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Evanston Arts Council Meeting

Tuesday, October 15, 2019, 6:30 p.m.

Lorraine H. Morton Civic Center, 2100 Ridge Avenue, 2404

Members Present: James Deeb, Judith Cohen, Gay Riseborough, Toby Sachs (Vice-chair), Beth Adler (Chair), William Jones, Maasai Amewa, Indira Johnson, Lisa Corrin

Members Absent: Jamal Ahmad, Angela Williams

Staff Present: Paulina Martínez (Assistant to the City Manager)

1. Call to Order and Declaration of a Quorum

The meeting was called to order at 6:39 p.m.

2. Public Comment

No public comment.

3. Approve Meeting Minutes from September 10, 2019

Ms. Adler moved to remove “cocktail party” from the minutes.”

Mr. Deeb and Ms. Riseborough moved to correct punctuation and spelling errors.

The minutes were approved unanimously as amended.

4. Consideration

A. Community Support Fund Guidelines

Ms. Adler recommended clarifying that the program will accept in-kind donations as part of the project’s budget.

Ms. Adler also asked for volunteers to look over the guidelines to get rid of the redundancy. Ms. Corrin nominated Ms. Riseborough and Ms. Cohen. Ms. Cohen indicated she would help revise the guidelines for redundancy.

Mr. Deeb said he thought it was logistically impossible to provide the demographic data without being intrusive and it is hard to collect for these purposes.

37 Mr. Sachs responded that perhaps what the group should do is to remove this for
38 now, and have the Equity in the Arts subcommittee think about how to collect that
39 data in a better way.

40
41 Mr. Deeb added that asking for approximate attendance is good, but we are
42 asking for too much information.

43
44 Ms. Johnson said that the group should still ask questions about inclusivity. Ms.
45 Corrin said just ask a question, instead of asking to check a box.

46
47 Mr. Jones suggested looking at example of reports by the Chicago Community
48 Trust or the Joyce Foundation.

49
50 Ms. Adler recommended removing the questions about attendance and
51 demographics from the final report.

52
53 Mr. Sachs recommended cleaning the guidelines up and tabling to the next
54 meeting.

55
56 Mr. Deeb asked to strike word “high resolution” from the report form.

57
58 All members agreed to provide final comments to Ms. Martínez by October 22 via
59 email.

60 B. Plaque for *Mound*

61 **Ms. Adler moved to approve. Ms. Riseborough seconded. The motion**
62 **carried unanimously.**

63

64 C. Purchase Proposal of *Re-vive, Re-grow*

65 Ms. Martínez explained to the Arts Council that artists, Vivian Visser, offered her
66 *Re-vive, Re-grow* sculpture for sale at the price of \$2,500 on top of the \$5,000
67 paid for a 2-year lease.

68

69 Mr. Jones and Mr. Deeb expressed concern over the long term maintenance of
70 the sculpture and the life expectancy. Ms. Johnson agreed.

71

72 Ms. Adler said the piece is not sturdy and will eventually decay.

73

74 **Ms. Riseborough moved approve the purchase of *Re-vive, Re-grow*. No**
75 **second. Motion failed.**

76

77 5. Discussion

78

A. Main-Dempster Mile Mural

79 Ms. Katherine Gotsick introduced herself as the Executive Director of the Main-
80 Dempster Mile (MDM). She explained the MDM commissioned a mural at
81 Washington Street a couple of years ago, but it was hard to repair because of the
82 condition of the viaduct wall. The MDM approached the original artist, Jordan

83 Nichol (a.k.a. “Pose”), to fix it, but he proposed a revolving mural instead at no
84 cost to the group. In exchange, the artist asked to be given creative liberty. The
85 MDM and Arts Council agreed, as long as it followed a “no paint” list.
86

87 Ms. Riseborough expressed concern about the issues with the mural. Ms.
88 Gotsick said she was too, but asked the artist’s studio to work with EMAP to
89 compare notes on wall prepping. Based on the feedback from EMAP, the artist
90 agreed to prime the wall, which was not done with the first mural.

91
92 Mr. Amewa also raised concerns about the materials of the wall. Ms. Gotsick
93 explained after one year a new concept will be painted. The MDM is paying for
94 primer, but the artist is paying for everything else.

