

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE BOARD OF CONTROL OF THE ART STUDENTS LEAGUE OF NEW YORK HELD WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 9, 2019, PURSUANT TO NOTICE DULY GIVEN, IN THE PHYLLIS HARRIMAN MASON GALLERY AT THE ART STUDENTS LEAGUE, 215 WEST 57<sup>TH</sup> ST., NEW YORK, NY.**

1. The meeting was called to order at 5:40p.m. with President Thomas Harvey in the chair.

**Board of Control (BoC) Members Present:** Attending: Thomas Harvey, Beth Berns, Charlotte Bialek, Cathy Blake, Ezra Bookstein, Robin Frank (by teleconference), Luz-Mary Harris, Robert Morris, Julia Salinas (by teleconference), Raj Shahani.

Absent: Mary Jo Anzel, Jeff Sundheim

Also present: Jennifer Solomon, CDO, and Assistant to the Executive Director Thomas Tacik, taking minutes.

3. **Approval of Minutes:** The minutes of the previous meeting of the BoC, held December 12, 2018, having been circulated to the members, were approved unanimously.
4. **Certificates of Completion:** There were no Certificates of Completion to approve.
5. **Membership Reinstatement Requests:** The following membership reinstatement requests were approved: Marsha Levine, Leora Miller, Peter Moreno, Cecilia Neustrom
6. **President's Report:** President Thomas Harvey delivered the following remarks:

Welcome everyone to the start of another new year for the League. We had our final selection of appointed Board members the day of our last Board meeting, so some of you weren't able to attend. Well, we're all together now. Thank you to the officers and to the elected Board members for running for office and thank you to those who volunteered for board service for your willingness to serve.

At the last Board meeting I circulated a tentative list of committee assignments. As you know, the President and both Vice Presidents serve as ex-officio members of every committee. I say the list is tentative because I want to be sure that everyone is on a committee that he or she wants to serve on. I think that we need some more volunteers for the Development Committee. If you would like to serve there, please let me know. And do let me know of any other changes that you would like to make.

Since that last meeting, Robin Frank and Momo Evans organized a pop-up art exhibit down in Chelsea. I attended the opening, as did a number of you. There was a great, enthusiastic crowd admiring (and hopefully purchasing) some really stellar art which was, as they say, "priced to sell." Robin, thank you for the considerable effort you obviously put into that project. I hope we will be able to do a lot more of those. They bring attention to the quality of the art that is produced by students at the League — and hopefully a few bucks when that art sells. I am sure that Kym Blanchard, our new Director of Communications and Marketing, would be happy to work with you to get the word out about such ventures.

Julia Salinas is off to a strong start with her Strategic Planning Committee. The term “strategic” implies long term, and for the League, that can be very long term. We are nearly 150 years old, and I know that all of us would like a part of our legacy to be another 150 years. What are we going to have to do out of necessity — such as replace the heating, ventilation and air conditioning system which is nearing the end of its projected useful life? And what are we going to do because there are opportunities for us to ready the League for the next phase of its storied history — such as reclaiming the Vanderbilt Gallery and repurposing some of the first floor? Whatever we do will require extensive communication with our membership. Their buy-in to our projected plans is going to be essential. And it’s not just the membership. The instructors, many of whom have an incredibly loyal following, will be critical in selling our plans to their students. So, I see a number of town hall meetings to hear what it is that the students want as well as instructors’ meetings to hear what they want for their classes, as well as focus groups to elicit members’ wants and needs.

We have looked at some potential swing space that we might use for the short term as the HVAC system is replaced. We would also like to add studio space. When we got the cantilever money, we talked about building up. Should we want to do that, it will be very expensive construction since there is no access to the roof of our building other than via crane from West 57th Street. At a recent members’ meeting, one person asked if it would be possible to find annex space in the neighborhood. We are looking at that — possibly as our swing space while we replace the HVAC and then retaining some of the space in the future for class studios. Of course, we will have to analyze demand to determine if there is enough to warrant long term commitments to additional real estate.

At the last meeting, I asked all the Board members present to contribute to the Annual Appeal. It is important that we be able to say that 100% of the Board supports the League financially — as well as through your generous contribution of time and talent. That Board support is something that potential grant makers look at as a sign of true commitment. Your generosity is, of course, important, but what I am asking you for here is participation at whatever level you are comfortable with.

7. **Marketing & Communications Report:** Director of Marketing and Communications Kym Blanchard presented an overview of current departmental activities and initiatives. Following Ms. Blanchard’s presentation there was a discussion regarding the League’s mission statement as well as Tuesday evening concours exhibition receptions. President Harvey asked if the receptions were budgeted. Ms. Blanchard replied that the monthly cost was approximately \$2,000. Board member Luz-Mary Harris suggested that classes might perhaps contribute to covering the costs of the receptions. Board member Cathy Blake suggested that information about the Tuesday evening receptions could be included in the upcoming *Notes from the Board* to raise awareness of this new initiative. There followed a discussion concerning League news on social media. Board member Robin Frank led a discussion regarding new student orientation.
8. **Development Report:** Chief Development Officer Jennifer Solomon provided an update on the annual appeal and led a discussion regarding League community contributions and current development strategies. Ms. Solomon also provided an update regarding ongoing efforts led by Executive Director Michael Rips to organize a fundraising event at Sotheby’s as well as a gala to take place in the Fall.

