

**ASSOCIATED ARTISTS OF PITTSBURGH**  
**Board of Directors Meeting**  
**November 17, 2014, 6:30 PM – Frame House Gallery**

Board Members present: John Lewis, Ann Thompson, Scott Hunter, Cecile Shellman, Mia Tarducci Henry, David Stanger, Ken Antol, Emily Meyer, Kathryn Stanko, David Bush, Christopher J. King, Ryan Lammie, PJ Zimmerlink.

Absent: Brian Siewiorek, Andy Urbach

Guests: Juliana Morris, Executive Director, AAP; Nancy Byrnes (first 45 minutes of meeting)

The meeting was called to order at 6:32 pm.

Welcome and Introductions

John Lewis opened the meeting by welcoming four new Directors who were elected to the Board at the November Members' Meeting. The new members are: David Bush, Christopher J. King, Ryan Lammie, and PJ Zimmerlink. Each board member present spoke in turn, introducing him/herself by name and stating how long s/he had been engaged in board service with AAP.

Ms. Morris and Mr. Lewis presented each Board member with Vicky Clark's book *The History of Associated Artists of Pittsburgh*, and encouraged everyone to read their copies.

Mr. Lewis introduced special guest Nancy Byrnes, an event planner who came well recommended. Each board member had been presented with a draft outline that Ms. Byrnes put together. She has spent time working with Andy Urbach, Juliana Morris, John Lewis on ideas for a major fundraising effort.

Fundraising Event Discussion

Ms. Byrnes began her remarks by stating that she had been a Director of the Associated Artists of Pittsburgh board as a Community Member about 25-30 years ago. She is excited to jumpstart AAP's public image. She is an event specialist, not a fundraising specialist, but she has been in charge of major fundraising efforts and events for key nonprofit organizations across the City of Pittsburgh, including the Carnegie International gala, the Teenie Harris Retrospective exhibition gala, the Pittsburgh Cultural Trust, and others. She has helped organizations raise millions of dollars.

Ms. Byrnes is confident that she can help us raise both funds and our image, stating that we need to project a "new era" image. Ideas initially came from the advisory board, and there were some interesting concepts raised. However, it does appear that AAP needs to capitalize on The Annual,

as this is our legacy. Considering we are having a traveling annual exhibition in 2015, we should look at a local focus for the fundraiser.

The event could happen in late May. Dates that were being looked at included May 22 or 23, or a Thursday (May 21) if needed. The event will comprise a gala event and art sale—a “first crack” at the juried artwork.

The venue for this event will be the Hotel Monaco, formerly the lobby of Reed Smith. Ms. Byrnes had a tour of the site. It’s a great size, is beautiful, and will be very a propos for our event. The hotel is set to open in February or March. The Hotel Monaco is part of a private boutique group, with 60 hotels in 30 cities. The hotel group is San Francisco based, and was named the 28<sup>th</sup> best company to work for in Forbes Magazine. In terms of revenue, we are looking to net \$30,000. This figure represents net profit after all expenses are covered.

Ms. Byrnes and Mr. Lewis acknowledged that this is all very new for us, and that we haven’t worked with her before, but we should trust Ms. Byrnes’ track record and experience, as well as reviewing the prospectus laid before us.

The fundraiser in the hotel will comprise a rooftop bar with cocktails and hors d’oeuvres; art sales; a silent and/or live auction that will include non-art items; remarks; a strolling supper (perhaps); entertainment (backdrop); and a prize recognition moment or event.

Artists will be invited, but there was some question about whether that would be all artists or just the prize winners. The intent is to have 250-300 guests.

There will be an honorary committee with two active chairpersons. Nancy Byrne has identified other committees including a corporate sponsor committee, which will provide in-kind support such as building exhibition walls; and a patron committee, whose tickets will be offered at a higher level, about \$500 each.

A letter-writing effort from the host committee will be undertaken to presell tickets to 75-100 people. There may also be an Ohio Ambassadors Committee. Juliana will be excellent for the Public Relations Committee. She is very proficient in communications and public relations. She can work with Nancy on this committee. The board chair/event chair will check in on the committees.

The board and advisory committee should help to build audiences; everyone is expected to work hard on this. The database of invitees will stay within the organization. Ms. Byrnes pointed our attention to a preliminary schedule/timeline that is laid out in the document. One significant date is April 6: the print deadline, by which time we will know how well we are meeting our goals and whether this will be as successful as expected.

The main objective of this event is to polish the image of the organization. The take-home should be “Wow! What a show! Wow! 104 years!” The party will be excellent, but even more so, the message will come across and we will raise money.

With regards to the hotel, May is a good time for the event as well. There are no weddings planned. The hotel is not yet being aggressively marketed. There are 240 rooms.

John Lewis expressed concern: There is significant financial and other risk; we are incurring costs. The key will be to land corporate sponsorships very early. John Lewis' firm has already committed to be a \$10,000 sponsor.

