

Minutes

Baltimore Clayworks Board of Trustees

Annual Board Meeting

Board Room in Gallery Building

January 22, 2020 | 6:00pm

This meeting was held in accordance with Baltimore Clayworks' bylaws.

In Attendance: Ronni Aronin, Deb Bedwell, Ariel Brown, Alan Cooper, Carla Dunlap, Marcy Emmer, John Gazurian, Nick Hawkins, Melanie Hood-Wilson, Cynthia Kammann, Susan Patz, Megan Rich, Larry Sandler, Fitsum Shebeshe, Leathia West, Marlene Sokolov Sandler, Pam Worthington. Staff: Cyndi Wish, Candace Mitchell.

Absent: Margaret Allen, Pat Halle, Caroline Jelavich, Volker Schoenleiss. Christina McCleary on leave of absence,

Guests (former board members): Mary Ann Mears, Rima Semaan

Welcome: Call to Order at 6:00pm - Susan Patz

Introduction of New Board Members - Nick Hawkins and Leathia West

Three new board members were welcomed. Fitsum Shebeshe, Melanie Hood-Wilson, and Ariel Brown introduced themselves. Board Members then introduced themselves around the table.

Recognitions

Sue Patz was congratulated and thanked by Deborah Bedwell (included here as Attachment #1) for her service to Baltimore Clayworks over the past 2 years of her presidency and beyond. Sue was presented with an engraved paperweight by Leathia West, a Certificate of Appreciation by Carla Dunlap, and a vase made by Sam Wallace. Cake and toasts were enjoyed. Sue thanked the full board for all its work and dedication.

Rima Semaan and Mary Ann Mears, members transitioning off the board were recognized by Sue with certificates of appreciation. They were thanked for their guidance and dedication through the rescue and renewal of Baltimore Clayworks. Sue also thanked **John K. Smith and Annet Couwenberg** who were unable to attend.

Approval of Minutes - Carla Dunlap

Carla asked for approval of the minutes from the November 13, 2019 Board Meeting. John Gazurian made a motion to approve the November minutes; Deb seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Executive Committee Update – Susan Patz

Sue summarized topics discussed at several Executive Committee meetings including:

- 2020 Budget.
- The Parking lot lease to Baltimore City began in 2000 ends May 2020. Negotiations have been taking place to detail the renewal of the lease for the next 20 years that include fair termination clauses for both Clayworks and the City.
- A Board Orientation session with both new and old members is being planned. It was agreed that a 4-hour session would be appropriate. Staff will send a google poll to determine a viable date in February. The location is to be determined.
- Sue asked that each member review the committee descriptions and their assignments and email Carla to confirm or request a different or additional committee assignment. Each member is required to participate in at least one committee.

Executive Director's Annual Report – Cyndi Wish (See Attachment #2 for full list)

Cyndi presented a list of Clayworks' highlights of 2019 including the continuation of the workforce development program, summer classes with the National Federation of the Blind, Try-It class accessibility for wheel chair student, record high class enrollment with shift to younger students, well attended artist workshops, mezzanine artist spaces full with 8 person waiting list, high enrollment for 2019 summer camp, and received hands on clay training scholarship program for institutional marketing plan. Clayworks also saw a record number of features on TV, radio and in print including WYPR's Out of the Blocks!, Ceramics Monthly, BMoreArt, Baltimore Magazine, Baltimore Style, Fox45, Channel 13, The MWIA Newsletter, and more.

Financial Report - Cyndi/Candace

The year to date financial statement was presented. Candace noted that there are very few items to add to complete the final report.

Approval of 2020 Budget by Cyndi/Candace

The 2020 budget was presented. Discussion included a need for a functional analysis and ways to determine the capacity of spaces in relation to the class sizes, shelf space, and storage, plus capacity for events that also produce revenue. There were several programmatic goals discussed that were not solely revenue-based, but examples of exemplifying and building upon our mission. Increased contributed revenue was recommended to the Board in the 2020 budget. It will need to be well-monitored, as this is a large increase from actuals in 2019. The Executive Director with the assistance of the Board will be accountable to achieve these goals. The Board will vote to approve

the strategic plan at the March meeting. The implementation plan will guide the organization to steps to achieve its goals.

Carla Dunlap moved to approve the 2020 Budget as presented. John Gazurian seconded.

Discussion: Alan noted that Clayworks is in a position almost as crucial as 3 years ago. This is an ambitious budget. Clayworks must move forward now. Revenue drives a non-profit budget so it must be both carefully monitored to meet the budget's revenue goals. To do so, the board needs to determine its vision for 3 and 5 years out.

VOTE: Motion passed unanimously.

