



Evanston Arts Council Meeting

Tuesday, June 11, 2019, 6:30 p.m.

Lorraine H. Morton Civic Center, 2100 Ridge Avenue, Room 2402

Members Present: B. Adler, T. Sachs, I. Johnson, W. Jones, H. Washinushi, G. Riseborough, J. Cohen, J. Ahmad (6:38 p.m. arrival)

Members Absent: L. Corrin, S. Davis Friedman, A. Williams

Staff Present: P. Martínez

1. Call to Order and Declaration of a Quorum

Meeting was called to order at 6:33 p.m.

2. Public Comment

No public comment

3. Approve Meeting Minutes from April 9, 2019

4. Consideration

A. Cultural Fund Grants

Ms. Adler moved to split the \$30,000 in two amounts of \$15,000 for each category (support to organizations and special projects). The motion was not seconded.

Ms. Riseborough asked to open the floor for discussion.

Ms. Adler and Mr. Sachs provided the following summary of the panel's comments on the Special Projects applications:

Ms. Adler explained to the Arts Council that a group of five Evanston artists and three members of the Arts Council served as judges on May 4, 2019 for the Cultural Fund grant applications. Ms. Adler also explained she served as a moderator for the Special Projects category, and Ms. Paulina Martínez, Assistant to the City manager, help moderate the Support to Organizations panel.

Ms. Adler said she was impressed with the Chicago Sculpture International application; their proposal was a sculpture that would serve as a pollinator home.

Mr. Sachs said Northlight Theatre had good community projects, but they were not specific about which projects the grant would be used for. The outreach strategy was very good with disadvantaged communities, however.

Ms. Adler commented that The Musical Offering is a concert series focusing on women. She also said Hip Circle proposed a participatory dance event that empowers women. Ms. Alder also explained that ITA is an organization that works with music therapy for memory patients. It seemed like the program was more therapeutic than arts. Mr. Sachs pointed out that there is a fine line between arts projects with a therapeutic component, and therapy services which make use of one or more art forms. In the panel's opinion, ITA did admirable work, but fell more in the category of therapy than art.

Mr. Sachs commented that the Ridgeville Foundation's proposal showed a lack of diversity.

Ms. Adler mentioned that the Music Theater Works program proposal did not do enough to entice a diverse audience. Mr. Sachs noted that the new director shows a lot of promise and might be able to change that, but he is very new.

Mr. Sachs said the North Shore Choral Society had a good proposal of programs in the community, but they had little to do with singing, which is the organization's main art.

Ms. Adler said she would like the group to award bigger awards to fewer applicants as opposed to awarding small awards to all.

Ms. Riseborough asked about the "Books and Breakfast" proposal from the Evanston Art Center. Ms. Adler explained the program is an extracurricular program that takes place in the elementary schools before the school day starts for students to match with volunteers who read to them or help them with their homework, and that the Evanston Art Center proposed to provide creative options for the program.

Ms. Cohen provided the following summary of the panel's comments on the Support to Organizations applications:

Ms. Cohen said she was impressed with the Evanston Symphony Orchestra concert she attended to on May, and they do exactly what they say they are going to do.

Ms. Cohen explained Evanston In-School Music Association (EISMA) gives free concerts for school children. She also said Mudlark Theatre has a good reputation. Mr. Sachs said they have a very professional approach to the children's programs they put on. Ms. Cohen added they attempt to be inclusive.

Re: The Actors Gymnasium Ms. Cohen commented that they are only one of nine circus gymnasiums in the country. They are also internationally known and a good ambassador for Evanston.

Ms. Cohen explained Open Studio Project offers therapeutic programs for children to express themselves. The Mitchell Museum of the American Indian works with the whole Chicagoland area, and has a unique niche that serves an important function in Evanston and the region. The Evanston Dance Ensemble works with children to provide affordable dance lessons. The Youth Chorus of the North Shore offers choral experience for young people. Ms. Martínez explained the recruitment approach and the diversification process the organization was pursuing. Re: the Opus 327 NFP application, Ms. Cohen explained it is a not-for-profit organization inside the church; the organization is dedicated to preserving and promoting the historic Skinner pipe organ in St. Luke's Church. Ms. Cohen's concern was that their outreach strategy is weak.

