

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE BOARD OF CONTROL OF THE ART STUDENTS LEAGUE OF NEW YORK HELD MAY 13, 2020, PURSUANT TO NOTICE DULY GIVEN, VIA INTERNET TELECONFERENCE (ZOOM).

1. The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. with President Robin Frank in the chair.

Board of Control (BoC) Members Present: Robin Frank, Beth Berns, Cathy Blake, Ezra Bookstein, Charlotte Bialek, Nelsena Burt-Spano, Thomas Greenbaum, Michael Jacobs, Julia Salinas, Jeff Sundheim. Absent: Nancy Smith

Also present: Executive Director Michael Rips, Karen Gaines, CFO; Eric Raff, HR Officer; Robert Telenick, Director of Programs; Genevieve Martin, Director of External Affairs, Development Consultant Rachel Weingeist and Manager Thomas Tacik, taking minutes.

2. **Approval of Minutes:** The minutes of the previous meeting of the BoC, held April 29, 2020, having been circulated to the board members, were approved.
3. **Executive Director's Report:** Executive Director Michael Rips highlighted the extraordinary response of students to online classes and discussed technical issues regarding production values. Mr. Rips noted that the response from instructors was highly positive. Mr. Rips went on to discuss tuition aid; the development of e-telier classes as a menu of options for a variety of instructors; and developing a prototype online course to present in fund raising efforts. Mr. Rips expressed hope that this would lead to a large revenue stream and gain the attention of media for online classes. Mr. Rips stated that this was consistent with League programming yet positioned the League in a new way. Mr. Rips also discussed pricing for in-house and online classes.

Board member Thomas Greenbaum asked about instructors' abilities to teach online classes. Mr. Rips responded that instructors would be assigned technical assistants for online classes. Mr. Greenbaum recommended hiring an academic consultant with expertise in this area to advise on the program. Mr. Rips concluded by stating that staff would address these questions

4. **External Affairs Report:** Director of External Affairs Genevieve Martin reviewed department activities and discussed institutional marketing, public relations, public programs and the relevance of these in the community, especially under the current circumstances.

Mr. Greenbaum asked about the revenue value of appraising and digitizing the permanent collection. Mr. Rips responded by discussing the upcoming Cinqué exhibition as an example of how the permanent collection can support an important community of artists.

President Frank led a discussion regarding the evaluation of part of the permanent collection by Christie's. Ms. Martin responded that Christie's is interested in a long-term partnership and that it may be possible to hire a second firm to look at the remainder of the permanent collection. President Frank stated that this was a good start and would be evaluated in committee.

Ms. Martin went on to state that all public programs would be moving online beginning with the Jerry Saltz interview by Mr. Rips, noting that other online initiatives included a gallery plug-in on the website with curated exhibitions, the upcoming Cinqué exhibition, an Art Table internship, and a new partnership with Chashama as a continuance of exhibition outreach.

There followed a discussion regarding exhibition outreach as a professional development program focused on exhibitions. Board member Beth Berns asked about the Affordable Art Fair. Ms. Martin responded that there were plans to participate in the Affordable Art Fair in the future.

5. **Programs Report:** Director of Programs Robert Telenick reviewed current registration and enrollment figures, and discussed the current structure of courses, instructor participation, development issues with online classes, and the exploration of developing an online platform with the company Kannu. Mr. Telenick went on to discuss the expansion of the program.

President Frank asked Mr. Telenick if he had reached out to instructors to develop new classes. Mr. Telenick responded that this was taking place in a controlled manner. President Frank remarked that communication was especially important at this time.

Board member Jeff Sundheim remarked on the quick turn-around to establish online classes and suggested the creation of training videos by instructors for instructors.

There followed a discussion regarding the structure and pricing of online classes. Board member Beth Berns recommended a technical helpline and suggested that classes be given specific meeting times. Mr. Telenick reported on hiring technical assistants to help instructors with online classes

6. **Human Resources Report:** Human Resources Officer Eric Raff presented an Excel spreadsheet developed by staff members of the task force for reopening the League.

There followed a discussion regarding online and telephone registration. Also discussed was the importance of customer service and the role of the clerks.

Board member Michael Jacobs reported on attending an All Arts meeting with Rachel Weingeist. There followed a discussion regarding LEED building specifications.

7. **Development Report:** Development consultant Rachel Weingeist discussed in-progress grant-writing efforts and remarked on conducting research on the history and prioritization of grant funding at the League. Ms. Weingeist reported on meetings with staff and board members.
8. **Finance Report:** Finance Chair Beth Berns reported on the in-progress proposed budget for FY 21, noting the challenges of dealing with recent changes and the uncertainty of when the building might reopen for operations. President Frank discussed possible opening dates and remarked that the board would need to make this decision.

CFO Karen Gaines then reviewed financial projections for July and discussed the issues around having students come back to the League. Ms. Berns stated that it would be possible to budget for a September opening regardless of an earlier opening date.

Ms. Gaines discussed working with Robert Telenick on projecting revenue for the new model of online classes.

Mr. Greenbaum led a discussion regarding reaching out to students to survey the community regarding reopening.

Mr. Jacobs stated that the League stood for low and affordable tuition and that he would not support a tuition increase. There followed a discussion regarding pricing of online classes

Board member Ezra Bookstein proposed a sliding scale for tuition.

Board member Julia Salinas noted expectations for lower revenue.

Mr. Jacobs remarked that it would be helpful to send out a communication to students regarding the League's current financial position.

President Frank noted that awareness needed to be increased among donors regarding the League's needs.

Board member Nelsena Burt-Spano remarked that raising prices too much would turn people away from the League.

There followed a discussion regarding opening the art store before classes began.

9. New Business

Vice President Charlotte Bialek proposed establishing a date for the postponed April members business meeting, and discussed meeting with Director of Special Projects Ken Park, and the League's elections vendor to determine how to conduct a meeting with the membership online.

Vice President Ezra Bookstein reported on current renovations and noted that the price for retiling the first floor restrooms would be approximately \$10,000. There followed a discussion regarding capital budget funds remaining from Fiscal Year 2020 that could be applied to Fiscal Year 2021.

There being no further business, and upon a motion duly made and seconded, the meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.



Robin Lechter Frank, President

7/22/2020

Date



Thomas Tacik, Staff Member (Taking Minutes)

7/22/2020

Date