

**Lansdowne Arts Board  
Agenda  
January 13, 2015 – 7:00 PM  
2020 House**

**Arts Board Mission:**

Serving on behalf of the Lansdowne Borough, the mission of the Lansdowne Arts Board is to create, foster, and promote Lansdowne's identity as a vibrant and inspiring artistic community.

**Arts Board Vision:**

Lansdowne is renowned as a place that fosters the creativity of artists and serves as a mecca for the active engagement of community members in the borough's inspirational cultural life.

<b>Agenda Topic</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Notes</b>
1. Open House update ❖ Financial #s, attendees, what went well, what could have gone differently	MH, ALL	
2. Open House next steps ❖ Thaddeus Squire follow up, HW's to do list for January	MH	
3. Existing Goals ❖ Performances, Gallery Shows	MH, ALL	
4. Social Media ❖ FB, Instagram, Website	MH, ALL	
5. Adjournment	MH	
Initials: HW		

**Lansdowne Arts Board**  
**Minutes**  
**January 13, 2015 – 7:00 PM**  
**20<sup>th</sup> Century Club & 2020 House**

<p><b>Present:</b> Megan Halsey, Chair Clare Hughes Maya Winters Bill Patterson</p> <p><b>Special visitor:</b> Magda Byrne, Borough Council member</p> <p><b>Minutes submitted by:</b> Hanne Weedon, LAB coordinator</p>	<p><b>Absent:</b> Lisa Nelson-Haynes Della Cowall Liz Steele Coats Kelli Artis, Borough Council Liaison</p>
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**Call to order**

The meeting was called to order at 7:15 PM

**Borough Council update**

LAB borough council member Magda Byrne presented a suggestion from Borough Council president Michael Schleigh that the Arts Board consider holding a Valentine's Day fundraiser and dance to raise money towards LAB programming costs. Kelli Artis, the Arts Board's new borough council member, had also been consulted, and thought this could be a good idea, if there was enough time to turn it around to make a profit. (Ms. Artis sent her regrets about not being able to attend the Arts Board meeting).

**Vote:** The board voted unanimously not to take on such an event between now and February, and thanked Ms. Byrne for her suggestions.

Ms. Halsey commented that she hopes the arts board will be able to do a spring event. After some discussion, the board concluded that March or June seemed to be good months to hold a possible fundraiser; the coordinator will look into the available dates for the 20th Century Club. The conversation continued, with the board discussing possible themes, possible photo documentation as a part of the event, and doing a minor call-for-entry to include artists' work as a part of an event. A discussion around how much such an event might bring in followed, with examples ranging from a 500-person Planned Parenthood gala event which raised \$100K (Ms. Weedon), to a formal dinner for Young Playwrights that netted \$14K (Ms. Hughes). It was agreed that an event this year would need to reflect where the board is now, versus where the board might expect to be down the road.

Ms. Byrne reminded the Arts Board that her borough council committee, Community Relations,

would be happy to help with any events the Arts Board produces.

### **2020 House update and follow up**

**Vote:** The board voted to approve the final version of the budget, pending the inclusion of both M. Winters' and D. Cowall's volunteer hours.

Ms. Hughes reminded the arts board that Lansdowne's decision to fund and support the arts board, the coordinator position and the 2020 House is all part of a small but not insignificant trend around the country. As of a few years ago, about 30 such municipally-funded arts projects exist nationwide. Sadly, many of these arts programs closing due to insufficient funding. On so many fronts, LAB is very lucky!

What went well:

- *Everything!*
- Borough assistance was thoughtful, timely, useful, and generous, and had a huge impact on the event going well from start to finish. (E.g. Craig Totaro, Mike Taylor, the maintenance crew, Erica Sollberger, Betsy Riffert, etc).
- Attendance was excellent, with about 150+ attending, more than 60 signed up for future updates.
- Outreach was impressive. About 3000+ Philadelphia-area individuals were personally invited, via an extensive PR and social media campaign. The list included area academics, artists, organizational and educational leaders, local art students, etc., as well as many Lansdowne connections.
- The site looked beautiful. In particular the lighting around Jared's reading was gorgeous.
- The entertainment was good, with a huge highlight being Jared Reed's reading of *A Christmas Carol* (and he generously volunteered to do it again next year).
- The food was delicious, people loved the mulled cider and cheesecakes, in particular.
- The volunteers were engaged and helpful.
- The printmaking project was engaging, fun, wonderfully experiential, and well received.
- The "suggestions board" was great, and ended up with wonderful, quotable quotes.
- Borough staff and elected officials showed up, and seemed genuinely pleased and excited that the event was happening.
- The board spent \$300 less than the allotted \$1800 on the event, with over \$8,250<sup>1</sup> in donations and in-kind contributions covering the additional costs.
- Incoming borough council president M. Schleigh wants to see another event happen, and is thinking about how LAB might secure funding for programming.

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<sup>1</sup> This is \$2250 more than the \$6000 of in-kind of and donation sum that was presented at the LAB meeting, as it now includes the volunteer time Ms. Cowall and Ms. Winters donated as jurors prior to the event (15 hours each @ \$75/hour)

- Thank you/appreciation notes went out to all the food contributors, attendees, and Borough employees who contributed to/participated in the event.

What could have gone differently:

- Figuring out how to have audiences sit for performances was challenging.
- FaceBook was not updated. Fell through the cracks.
- Need more in depth history of the house to share with visitors
- Method of displaying artwork was sub standard
- Need a hanging system
- Lansdowne maps did not get included in the event.