DEAI Committee Request is tabled until next meeting.

Nominations for 2020 Officers - Leathia and Nick

Introduction of Proposed Slate of Officers:

New – Marcy Emmer, President for a two year term.

Continuing - Larry Sandler, VP; Carla Dunlap, Secretary; and Margaret Allen, Treasurer.

A motion to approve the slate was made by John Gazurian, and seconded by Ronni Aronin.

VOTE: The motion was passed unanimously.

Outgoing President's Message – Sue Patz

Sue told the board that it has been an honor to work with them, the staff, teachers, artists and our community- and accomplish our current success. She acknowledged the Clayworks founders and the steering committee that guided the community in reopening Clayworks. She asked that the board look at the most recent past and understand what happened and why in 2017. The hurdles that were overcome were legendary and serve as a cautionary reminder of what can happen when a Board and/or Executive Leadership fails to understand and thus responsibly steward this treasured non-profit. With a deep knowledge of Clayworks' recent past, Sue reiterated the important stewardship responsibilities of the Board, financially and as the final overseer of programmatic goals to achieve its mission.

In order to insure Clayworks' financial viability, Sue recommends Clayworks establish both an endowment fund and a restricted reserve fund that requires Board-approval prior to any release of funds. She looks forward to marketing being ramped up so our work and our relevance to the City of Baltimore, to the state of MD, and the national and international ceramics and arts communities are known. This marketing goes beyond what is current. It is the vision of what Clayworks will be in 3, 5, 10 years and beyond.

Like the strategic plan and development plan still being formulated, this is the visionary plan that proclaims to all why our mission and work is both critical and relevant. Attention to this, is the raison d'être of our work and is marketing at its best.

Sue closed by welcoming Marcy Emmer, Clayworks' newly elected Board President. Marcy will be a great President who brings strong Baltimore roots to the organization, and a comprehensive understanding of Clayworks. She has been a business owner, arts educator and more. As a Clayworks student for many years- Marcy is famous for creating a welcoming and fun atmosphere in every class.

Sue stated she is not going far and will remain on the Board. She looks forward to making her goals a reality, but especially working under the leadership of our new Board President, Marcy Emmer.

Meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Board Orientation Meeting - Date to be determined

Next board Meeting - March 11, 2020

Next Executive Committee Meeting - February 12, 2020

Next Community Meeting - February 26, 2020

Scribe: Lynne Molner

Carla Dunlap, Secretary

Marcy Emmer, President

Attachment #1

Remarks of Appreciation to Susan Patz by Deborah Bedwell.

It's not often these days that I get to speak for the organization as a whole, but tonight I have the honor and privilege of doing just that. On behalf of all of Baltimore Clayworks, of the trustees gathered here, of its artists, staff, teachers, students and for the members of the broad and diverse communities that we seek to serve, we thank you so much for being our leader, our board chair and our Strongest Sister of Resistance during the past three years. These years have been at times both tumultuous and rewarding, and most of all they have been a journey with you, lantern in hand, leading the way.

We thank you first of all for your vision and for sharing that vision when success was all but invisible. We thank you, Sue for your strength, your steadfast belief in our history as a forward-thinking and useful legacy, and for your bold and forthright communication of that legacy - speaking truth to power and to the powerless.

We appreciate your generosity of both the spirit and the tangible, and of the many ways that generosity was made manifest. We thank you and your family for the personal sacrifice of your presence in their lives and the countless late-night hours in front of your computer and also making the case. And most of all for your loyalty and your tenacity and your presence. You just show up!

Sue, you are like the finest piece of porcelain, full of beauty and grace and able to withstand the hottest of flames and emerge stronger. For this and so much more, please accept our heartfelt appreciation.

Attachment 2

Notes from Cyndi Wish's report on Highlights from 2019

Successful first year and continuation of the Workforce Development Program. BCYF funding got delayed. Grant from the Brown Foundation filling the gap, new BCYF funds scheduled now for March.

Hired two WFD students to Clayworks staff to assist summer camp. Summer partnership with PHR, creating a public art piece with YouthWorks students in Park Heights.

Classes with NFB – creation of what we hope will be an ongoing tactile mural. Marguerite conducted training for some of our teachers on how to teach ceramics to blind students. Now enrolled in Viannay's full wheel class with sighted students.

Recent try-it saw the first use of our accessible wheel by a student in a wheel chair. (In Matt's memory....)

Class enrollment is at a record high and age demographic is shifting younger. (Credit general trend in ceramics and targeted marketing.)

At the end of 2019 we were leading into 2020 with about 2.5 times the deferred revenue we saw leading into 2019.

