

Minutes
Baltimore Clayworks Board of Trustees
Board Meeting - Virtual
July 1, 2020 7:30p

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, Pat Halle, Caroline Jelavich, Melanie Hood-Wilson, Susan Patz, Megan Rich, Larry Sandler, Fitsum Shebeshe, Leathia West (partial attendance). Emeritus: Pam Worthington, Marlene Sokoloski-Sandler. Staff: Cyndi Wish, MJ Goetschius. Absent: Margaret Allen, Nick Hawkins.
Scribe: Lynne Molner.

WELCOME: CALL TO ORDER at 7:35pm - Marcy Emmer

"I find myself shaking my head in disbelief. Our world is suffering and dying from the Covid virus. States are being pushed to re-open to get our economy rolling again. We now see a surge in cases from the states that open too soon.

The murder of George Floyd and too many others has stunned and angered the nation. These horrific crimes, gathered people, together to go out and demand justice. If we put the TV on, we see how divided our nation is and how much understanding is needed to heal our own divisions.

When I am at Clayworks, the community that we all love I shake my head in disbelief at how divided we have become. We are Clayworks and once again we will overcome these challenges such as virtual teaching and make sure that this board and our community will know and understand the truth.

At the end of the meeting we will go into executive session with the full board to discuss HR matters."

APPROVAL OF JUNE 17 AND JUNE 24, 2020 MINUTES – Carla Dunlap

Carla asked for a motion to approve the minutes. John moved to approve, Alan seconded. Susan noted a sentence in the July 22 minutes should be corrected to read: "Staff issues go to Cyndi. Board members go to Marcy." Cyndi asked if the staff could review since they were at the June 17 meeting. Board agreed with the condition that nothing is added that did not occur at the meeting.

Motion revised to approve the minutes with the necessary correction. **Motion approved unanimously.**

FINANCIAL REPORT – MJ Goetschius reports for Margaret Allen

Financial statement was distributed via email. April, May, June: projecting \$157,000. \$30,000 from parking lot has been invoiced. We will begin paying full rent again in July. \$464,000 in bank right now. We also have a line of credit we are trying not to use.

The question was asked about staff being paid for working overtime as they are putting in so many hours to deal with the pandemic. Cyndi said we are looking at providing a technology stipend for past 4 - 5 months as they used their own equipment. It was noted that the executive committee realized the situation and was looking into compensating, especially Matt and Nicole

RESPONSE to CALL FOR BALTIMORE CLAYWORKS ACCOUNTABILITY TO THE COMMUNITY – Pat Halle, Ariel Brown

Pat Halle - we want to acknowledge the letter about race and racial justice and view it as an opportunity to review the issues and respond. DEAI discussed the letter and came up with suggestions. Ariel will present those to you. The executive committee members also think this letter is timely and of merit, and gives the board the opportunity to think about future visions.

Ariel Brown – our overarching goal is to support diversity and inclusion because it strengthens the organization. We value our stakeholders' perspectives on diversity. (from Ariel's notes)

Ways to support inclusion:

1. Give the community an opportunity to provide input on Clayworks diversity: For example, create a survey monkey that asks our stakeholders what their perception of diversity/inclusion is and do they feel included in the Clayworks community? What can Clayworks do to be more inclusive? Explore ways to train the board in racial equity,
2. Work with others on staff to explore grants to fund BRJA or another organization to train the board and staff racial equity and inclusion.
3. Work with others on staff to find grants/ funds or scholarships to offset the financial burden that may be a barrier to bringing more diversity into the Clayworks artist community
4. Partner with diverse art/ diversity organizations and host a webinar about diversity/inclusion in the art field (Reginald Lewis Museum/Black/Jewish alliance/Walters or another arts organization are some of the ones that came up in a recent committee meeting.) Revitalize and build.
5. Regularly feature more pottery by potters of color and other diverse backgrounds .
6. Inspired by Theaster Gates and Bill Strickland who both used their practice of ceramics as a jumping off point to developing revitalization and workforce development projects in Chicago and Pittsburgh (respectively) . Their work also involves highly diverse staff. Clayworks would develop a sustainable, sequential, program in clay (as part of Community Arts) from elementary through high school so that there are, eventually, more Baltimore- based ceramic artists who are BIPOC. The high school component would be geared to enhancing academic, strategic and creative thinking skills as well as entrepreneurship. The ClayWorkforce Development program for youth with intellectual disabilities will continue.
7. Fund two residencies for people of color from Baltimore. Per Clayworks' mission statement the organization isn't focusing solely on the city and I am personally not sure if that's a must. (To focus more on Baltimore is a whole other conversation).
8. Collaboration with other organizations including educational institutions, like MICA, Morgan, Towson, Hopkins, etc.
9. Community arts and outreach are key- we can build on something that is already done well to potentially increase a diverse pool of artists working in clay.

