



## **MEETING MINUTES**

### **Evanston Arts Council**

Tuesday, June 18, 2013

6:30 p.m.

Noyes Cultural Arts Center, 927 Noyes Street Studio 106

Members Present: Anne Berkeley co-chair; Heidi Bloom, co-chair; Helen Axelrood; Carole Bass; Lisa Degliantoni; Rina Gitlin; Fran Joy; Rebeca Mendoza; Dino Robinson; Jacqueline Williams.

Members Absent: Manuel Aleman; Greg Allen; Stephen Guenther; Nan Stein.

Staff Present: Wally Bobkiewicz, City Manager; Jeff Cory, Cultural Arts/Arts Council Director

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### **Declaration of Quorum**

With a quorum present, Anne Berkeley, co – chair called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

### **APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES**

Approval of the May meeting minutes was postponed until the July meeting.

**PUBLIC COMMENT** – Evanston artist Alfonso Nieves Ruiz said he is interested in learning about the Arts Council. He shared information about his plans to provide arts programming for Evanston children. He is also raising funds a book. His website is [www.anrstudios.com](http://www.anrstudios.com).

### **STAFF REPORT**

Mr. Cory mentioned that the Starlight Concert Series began last week and will continue through August 20. Mr. Cory noted his attendance at the recent Americans for the Arts Conference in Pittsburgh.

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Arts & Business** – Ms. Joy reported the group is having difficulty identifying landlords that will allow use of vacant space for Art Under Glass. Ms. Bass mentioned that sponsorship opportunities are available for Backstage Evanston. A save-the-date bookmark has been created to promote Backstage Evanston, and the event will be tied into the Evanston 150 Celebration. Ms. Gitlin said a brief history of the performing arts in Evanston will be presented during the opening remarks.

**Community Relations** – Ms. Bloom reported the June meeting was cancelled due to severe weather. Then next meeting will be at 6 p.m. on Wednesday, July 10.

### **COMMUNICATIONS**

Mr. Bobkiewicz reported City Council authorized the hiring of a Cultural Arts Coordinator, who will report directly to the City Manager. The City Manager said he hopes to have this position filled by the fall. He said Arts Council members would participate in the interview process. A listing will also be posted for an arts Program Manager position in the Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department. He said he has been authorized to work with the Arts Council in the implementation of

***Approved***

recommendations found in the evanstARTs report. Discussion ensued regarding the Piven proposal for the Noyes Cultural Arts Center. Ms. Mendoza asked Mr. Bobkiewicz to explain why he feels the Piven plan is a good idea. He responded that the plan improves the physical condition of the building and addresses a lack of vibrancy at Noyes, which he feels could be much more. He said the proposal will bring vitality back to the building and it is a great financial contribution from Piven. Ms. Mendoza asked what would happen to the building if the Piven proposal is not approved. Mr. Bobkiewicz said he is uncertain about the future of Noyes, but that we may have already gone too far to revert to the status quo. Ms. Bass said she has dissected the current proposal, which she found to be full of contradictions and financial errors. For example, at public meetings Piven is on record having stated that they will upgrade the electricity and install air conditioning throughout the entire building. However, in the contract it states the City of Evanston is responsible for this expense. Mr. Bobkiewicz replied that it will be a partnership. Ms. Bass noted that the added expense would expand the City's financial commitment beyond the loan. She expressed frustration that no one appears to have a good handle on the numbers, and suggested that a project of this magnitude should have outside source providing an independent fiscal analysis. Mr. Bobkiewicz said he is satisfied with his staff's review of the proposal. He thanked the Arts Council for their commitment in these hard times. He said that in time they will sort through what to do with the Noyes building.

Ms. Berkeley asked that fundraising be added as a discussion item on the agenda for July's meeting. Ms. Mendoza asked what they need money for. Ms. Degliantoni mentioned recent cuts in support to the Cultural Fund Grant Program by the City and state in recent years. The Arts Council could seek support to supplement the pool of available grant funds.

**ADJOURNMENT**

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting. A voice vote was taken and the motion was approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Jill Silverman  
Secretary II, Parks, Recreation and Community Services