## 9. Committee Reports:

Finance Committee: Ms. Solomon provided an update on the hiring of a Chief Financial Officer, as well as a recent meeting of the Investment Advisory Committee.

Strategic Planning Committee: Committee Chair Julia Salinas delivered the following report:

As a summary of what we on Strategic Planning have been doing in committee since the last BoC meeting in December: we have had two meetings so far in which the new Board members have become more familiar with what the committee was doing for the last year. We have begun discussing the complex issues facing the League and discussing how to best start engaging the membership in that dialogue.

A unanimous goal of the committee is to communicate clearly and regularly with the larger Board about our committee discussions – and to get your feedback and input so that we are benefitting from all of your ideas, suggestions, and criticisms – and then to include the membership in this discussion in very timely and relevant ways going forward. We would like, first and foremost, that the whole Board is a part of decisions affecting the direction the League is moving in so that there are no surprises, no rumors, no concerns that have been overlooked.

Specifically, we have begun talking about two ways to dialogue with the membership: conducting focus groups and holding town hall gatherings. At this moment, thanks to Luz-Mary and Charlotte whose words I will be quoting here, we are exploring the function of focus groups and how having focus groups can help us become good listeners of the membership and other important stakeholders, such as the instructors.

Focus groups are an essential input to strategic planning. They are a way of asking questions to get opinions (and objections) to the options we have for the League's future. Instead of telling people what is happening we would be asking them in an open-ended way about their vision for the League. It is a way to communicate that there will be changes – that have not been pre-determined – and bringing everyone into the discussion. The second means of creating a dialogue is through town halls, which would be run and presented by Michael, and supported by the BoC. We think now that we would like to have at least one focus group with one group before we go to a town hall so that there are constituents who are informed and who have had a chance to think things over before we put it all out there on a broader stage with no real ideas what the feedback will be.

Our next step is to bring you BoC members deeper into the focus group process, and in fact, have you participate as the first group in deciding our priorities and so helping us shape our strategic plan. A focus group is a small-group discussion guided by a trained leader. It is used to learn about opinions on a designated topic, and to guide future action. In our case they will allow us to "get the pulse" of the League's constituents regarding the actions needed after Extel construction ends, or more specifically about our building issues. For example, if the BoC decided building issues are a priority, some examples of questions could be:

As the Extel construction is coming to an end, what are your thoughts about future plans for the building? Would you say you are satisfied with the current situation in the building? What are you satisfied about? Why is that? Are there things you are dissatisfied with, that you would like to see changed? How should they change? What kinds of things would you like to see happen?

After we decide on our priorities and the script and questions, we will ensure that a record is produced, as clear as possible, of the discussions from the groups so that we can capture patterns and common themes in people's minds as well as new ideas or perspectives not considered before. We on the committee would like to ask you all to participate as the first focus group in a series of questions about our priorities at the next Board meeting, if you all agree. How does that sound to you all? Thanks in advance.

Development Committee: There was no committee report.

Building & Facilities Committee: There was no committee report.

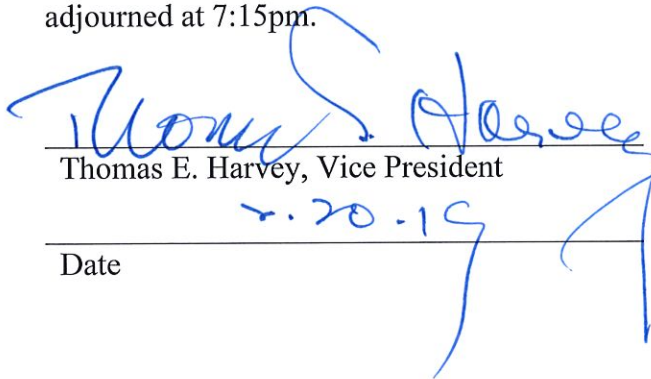
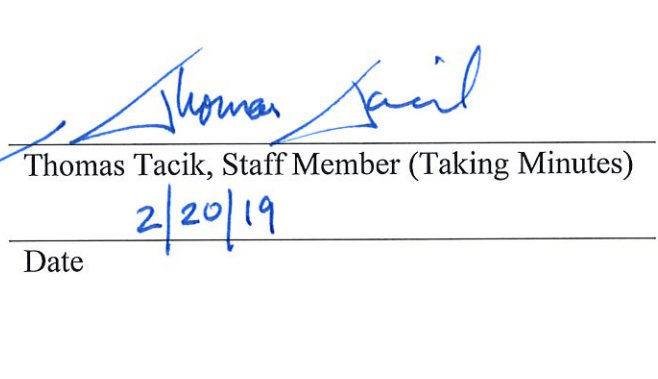
Programming Committee: Committee Chair Robin Frank stated that a committee meeting has been scheduled for January 24<sup>th</sup>.

Membership Committee: Committee Chair Cathy Blake provided an update on presenting an overview of Board activities to the League membership.

**11. New Business:**

Vice President Ezra Bookstein opened a discussion regarding the wax studio and funding for tools and other improvements. Ms. Solomon stated that the finance department was unaware of any purchase orders related to the wax studio. There followed a discussion regarding students' self-funding class tools or improvements, and procedures for instructors to submit requests to operations and maintenance for items to repair or purchase.

There being no further business and upon a motion duly made and seconded, the meeting was adjourned at 7:15pm.

	
_____ Thomas E. Harvey, Vice President	_____ Thomas Tacik, Staff Member (Taking Minutes)
_____ Date 2.20.19	_____ Date 2/20/19