### **Thaddeus Squire follow up**

Ms. Halsey gave an overview of a conversation she had at the Open House with CultureWorks' director, Thaddeus Squire. Mr. Squire offered suggestions of many leads for the Arts Board going forward. He talked about "makers" as a new category or artist. The Coordinator will follow up on the leads, and begin conversations about opportunities for partnerships. Additionally, she will ask Squire's contacts about how they successfully use social media and funding.

A brief conversation followed about how and whether CultureWorks might assist the Arts Board, for example with doing events. It was suggested that the Coordinator check out the Cultural Alliance and the Delaware Valley Planning Commission for possible conferences the board might want to know about. Ms. Hughes suggested the Coordinator contact the Independence Foundation which runs a workshop series on many topics.

### **Moving Forward**

Ms. Halsey briefly reviewed the October 2014 goals set for the Arts Board for 2015. A further discussion will follow at the February meeting.

Ms. Halsey requested that the board come to the February 2015 meeting with ideas about possible fund raising activities, with a basic framework being a gallery show at the 2020 House, and a fundraiser gala at the 20th Century Club. Ms. Hughes concurred, suggesting that the 2020 House is limited as a performance space, considering it only seats about 30-40 people, does not have professional grade lighting or audio, etc. The space could host a background performance (perhaps of live music, for example) during a cocktail party, but not more.

Both Mr. Patterson and Ms. Winters expressed strong opinions that gallery shows would further promote the Arts Board's mission, and should be a top priority moving forward. One idea suggested was for there to be a "dry run" gallery show, to be used to get the kinks out of the process.

Discussion followed about getting a well established, known juror. The idea here is that artists want recognition/visibility, exposure, connection to known entities, a possibility of sales, a buying public. Since the Arts Board cannot offer much as yet (the space/audience/locale is not known), consider getting a name attached to the event to promote interest and visibility. Artists will jump at the opportunity to present in front of a well-known curator. Most well-know curators are well respected, but *not well paid*. Offering something between \$300-\$500 to curate LAB shows will insure someone good, and provide visibility, applications, and real interest.

*(From Ms. Weedon's August 2014 notes with CFEVA's Genevieve Coutroubis: consider finding a juror from the curatorial staff at any of the following: the Philadelphia Museum of Art, Institute of Contemporary Art, Delaware Art Museum, Princeton Art Museum, Delaware Center for the Contemporary Arts, Bridgette Mayer, LG Tripp, etc).*

The Visual Arts group agreed to meet in the next two weeks to discuss getting a juror for a gallery show, and setting up a possible dry run exhibit.

**Social Media:**

Ms. Halsey began the discussion by saying there had been nothing posted on FaceBook after the event. (Ms. Hughes had attempted to add Ms. Weedon as an administrator, but that had not worked. Ms. Weedon will follow up on figuring this out.)

Ms. Winters posted some event photos on Instagram, but so far there are only four followers.

**Vote:** The board voted unanimously to support the idea that the coordinator find an intern to oversee LAB's social media campaign.

Ms. Hughes agreed to continue acting as the web administrator for the Arts Board, and said she could connect Ms. Weedon with a number of people from a variety of organizations who successfully use FB and social media.

Ms. Halsey encouraged the board to share photos from the event with their FB contacts.

### ***LAB Next Steps***

- Bill will look into the wall hanging systems, come up with some options. Maya and Bill to review hanging systems, Bill to present to board?
- Visual Arts group to gather to discuss juror, gallery shows.
- Maya will look for possible artists for a dry run, and will bring those to discuss at the next visual meeting. Possible call for entry?
- Clare will add social media icons to the website.
- Maya will look up what other municipal arts organizations offer in terms of amenities, and will present her findings at the next LAB meeting.

### ***Arts Board Coordinator***

- Set up a meeting with MH and new Econ Dev chair Kelli Artis
- Set up meeting with MH and CT
- Check with Erika Sollberger about possible 20thCC fundraiser dates for March/June
- Add to event budget: artist review selection volunteer time (\$75/hr @ 15 hours each for Cowell & Winters).
- Contact the young woman who was interested in becoming active with the 2020 House and ask if she might be able to handle social media activities..
- Ask Clare how do the successful municipal orgs maintain funding?
- Ask additional email lists if they would like to opt-in to our mailing list. Create a .pdf with photos, information, etc.
- Help M. Halsey create a roadmap for Borough Council re: where we are going, what we have done.
- Check with library staff (Sandra) about existing 2020 house archives, architectural info, is there a library resource to access, etc. If library cannot help, Clare's husband is a librarian and could likely access helpful information. Also, ask Matt Schultz who is the local historian (see FB) and could that person assist with research?
- Check with Keren White about big picture overview of doing events (income vs. expenses, staffing, etc.)
- Check out the Cultural Alliance (Jessica Eldridge worked there), the Delaware Valley Planning Commission, and the Independence Foundation (Sue Heckorette (sp?): use Clare's name as part of Young Playwrites). Check in monthly with these orgs about upcoming workshops/conferences, etc.
- Follow up on Thaddeus Squire leads, and ask how they use social media, what kinds of grants are out there, and what does a successful fundraising event look like?
- How to become FB administrator?
- Check with C. Totaro about how the remaining \$300 can be spent

- Follow up with C. Totaro about M. Schleigh's suggestion for kitchen doors. Check with M. Taylor for options/sizes.. Possibility of Borough Council funding it.
- Ask C. Totaro - what should we ask T. Squires' people? Do we seek 501c-3 status? Do we umbrella under their org? What is their org? How does it work?

***Next board meeting agenda***

2015 Goals and projects

**Next LAB meetings**

Second Tuesday of every month, 7pm at the 2020 House  
2/10, 3/10, 4/14, 5/12, 6/09, 7/14, 8/11, etc.

***Questions for Borough Liaison/Borough Council:***

n/a