

**ArtStream**  
Board of Director's Meeting  
January 18, 2022

**APPROVED MINUTES**

**ROLL CALL**

In attendance: Eleanor Allen; Pam Brown; Kristen Chou; Kim Coates-Schofield; Mike Cooper, Chair; Lisa Gaffney, Vice President; Maggie Haslam, Secretary; Sari Hornstein; Paul Murray; Molly Myers, Treasurer; Darlene Richeson; Irene Stephens; Jonathan Tepper; Sonia Trask; Delia Zielinski, Teaching Artist Liaison

**ArtStream staff in attendance:** Heller An Shapiro, Executive Director; Lynn Taylor Moore, Director of Finance and Administration

**Not in attendance:** Vu Tran, Client Liaison

**MINUTES RATIFICATION**

Pam Brown noted that she left the November 29, 2021 meeting at 8:30 p.m. and was not present at the Executive Session. Sonia Trask and Irene Stephens were present at the Executive Session.

Sari Hornstein asked that the following paragraph from the Organizational Consulting and Change Leadership (OCCL) Team from Georgetown University's School for Continuing Studies report be added to the September 20, 2021 minutes, under the Staff Organization Review Report section: "Some of the inefficiencies stem from many staff members not having a clear picture of the seasonal and annual cycle of the performing arts programs, as well as not fully understanding all the nuances of the programming side of their work. For example, not all staff members understand what "tech week" entails. Lack of understanding of the annual cycle leads to challenges in efficient planning for workload. Additionally, staff frequently need to switch tasks and shuffle priorities, which negatively affects workflow and leads to frustration for some of the team members."

Sari also raised a question regarding the Dashboard, stating that the data provide misleading information to the Board regarding the number served by ArtStream. Heller An explained how her numbers were compiled and clarified that when the count was made two years ago, there were about 200 individual students in tuition classes.

With those changes, the minutes were approved without dissent.

**RECOGNITION OF OUTGOING CLIENT AND TEACHING ARTIST LIAISONS**

Mike Cooper offered remarks on Vu Tran and Delia Zielinski's service to the board. He remarked that Vu was always a welcome presence in our board meetings and that Vu's enthusiasm was obvious and his attitude during the pandemic gave us all a boost.

Delia Zielinski is also ending her term as Teaching Liaison, where she served an extended term from January 2020 to January 2022, assisting the organization during the pandemic. Mike remarked that Delia has always been thoughtful and weighed in on important decisions. Delia remarked that she didn't feel she should leave without the position being filled, as she is a vital source for the teaching artists to understand what is happening with board and organizational business. She wants to encourage the quick approval of her successor—she realizes people are not clamoring to serve but knows of one who is willing to come and serve in good faith.

## **FINANCIAL AND OPERATIONS OUTLOOK: HIGHLIGHTS**

*For a full understanding, please refer to the report on the Board intranet.*

*Overview:* Revenue is running a little below annual expenses; the delayed Gala event means that sponsor revenue is not recognized until after the Gala. The theatre companies are under-enrolled because of students who have challenges with masks, people moving away, and mental health issues; there is still a misperception that there is a waiting list, so ArtStream is actively engaging in outreach.

Heller An announced that they have a nice slate of experienced teaching artists, including Delia who will serve as master teaching artists. They have hired 12 new Teaching Artists but are still struggling to find VA-based folks. Teaching Artists fees were increased in FY21-22. We are \$1K away from our target of \$85K for gala sponsorship. Grants increased 17% from FY 19-20 and 13% from FY20-21, not including COVID grants. Heller An ran through other possible grants for this next year and the status of others.

Sari brought up the cost of the six master teachers and the quality of the teachers, and whether they provide the support that the teaching artists need. Paul called a point of order to get back on the agenda.

*Office:* ArtStream's current office lease runs through December 2022; staff are still looking at the Non-profit village as an option for new space.

*Employee Handbook:* It is still in the review process at Lerch Early, but it hasn't been implementable because it hasn't been approved by legal and the Board. Heller An asked if anyone had a resource for this. Kristen Chou offered to send it to her company's legal counsel and pay for their time to review it.

*Outreach Coordinator/Teaching Artist Director Discussion:* ArtStream's part time Outreach Coordinator is leaving; Heller An asked if the organization should replace the part-time Outreach Coordinator with the fulltime Outreach Coordinator for Student and Volunteer engagement as developed during the staff strategic retreat in spring 2021. It would cost roughly 40-50K a year (20-30K for FY22).

