

ASSOCIATED ARTISTS OF PITTSBURGH
Board of Directors Meeting
September 14, 2015, 6:30 PM – Ice House Conference Room

Board Members present: John Lewis, Scott Hunter, Cecile Shellman, Ken Antol, Kathryn Stanko, Brian Siewiorek, Mia Tarducci Henry, Emily Meyer, Ryan Lammie, Chris King, Tom

Absent: Andy Urbach, Ann Thompson, PJ Zimmerlink

Guests: Juliana Morris, Executive Director, Jeff Jarzynka, Potential Board Member (excused prior to business portion of meeting)

The meeting was called to order at 6:30pm.

Review and Approval of Minutes.

There are no minutes for the July 2015 meeting.

Interview of Jeff Jarzynka

The Board interviewed new community member Jeff Jarzynka as a candidate to be recommended by the Directors for potential election at the November member meeting. The interview portion consisted of John Lewis' giving a description of the organization, its leadership, practices, and programs. Mr. Jarzynka was then asked about his skills and talents as they might pertain to AAP board membership. He cited his involvement with The Brew House board; his experience at his own ad agency and design firm that would enable him to provide communications expertise, his work as a guest juror; and his passion for art as a collector and amateur art dealer. In particular, he recently sold 70 works of art at a private show. Many of the artists are AAP members.

Mr. Jarzynka went on to say that he believes AAP has "found new life" in the community, evidenced by a slate of new artists and an improved quality in the exhibitions. He has encouraged artists to join the organization, and one was admitted recently.

John Lewis communicated next steps to Mr. Jarzynka, ensuring the candidate that there will be follow-up from the Board. Ken antol will invite Mr. Jarzynka to the next Advisory Council meeting.

After his interview was concluded, the Board debriefed the conversation. Brian Siewiorek considered the candidate to be very diplomatic and well spoken. Mia Tarducci Henry will recommend him.

Executive Director's Report.

Juliana Morris led this portion of the meeting by stating that a Buhl Foundation meeting—attended by her and Mr. Lewis—went exceptionally well. Education is of prime interest to Buhl. A grant submission is due a week from the date of the September meeting.

Juliana called Cynthia Ferris-Kelly, Grants and Program Officer at The Fine Foundation. Ms. Ferris-Kelly agreed to have the Foundation fund the 2016 Annual. This grant also needed to be submitted within a week. The Annual is back at Carnegie Museum of Art in 2016, with an extended schedule, from May to August. The exhibition will be in the Heinz Gallery, a more visible and popular space than originally scheduled. Our credibility is improving. Fred Thieman, President of the Buhl Foundation, invited AAP to ask for funding. Catherine Evans, Chief Curator at Carnegie Museum of Art, is pleased with our direction. The fundraiser put on by AAP also helped to raise visibility and awareness about the organization's changes. Cecile Shellman, Board Secretary and an employee at Carnegie Museums of Pittsburgh, has met with Catherine Evans to advocate on behalf of AAP.

The Heinz Endowments grant was submitted on August 21. For the last two years, Heinz has given us \$20,000 per year. Janet Sarbaugh has recently suggested that AAP can ask for double that amount from now on, based on our performance. We have effectively moved into a bigger grant category. While we didn't receive the money until the end of the fiscal year previously, Ms. Sarbaugh says we will receive future funds more quickly.

Juliana Morris has finalized the budget. The budget is about 10% higher than last year's.

Regarding the Exhibitions Committee, there has not been a huge response to exhibitions. Scott Hunter and Adam Welch have met about the exhibitions. This system needs to be reevaluated. The committee is great for volunteering for discrete projects, but it has not yielded a lot of programmatic input.

We need to focus on getting a space for ourselves. The venues we are taking on have not turned out to be the best choices. One example of this is the Christine Frechard Gallery in Squirrel Hill. There have been many challenges in securing this gallery as a potential venue for a show. Lots of time and energy is being expended finding ideal occasional spaces. If we had our own space, we would have many more opportunities to showcase our artists.