Successful and exciting workshop programs this past year. Misty Gamble, Shawna Pinkus, Yoshi Fuji.

Springboard is running out of space – looking at expanding the space into the classroom. Mezzanine program has a nine person wait list.

Short-term residency program launched! First short term resident produced public art sculpture in conjunction with the Mount Washington School through a grant Clayworks received from Healthy Neighborhoods. Second scheduled short term resident cancelled, so Clayworks opened the space to multi-media artists who integrate Clay into their work. The space is now being used by two “new to Clayworks” artists.

We need housing for short-term residents! Something to address as an organization for the future.

We are working on a new “teacher training” program which will be multi-lingual and support immigrants and non-native English speakers. Clayworks will provide trainings for artists and craftspeople in how to teach clay techniques, then support classes and workshops within their own communities – churches/libraries/community centers, etc.

“Hands In Clay” scholarship program provides tuition assistance/stipend for materials/travel assistance for those who self-identify as being people of color or having a disability.

Worked all of 2019 collecting marketing data and are now in a good position to build institutional marketing plan through the grant we got to work with Vayner media (also comes with \$10,000), as well as fine tune specific marketing initiatives for defined goals.

We are also working with business students from the University of Baltimore on Marketing strategy with a focus on fundraising targeted towards millennials and GenZ.

We were featured on WYPR’s Out of the Blocks! And in 2019, Clayworks and Clayworks artists were featured in Ceramics Monthly, BMore Art, Baltimore Magazine, Baltimore Style, Fox45, Channel 13, The MWIA Newsletter, and more.

The shop is back online.

Our galleries saw over 5000 visitors throughout 2019, and we exhibited the work of over 250 artists.

FireFest saw about 150 attendees, and was lovely. Putting a unique graphic identity on the event was fun. New people through the door.

Summer camps were at record enrollment last year and we have started enrolling for 2020 camps (6 weeks earlier than we did last year.) We are working to “institutionalize” inclusion practices across the Board, but especially with our children’s programs.

Ariel Foster, our 2019 UAL fellow, stayed on as a contractor with Clayworks following her fellowship and is now on staff as “Inclusion Strategist”.

We welcome our 2020 UAL Fellow, Kelly – a Senior at Coppin University – next month.

Clayworks underwent a strategic planning process in 2019. Consensus for priorities was on programmatic innovation, diversity in leadership and all aspects of the organization, developing more formal marketing and fundraising strategies, and investing in who works for Clayworks and equity in how they are compensated. The 2020 proposed budget reflects investments in these priorities.

2020 will see our reception on Saturday from 6-9 featuring a proclamation from our Councilman Yitzzy, speakers Ralph E. Moore Jr., Nicholas Cohen, and Sammy Hoi. Will you be there? Please sign up!

NCECA opening reception is the evening of Tuesday March 24 in Richmond – looking for a volunteer or volunteers to help organize a pilgrimage from Baltimore to attend.

Upcoming: Seconds Sale Weekend – with some tweaks!
Summer partnership with LaDew Gardens.
Bigger, Better, Fire Fest!
Post Election Brunch Gala.

Amazing year-end fundraising campaign with stories collected throughout the year.
Strategic Planning - Consensus for priorities was on programmatic innovation, diversity in leadership and all aspects of the organization, developing more formal marketing and fundraising strategies, community partnerships, and investing in who works for Clayworks and equity in how they are compensated/supported/treated. The 2020 proposed budget reflects investments in these priorities.

Programmatic Innovation - \$28,000 Taiwan sponsorship to support international exhibition. Increased overall gallery budget. Innovative workshops. Support for multi-disciplinary artists.

Marketing – Work with Vayner Media and UBalt. Increased marketing budget. Increased marketing staff support. Graphic design support.

Development/Fund diversity – Continued investigation into reliable fund sources (i/e increasing springboard enrollment) further marketing of online shop, greater attention to equitable partnerships, moderate increases in firing fees (it’s been a while), continued programmatic partnerships with local businesses, increased focus on merchandise. Build relationships with Chamber of Commerce and other business entities outside of the arts.

Diversity – Continued investment in GBCA UAL Fellowship. Creating an Inclusion Strategist position on staff. Investment in scholarship and multi-lingual teacher trainings. Opening residency spaces to multi-disciplinary artists.

Community partnerships – Similar to diversity investments.
Make professional development opportunities to staff that create connections with non-arts entities. “Human capital” – research regional salary/compensation structure. Advocate for raises that support meeting market averages. Rewrite and redefine job descriptions to include quantitative allowance for collaboration and innovation (rather than it being assumed). Revisit employee handbook to further define “Harassment” and establish standards for contact responses.