Mr. Sachs said that if we followed Ms. Adler's suggestion for funding we could concentrate on the top four scores. Ms. Adler added to encourage those who don't receive funds to apply for the Community Support Fund.

Dr. Ahmad suggested those who received a score above 90% receive \$3,000 and those who scored above 80% receive \$2,000.

Ms. Washinushi said that the Arts Council should consider giving money to new groups instead of those who have received funding in the past. Mr. Sachs said that was a good point, but that policy needs to be in place for the next grant cycle, because it would not be fair for this year, as applicants were not aware of that provision.

Ms. Adler said Dr. Ahmad's model was good, but that the number should be cut off at 84% instead of 80%. Ms. Martínez explained that under this suggestion the following groups would be awarded funding:

3 groups over 90%

- Chicago Sculpture International - \$4,000
- Evanston Symphony Orchestra - \$4,000
- Evanston In-School Music Association - \$4,000
- Northlight Theatre - \$2,000
- The Musical Offering - \$2,000
- Evanston Art Center - \$2,000
- Music Institute of Chicago - \$2,000
- Mudlark Theatre - \$2,000
- The Actors Gymnasium - \$2,000
- Open Studio - \$2,000
- The Mitchel Museum of the American Indian - \$2,000
- Evanston Dance Ensemble - \$2,000

Ms. Adler moved to award \$4,000 to the applicants who received a score above 90% and \$2,000 to applicants who received a score between 84% and 90%. Ms. Riseborough seconded. Unanimously approved.

B. 826-828 Noyes Public Art Contribution

Ms. Riseborough introduced the topic. Ms. Martínez explained she has been in communication with the Chicago Public Arts Group (CPAG) Executive Director, Steve Weaver, and noted they had quoted \$1,200 for the design phase of the project. Ms. Johnson felt \$1,200 is too high, even if it's two artists.

Ms. Martínez and Ms. Johnson spoke about the maintenance plan for the project. Ms. Riseborough said the doors of the Noyes Street station garage would have to be painted, because access cannot be blocked.

Ms. Adler instructed staff to communicate to CPAG that CTA needs a rough draft, and to negotiate a lower fee for the design phase, starting at \$800.

Ms. Riseborough moved to authorize staff to negotiate. Ms. Johnson seconded. Unanimously approved.

5. Communication

A. **Chairs Report** – Ms. Adler / Ms. Davis Friedman

Ms. Adler reported she met with “Out of Sight,” an organization that does aspirational hopscotch murals on the ground. If the City wanted

to pursue this idea, the City would have to pay for the materials, but not the honorarium for the artist. She said she requested a formal proposal so that the Arts Council has a better understanding of the project. Ms. Riseborough asked about life-expectancy of the ground mural, Ms. Adler replied it is about 3 to 4 years.

Ms. Adler and Mr. Sachs met with Evanston Community Foundation to discuss collaborative efforts about equity in the arts.

Ms. Adler indicated she wants to schedule Bright Night. Ms. Martínez indicated she will coordinate a date that works for the Mayor's calendar in October or November. Ms. Adler also talked about the Mayor's Award at Bright night. She said the Arts Council needs to vote on it and it needs to be revised for cohesiveness.

Mr. Sachs suggested also adding an "Emerging Artist" award.

Mr. Jones suggested opening the award to those who do not work in Evanston but are from Evanston to draw attention to the more established and better recognized artists. The "Emerging Artist" award could be given to a local person. Mr. Jones added that the award he is proposing could be someone the Arts Council picks and the "Emerging Artist" award could be open to the community to nominate and vote on.

B. Public Art Subcommittee Report – Ms. Riseborough

Ms. Riseborough reported that the South Blvd. mural is repaired. The Michael Montenegro mural is repaired. The Chute School project is complete.

C. Working Groups Report

Mr. Sachs reported that the lunch for art organizations is on September 6; City Manager, Wally Bobkiewicz, will be the guest speaker.

D. Staff Report – Paulina Martínez

Ms. Martínez reported she attended the *Fight Like a Girl* exhibit, which received financial support through the Community Support Fund. She reported the opening had a good turnout, which was diverse in age, race, and gender. Ms. Riseborough, who also attended, reported she was disappointed in the concept of the work.

6. Announcements

No announcements.

7. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Paulina Martínez