Sari asked why the board is choosing to fill this position over an artistic director. Kristen Chou feels that filling our theatre companies and classes is, in her opinion, a priority. Kim said that we can't have one without the other. Mike made a motion to end the conversation on the artistic director because efforts to find the funding and correct

position description for an artistic director are ongoing. Jonathan asked if Heller An was leaning one way or another between fulltime and part time. She said she would love to have a fulltime person to take a load off of the staff and further develop the volunteers. For example, the Theatre Companies have many fewer volunteers than are needed. Board members approved expanding the part time Community Outreach Coordinator to a fulltime Outreach Coordinator for Student and Volunteer Engagement.

Delia stated that she has provided the teaching artists asks: an Artistic Director, TA training, and volunteer mentor training. The Outreach Coordinator would cover the mentor training, but the other two they still really need. She said that if we expect to expand and be successful, we need to also concentrate on these things and that we have to invest in our teaching artists.

### **FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT**

The Finance Committee, Mike Cooper and Heller An met with the engagement partner from Gorfine, Schiller & Gardyn, ArtStream's Audit firm. ArtStream's balance sheet is strong, with liquid assets to cover a year's operation costs. The objective over time is to maintain this cushion and grow it to 18 months coverage.

The organization's operations have not been significantly impacted by the virus. Heller An and the ArtStream staff have done an exemplary job of leading the organization through the pandemic over the past two years. The finance committee will continue to work with Heller An on maintaining and improving ArtStream's strong financial position.

### **AUDITOR SELECTION TASK FORCE PROPOSAL**

To comply with best practices, we should review our auditor placement every 3-5 years. Molly will chair the Task Force, and Irene, Paul, and Sonia volunteered to serve. Molly suggested that Lynn be part of these discussions.

### **GALA UPDATE**

ArtStream is moving the Gala online and talking to the conference center about moving our reservation to next September. There will be a preview of the January cabaret at the event. The Bethesda North Marriott is reducing the \$16K minimum or moving it to the new date.

Heller An asked if any of the board members would host a chat room for parents while clients danced virtually to the DJ. Lisa, Molly, Sari, and Sonia volunteered. This announcement will be shared with families tomorrow (1/19). Kim suggested a possible "spring fling" to have an outdoor gathering later on to allow people to connect with each other and not rely just on the Gala. Heller An noted that spring is a busy time for staff because of all of the performances.

### **PANDEMIC PLANNING**

ArtStream is currently online, including cabaret rehearsals. They are hoping to get back to in-person in mid-February in order to allow in-person shows in Virginia and

Gaithersburg. If ArtStream gets back in-person by mid-March, then Silver Spring has a chance to go in-person. As of now, ArtStream will still be paying theatre rental regardless.

### **PENN CREATIVE STRATEGY PRELIMINARY REPORT**

Molly Penn and Sofiya Cheyenne presented data gathering thus far for the strategic planning process. Penn spoke with similar organizations to ArtStream and potential partner organizations for the data gathering; they also held family member focus groups. Families consistently referred to the arts aspect of the program and the concrete ways in which they see the impact. The most important needs they have are building more social skills / socialization, building more community, belonging, improving listening skills and public speaking, building self-esteem, learning to work as a team, and pushing outside their comfort zone. Among suggestions for new programming, the focus groups requested classes covering other aspects of theatre such as set building, costumes, stage management, lighting, sound, singing, vocal projection etc.

Preliminary findings include: AS is in a strong financial position; families feel AS's programs have huge impact; AS's shift to digital kept the community together and hybrid programming will continue to be important; AS is praised for combining people with I/DD with people without I/DD. Opportunities for growth include: more programming, particularly into day programs and respite programs; diversifying ArtStream's fee structure; parent involvement; longer term registration commitment (for instance, a year rather than class-to-class) for AS programs. They identified 121 potential partners for growth as well as a number of theatre spaces. Opportunities include better communication and a more streamlined website. Geographically the classes/performing companies are not close enough to where many families live. Next steps include understanding three-year goals and what gaps exist to keep AS from those goals.

### **FY20-22 STRATEGIC PLAN PROGRESS REPORT**

AS has been invited to perform at the Kennedy Center Reach Event in July- negotiations are in process. AS is connecting the donor database with the donor form, which will be much more efficient, and are about to mail out the annual survey.

### **FY22Q1 DASHBOARD**

AS has seen a big jump in students from '21 to '22 and continues to see high retention rates. Individual donor numbers and gifts are up.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

No new business was proposed.

### **NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Board of Directors will be **Monday, March 21, 2022, 7-9 p.m.**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Maggie Haslam