95
96 Ms. Cohen and other members expressed concerns over the phrase: “if you think
97 you can do a thing your right” as it is grammatically incorrect in the design for the
98 first rotating mural.

99
100 The general consensus was mainly favorable.

101 102 B. Arts Council Bylaws

103 Ms. Adler said she wanted to rewrite the mission to incorporate the outcomes of
104 the Arts Council retreat that took place in March 2019. She suggested that any
105 additional suggestions were turned in to Ms. Martínez by October 22 via email.
106

107 Mr. Deeb recommended adding a line that refers to geographic diversity.

108
109 This item was tabled to the next Arts Council meeting.
110

111 C. New Members Onboarding

112 Ms. Adler and Mr. Sachs explained that they had discussed creating an informal
113 process to onboard new Arts Council members.
114

115 Mr. Sachs added that in his experience with other boards he has been paired
116 with a “buddy” to orient him, and that it would be best if veteran Arts Council
117 members volunteered to welcome the newcomers. Overall, this would be meant
118 to be an informal process and on a volunteer basis.
119

120 6. Communications

121 A. Chairs Report

122 Ms. Adler mentioned that the Community Support Fund has money left over, thus
123 asked the Arts Council members to encourage people with concepts or projects
124 to apply.
125

126 Ms. Adler provided a brief update about the progress in the planning of “Bright
127 Night for the Arts.” Mr. Sachs asked if some tickets will be free. Ms. Adler said we
128 can reserve tickets for Family Focus and Identity Dance.

129 Ms. Corrin asked what has been the event cost. Ms. Martínez replied that last
130 year a little over \$3,000 were spent on food, which is the biggest expense of the
131 event. Ms. Corrin suggested considering eliminating food and making the event
132 free to allow all people to access the event.

133
134 Ms. Cohen said she understood the point, but disagreed because the general
135 feeling of the event is of elegance. Mr. Sachs said he agreed on the way the
136 event was perceived, and that is why it should change.

137
138 Ms. Corrin added that “Bright Night for the Arts” is the only event The Block
139 Museum allows that charges a fee. Alcohol is usually not allowed either.

140
141 Ms. Martínez indicated that if the Arts Council decided to make the event free,
142 she could easily get quote for desserts, fruit, coffee, water, non-alcoholic cider,
143 and other treats.

144
145 The general consensus of the group was to make the event free.

146
147 **B. Public Art Subcommittee Report**
148 Ms. Martínez reported that a piece of art at the west wall of the new Robert
149 Crown Community Center was not going to be allowed by the engineers, as the
150 building was not designed to have anything painted or hung from that wall.

151
152
153 **C. Equity in the Arts Subcommittee Report**
154 Mr. Sachs reported that the Equity in the Arts subcommittee was going to meet
155 the next day for a second time. The group’s focus is to get trained, and Deputy
156 City Manager, Kimberly Richardson, will lead the first round of training. He also
157 added that the group secured a grant from the Evanston Community Foundation
158 for further training through Enrich Chicago.

159
160 Mr. Sachs mentioned that the group is working with the Parks and Recreation
161 Department to revive the Ethnic Arts Festival.

162
163
164 Ms. Adler and Mr. Sachs reported that they provided a brief progress report to
165 the Human Services Committee.

166
167 **D. Staff Report**
168 Ms. Martínez provided a brief overview of the proposed budget.

169
170 Ms. Adler expressed concern about the community engagement process for the
171 Robert Crown public art piece. She did not think the proposed process by the
172 artists will get enough traction.

173

174 Ms. Corrin said “we chose the artist” and this is how she works. “We also don’t
175 have a skilled curator that communicated between the artists and the council.”
176

177 Ms. Adler said she wants to utilize Washington School. She suggested hiring a
178 teaching artist, who can be paid from the community support fund. Mr. Amewa
179 offered to help as the teaching artist. Mr, Sachs said the teaching artist can work
180 even without Blessing present.
181

182 Ms. Adler, Ms. Riseborough, and Ms. Cohen offered to join artists, Blessing
183 Hancock, at the tables where she will collect feedback from the community.
184

185 **7. Announcements**

186 No announcements.
187

188 **8. Adjournment**

189
190 The meeting was adjourned at 8:52 p.m.
191

192 Respectfully submitted,
193

194 Paulina Martínez