Adam Welch has been working with Ryan, Scott, and PJ on exhibit-related matters. We were glad to have a temporary part time person until August 31; we have surpassed that timeline and he is still proving to be incredibly important to the exhibit work. He is a good consultant for us. He is taking care of the upcoming Mine Factory exhibit.

Mia Tarducci Henry posed a Devil's Advocate question that might be sure to be raised by members: Why wasn't this position offered as a general call? The answer is that this is more of a consultancy than a job. This was a business decision. At the same time, we are fully aware that we have a responsibility to the membership. Adam is doing a lot for us *pro bono*, beyond the five hours/week stint. It would be a good idea for us to have Adam furnish a one-pager describing his

capacity and competences, as well as his role. There are also other short-term, part-time consultants with whom we already work.

Some of the recent concerns about having Adam Welch work in a limited part-time role have to do with his personal relationship with the Executive Director. Assumptions are being made, but all members and directors should understand that he is highly qualified. When asked, we will say that Mr. Welch is “filling a part-time, low-paying consultant position. He is the best qualified for this role.” Emily Meyer will craft a bulleted list that we can use as talking points.

Chris King will speak with the auditors about the audit. They will furnish a draft soon. Helene helped with getting this done.

Juliana had lunch with Mr. Swain, director of Greater Pittsburgh Arts Council (GPAC). AAP was invited to attend an October 1 conference about the state of the arts in Pittsburgh. The meeting is at the Heinz History Center.

Other meetings have included one with Bunny Buncher of the Buncher Foundation, an upcoming update meeting with Graham (Shearing?). The Buncher Foundation typically funds education-based, student-focused projects, primarily those with an accessibility or disability connection.

John Lewis talked about a colleague in his firm who oversees a foundation that funds programs for children with disabilities. He said that if someone under the AAP umbrella could run some sort of program that helps children with learning disabilities, we could possibly get as much as \$10,000. The deadline is sometime in October. Charitable Trust could fast track this kind of grant for us.

Juliana and John described the ARAD hearing. The presentation was brief, but John made sure to enumerate our success, explaining how we had improved and demonstrated what we are doing for the artist community. He asked why ARAD does not give us funding. They want more information on the number of donors, particularly corporate donors. They are interested in learning more about the impact of AAP on the community. John Lewis will write a letter to ARAD, hoping for at least \$5,000.

Chatham University has contacted AAP about a student curator for an exhibition. We are working with Ryan Lammie about a possible show on the North Side. Juliana is writing a patron newsletter for those who came to the fundraiser. A report to PNC is forthcoming to show how their gift of \$2,500 was spent. We have advertised membership screenings.

We need to do better in attracting diverse membership. The diversity committee needs to provide input and help. We also need to have a dedicated committee for Venue/Space and Education. Eric Shiner, director of The Andy Warhol Museum, had at one time agreed to co-curate a show for us, but wanted it to have a diverse artist component. When it was discovered that we truly do not have a diverse membership (via looking at artist profiles and online portfolios), Mr. Shiner decided not to be involved.

Only 25% of the total membership currently has information on the web. We have about 500 members. Categorization into sectors is important.

Cecile Shellman suggested that we have to be thoughtful about how to develop the board are become a more inclusive organization. While it had been suggested to invite African American artists such as Vanessa German and Alisha Wormsley to join our Advisory Council and/or become members, we have to realize we are asking these artists to effectively integrate an overwhelmingly homogenous large organization.

Other board candidates were floated, included John McCaffrey and Jack Tomaco.

Mia Tarducci Henry led the board in a lively discussion about specific ways in which the structure of AAP might change. There are suggested changes to membership levels and responsibilities. Our professionalism and professional development of the artist members should be key. There will need to be a lot more discussion about this in the future, with buy-in from the board and membership over time.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45.