Cecile Shellman posed a question about the idea of modular walls. From her experience, it is harder than it might appear to install demountable walls in a finished space with polished floors (danger of floor damage due to scratching), no ceiling supports (stability), and no loading dock (safety in transporting art), especially where heavy or cumbersome artwork is concerned. Downtown Pittsburgh with its one-way street and onerous traffic will mean careful scheduling of drop-offs/pick-ups. Cecile is familiar with installing difficult shows in Downtown spaces—from getting street permits to drop off art to bringing in construction/wall elements from off the street, working with The Smithsonian, the Holocaust Museum and local art venues/artists to bring in shows. It's not a deal breaker; it's just something to consider.

John Lewis said it's scary, but we have to do something. Andy Urbach has identified a corporate sponsor involved in construction that will help with the modular walls and also store them. PJ Zimmerlink is also very proficient at building and installing gallery walls.

Juliana asked Cecile and PJ to advise on that aspect as planning ensues. She also mentioned that there will be size restrictions for the show because the Annual venue is a much smaller space. This will prevent some of the anticipated concerns. The show will also be on the first floor, so there will be no concerns about freight elevators.

PJ Zimmerlink asked whether we could put out an early announcement for the Annual. Artists should know that the gallery will be smaller, as this will affect the projects they are currently involved in for the Annual. Juliana says we could put the floor plan in the prospectus.

The discussion returned to the planning details. It was stressed that “entertainment will be an accent.” The event will have party elements, but it's not a party. The party elements will be artfully designed, but we are not hosting a five-course meal. Mia Tarducci Henry suggested having Chatham Baroque serve as our entertainment since we are helping them with their fundraiser (by providing art).

The Board Fundraiser subcommittee is comprised of: John Lewis and Andy Urbach (co-chairs); Mia Tarducci Henry; Chris King; David Stanger; Ryan Lammie, David Bush. Other planning meetings may include advisory members and intended advisory members Greg Barrett, Cindy Busch, and Stacy Weiss.

The floor was opened again for questions: were there any strong reactions to the ideas so far?

PJ Zimmerlink stated that he has a “terribly negative reaction” to the idea of a fundraiser of this caliber. He thinks we should have an “inclusive, more affordable event,” especially for the artists' sake, and since it's our first event of this kind.

Juliana Morris said we are financially in trouble, so we have to do something big.

PJ worries that this is the wrong profile for young artists.

Nancy Byrne asserted that a \$35 ticket cannot help to raise a lot of money. This event that we are currently planning—a higher end affair-- is a quick hit to manage our fundraising goal.

Juliana remarked that The Heinz Endowments will be pleased that we are developing capacity and broadening our fundraising efforts by not being exclusively reliant on outside funding organizations. She also stated that we cannot function without an annual fundraiser. The organization inherited a lot of loose ends within the last few years. There was no follow-up to grow lists. We have much more programming now.

John Lewis agreed, saying we need a fundraiser because of finances. We are still having a regular preview. We have always had a preview.

Ann asked whether this is a big celebration of the organization, putting us on the map. If so, the event should definitely include artists and be mindful of them.

Nancy Byrnes said that the event is to make AAP stronger, not to exclude anyone.

John Lewis said that there was a comment from a member at the November meeting that members need to not feel disenchanting, and that they need to be included where possible. John Lewis feels a lot of pressure to get the organization financially stable.

Ms. Byrnes was excused from the meeting, as her allotted time was spent.

The conversation continued.

Kathryn Stanko said she liked that Nancy Byrnes is going to direct us through the process.

In the previous month's meeting, a quote was given for Nancy Byrnes' work in putting the plan together. That fee was \$1,000. It should be noted, said John Lewis, that her fee for doing the work that the plan sets out is \$10,000.

David Bush, who has extensive event planning experience, suggested cutting Ms. Byrnes a deal: \$7,500 over two years?

Chris wondered if we should aim higher for a target goal. Chris also checked the calendar and verified that the dates Nancy Byrnes suggested are indeed the same dates as Memorial Day weekend—not a good weekend for the event.

Breakout Groups for Subcommittees

The Board Meeting broke into two subcommittee groups at 8:03 p.m.: Financial and Advisory Board. Full notes for these subcommittee group discussions should be available by group leaders.

The Board Meeting reconvened at 8:39 p.m. A brief reporting on these breakouts: The Finance Subcommittee's next meeting will be on December –at this meeting there will be additional planning for the individual task forces for the fundraising event mentioned by Ms. Byrne, and as included in her planning document; the Advisory Committee settled on a process for bringing new members on. Five advisory board members will serve on the Board Advisory Committee in an official capacity; Graham Shearing, Elaine Effort, Ken Beers, Barry Friedman, Laura Horner.

### Director's Report

The Director's Report will be send via email to all Directors.

### Voting on Officers

The Board of Directors as currently constituted was read by Board President John Lewis:

John Lewis, President; Ken Antol, First Vice President; Emily Meyer, Second Vice President; Cecile Shellman, Board Secretary; Kathryn Stanko, Chair: Education Committee.

PJ Zimmerlink accepted the position of co-chair to the Exhibitions Committee. Scott Hunter is the other co-Chair. Chris Hunter was asked previously to serve as Board Treasurer; he accepted.

Kathryn Stanko made a motion to approve the slate of officers as now constituted. Ann seconded that motion. All were in favor.

The August and October minutes were unanimously approved, with August minutes' having been revised at Juliana Morris' request for typographical errors.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:57 p.m.