Mike also recently scheduled a training session for all ChiArts staff on the topic of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender students.

Finance Committee

Betsy Holden (“Betsy”) reported that the 2015 audit is officially done and there were no material weaknesses. The auditors were very complimentary of finance staff and only had a few minor suggestions for improvement. Betsy also reviewed the budget process for CPS. ChiArts has already completed and turned in the 2015-16 budget to CPS twice according to the CPS schedule, and a third and final budget will be submitted in November.

Betsy reported that the YTD numbers are favorable due to donations and ChiArts is currently on budget.

Development Committee

Jessi Ramirez (“Jessi”) reported that 42% of the annual goal has already been raised in cash and commitments, which is a comparable level to the previous year. Jessi shared that the development department is going to send out a general mailing appeal this year, seeking donations. The mailing will include a ChiArts brochure and a note from a ChiArts student. Jessi announced that the 2015 Fall Salon was a success with about 130 guests.

Mirja Haffner (“Mirja”) announced a new development program to encourage more people to visit the school, especially those who do not have the time for a full length tour. Mirja also announced that Pam Strobel (“Pam”) and Sandy will be chairs for the 2016 Fall Salon. She also thanked Sylvia for hosting a development event at her house.

Elissa announced that thanks to Pam, ChiArts received the largest sponsorship for Kerfuffle ever, in the amount of \$50,000 from State Farm. Elissa shared that a portion of this donation will be used to create a short video that will be premiered at Kerfuffle.

Jessi finished the development report by sharing a gratitude poem from a ChiArts creative writing student and a letter from a donor who recently published an article about his experience touring ChiArts.

Governance and Nominations Committee

Sondra informed the board of a candidate for board membership, Cynthia Mufarreh, who was introduced to ChiArts by Steve Soloman (“Steve”). Steve shared Cynthia’s bio with the board and gave her the highest recommendation. Cynthia is currently the Chief Administrative Officer with BMO Harris. Sondra nominated Cynthia to the board of directors, Steve seconded and the board unanimously approved.

Kay announced the resignation of Jay Franke.

Communications and Outreach Committee

Francee reminded the board that the purpose of the Communications and Outreach committee is to develop relationships with the local community around the school and invited any board members who were interested to join.

Parent Support Organization

Sandra Saucedo-Falagan (“Sandra”) and Blake Batterson (“Blake”) presented the Parent Support Organization (“PSO”) report. Sandra updated the board on the piloting of the use of google classroom in academic classes at ChiArts which was rolled out by the principal this year. Blake announced the PSO will be holding a silent auction in February and is looking for donations for the event. They are currently in the process of searching for a building in the community to use.

New Business

None.

ChiArts Board SWOT Analysis

José distributed a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (“SWOT”) analysis form to the board and asked them to complete. While board members were completing the form José shared the results gathered from ChiArts staff the previous week.

Executive Session

Sandy moved that the meeting move to Closed Session to discuss a good governance issue. Steve seconded. The Board unanimously approved.

Upon returning to Open Session, Kay called the meeting back to order. No vote was required to be taken by the Board.

Public Comments

None

There being no further business, Kay asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting, Sandy moved to adjourn, and Sondra seconded, and the board unanimously approved. Kay then adjourned the meeting at 5:15 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Shruti Jayaraman
Secretary