MOTION

The Board tasks the DEAI Committee to further research and to bring to the board recommendations to address the issues outlined in the letter. Pat moved. Melanie seconded.

Discussion: Everyone wants these issues to be addressed but there is danger in raising expectations that the board may not agree with or be able to accomplish. Do not give expectations to the community without approval of the board. Don't create a barrier between community and board. Let us know what is happening. Present a plan to the board.

Motion approved unanimously.

CLAYWORKS' ROLES, COMMUNICATIONS, DECISIONS MATRIX – Melanie Hood-Wilson

Melanie reported that she created three documents that had been sent to the board for adoption or for editing. She outlined the proposals and asked the board to read them in full.

Board Roles - has to do with mission and policy, this is the work of the board, not to manage the organization. Staff role is to implement. The lines are often not very clear. **Communication Plan includes** - Transparency within 24 hours, if a letter comes to the board or a call, it should be addressed within 24 hours. EC minutes to be shared with full board. 48 hour rule - if somebody says something within a meeting that concerns a member, they should voice it within 48 hours or let it go. Inform staff of board meeting, no individual board members give direction to staff. Have an annual board evaluation to address board accountability and success. **Decision Matrix** is included in your documents. Clarifies who is responsible to whom.

MOTION

Pat moves that the board meet in 2 weeks to discuss all three proposals. Ariel seconded. Meeting scheduled for Wednesday, July 15, 2020, 7:30pm.

Motion passes. Yays -10. Abstentions -2.

TASK FOR BOARD - Review the 3 proposals and send your comments by end of day on Monday, June 13th for Melanie to incorporate. Please send comments to the full board. For discussion on July 15.

TRANSITION MESSAGING TO COMMUNITY AND DONORS – Alan Cooper

It's important to communicate to the community a positive message in a public announcement about Cyndi's resignation. Contact important stakeholders. Talking points are being developed. A list of stakeholders was developed by Cyndi. Board members will be asked to make positive phone calls about moving forward. A letter from Marcy and Cyndi will be emailed to the broader community. Pat wonders if staff would also like to have a message. Carla noted she had asked Nicole Fall to discuss that with the staff.

UPDATES

Elizabeth (Beth) Kendal consultation – Alan

Beth will use Clayworks as a case study for her graduate program dissertation. She is going to employ a number of diagnostic methods to find out about Clayworks and how it works with the hope of coming up with positive steps we can take to further our organizational development. This would include board and staff operations; and relationships with the BCW community, stakeholders, funders, and others. Her team will include 2 staff member and 2 board members.

Marsha Smelkinson's Offer to Volunteer Marketing Services - Marcy

Marsha has offered to volunteer marketing services regarding Clayworks' messaging. She presented to the Executive committee last night.

Pat concerned Marsha she did not mention DEAI in her proposal; as we are looking at staff, in a white organization , we tend to select white people. Melanie wants a need assessment first to gather data to determine if we have real problems in that area. In her power point last night, there was a lot about revisioning, rethinking a vision plan. Feel we have so much work to do. Does not agree with Marsha about redoing the strategic plan.

Caroline thinks we should consider it since we lost Sara. It I noted that we are not devoid of data, Sasha group data after their 6-month consultation, and data from former surveys. We have good marketing for events, but are lacking messaging to our communities about who we are and what we are doing. We need a marketing person more than ever right now. Marsha will not implement without board reviewing and approving it.

Cyndi thinks we might hire someone to diversity our staff pool and move the organization forward. Alan agrees that is opportunity to hire person of color when we are more stable and know what we are doing. Marsha is talking about positioning the organization, she has experience doing that. No doubt Marsha will adapt to include DEAI and will be tasked to do so. Megan suggest using Marsha and she can possibly train someone else at the same time.

MOTION

>Sue moves to accept Marsha’s offer to direct our marketing and required her to bring a plan forward to the board and ED with the logistics within 2 weeks.

John seconded.

Yays -7. Nays -2. Abstentions-3. **Motion passes.**

Meeting adjourned at 9:09 p.m. to move to an Executive Session on HR.

Next Meeting to Discuss Proposals: Wednesday, July 15, 2020, 7:30pm.

Carla Dunlap

Marcy Emmer

Carla Dunlap, Secretary

Marcy Emmer, President