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## Arts & Culture Meeting #10

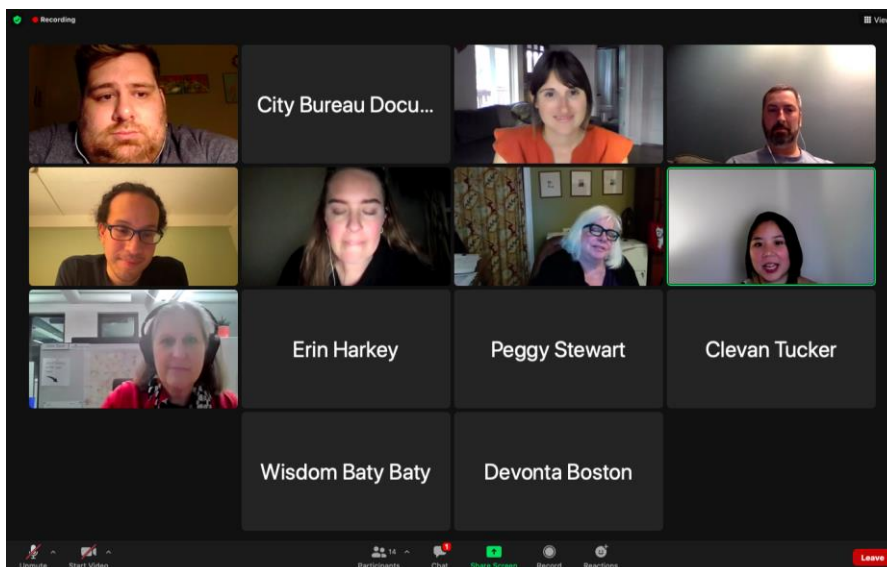
February 22, 2022, 4:00PM | 2 hours

*Documented by: Ayanna Watkins*

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### ATTENDEES

- Aaliya Christina
- Clevan Tucker
- Henry Wishcamper
- Jeremy Dunn
- Kim Lewis Jay
- Lynn Basa
- Maritza Nazario
- Peter Vega
- Anezka Gocova
- Peggy Stewart
- Kevin Corbett
- Alicia Alexander
- Enrique Morales
- Jarol Rendon
- Julia de Bettencourt
- Kristin Larsen
- Maritza Nazario
- Max Grinnell
- Rose Olea
- Rachael Smith
- Sophie Chishty
- Melanie Wang
- Cathy Breitenbach
- Gabriela Jirasek
- Jennifer Ligaya
- Julie Burros
- Krystal Amevor
- Natasha Tarpley
- Wisdom Baty
- Alison Zehr
- Vanessa Stokes
- Erin Harkey
- Devonta Boston



### MEETING GOAL

*To further discuss successful and challenging moments taking place within the arts and culture realm and develop 3-5 potential policies per objective that align with the future needs of the city.*

### WHERE WE ARE



Step 1  
**We Are**  
Setting the Stage



Step 2  
**We Have and Need**  
Develop A Policy Toolkit



Step 3  
**We Will**  
Set Policy Framework

### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- 1 | Participants discussed opportunities to improve the arts and cultural climate in the city, such as increased funding and support for creative workers.
- 2 | We Will Chicago is in the process of formatting policies that center communal trust building, power shifting and equitable investment.
- 3 | We Will Chicago's Arts & Culture pillar dedicated a great amount of time to discussing the wants and needs of under-resourced communities across the city.



## CONVERSATION HIGHLIGHTS

*“To Alison's point, we're gonna make data a much more intentional part of the work that we do, because when you can see it right, you can address it.”*

**Erin Harkey** | Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events, Commissioner

*“Just even trying to find this information, I went down a lot of roads that ended up in dead ends ... There's just not the kind of data that is kept on arts and culture as there is on transportation or housing.”*

**Alison Zehr** | Business of the Arts, Nonprofit Management Consultant

*“We want to brainstorm policy ideas and really think about: How can we make this happen? If we know what our objectives are, what are the tools that we can employ to really make that happen?”*

**Rachael Smith** | All Together, Principal + Co-Founder

## NOTES

- We Will Chicago, a three-year, citywide planning initiative under Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot, aims to encourage neighborhood growth and vibrancy while addressing social and economic inequities that impair Chicago's legacy as a global city.
- According to the website, "The Arts & Culture pillar [of We Will Chicago] is intended to provide a planning framework that celebrates and enhances Chicago's vibrancy for the creation and appreciation of artistic works."
- Public comments to date have involved the following themes:
  - The need for an organized, citywide assessment of cultural facilities to help understand neighborhood inequities
  - Additional public and private funding to support professional artists and arts students to ensure diversity within the City's economy
- Recently, the Arts & Culture pillar held community engagement events throughout the city. The team is currently in the process of building out potential policies that will better all communities in the city.
- Meeting 10 will be conducted a bit differently due to recent feedback. Participants will spend more time in breakout groups and will have a longer closing conversation.
- In this third stage of pillar work, the group will incorporate additional community feedback, outline policy framework and craft policies, incorporate a health and racial equity impact assessment (HREIA) lens, and identify performance metrics.
- Rachael Smith highlighted that the group would be able to refine policies for review. Guiding Questions 3 and 5 will be the focus. Guiding Question 4 will be set aside for the next meeting. We Will Chicago made this decision because Guiding Question 4 touches on arts education, but a Chicago Public Schools (CPS) representative wasn't available for this meeting.
- In March, the city of Chicago will be distributing a survey and We Will Chicago desires to engage with the public during that time as well. Before pushing any content, the team wants to ensure that the language is as specific and understandable as possible. With that, they are asking the group to provide feedback on the final version.
- Rachael Smith encouraged the group to share the content with their own networks. The feedback they receive will refine the direction they are moving in.
- Rachael Smith also highlighted that the content pushed will be a guide for future planning processes, as they want to push the framework towards a more "central-city" angle.
- Upcoming Arts & Culture pillar community events:
  - Maritza Nazario has an event today with 20 people signed up
  - Kevin Corbett is synthesizing feedback from an event with 15-16 people where they discussed guiding questions 4 and 5
  - Devonta Boston is working on setting an event date

- Alison Zehr notes that the data shown today heavily supports the Guiding Questions, specifically Question 3. This collected information was based on the requests from the group.
- The presentation discusses the percentage of Chicago applicants that receive funding based on their location.
  - DCASE received a total of 1,480 funding applications and selected 496 grantees (34% of applicants were funded).
- Enrique Morales asked if subcategories could be included in the data. They emphasized that demographically, each “side” of the city differs.
- Erin Harkey mentions Southern Methodist University’s DataArts reports as another useful resource the group may want to utilize. She describes it as a “slightly more nuanced profile of the way that the funding from the city is being allocated across the city.”
- Data for City Arts:
  - 392 applicants, 199 grantees
    - Alison Zehr highlighted that the data shows that most applicants desire funding for the youth or the mass majority.
- Chicago compared to other metro areas (2019 data)
  - “If we look at organizations per 10,000 people, Chicago has 1.5 organizations for 10,000 people, which is more than Washington and Los Angeles, almost as much as New York.” - Alison Zehr
  - Alison Zehr pointed out that Chicago has a lot of arts organizations with relatively small budgets. Average expenses in 2019 came out to \$1.58 million, which is significantly lower than New York City, San Francisco, Los Angeles and Washington, D.C.
- Distribution of nonprofits arts and cultural organizations by community area (2013)
  - A total of 1,085 nonprofit arts and culture organizations mapped
  - 25% of the organizations are located in the Loop or Near North Side
- Toward the end of the data presentation, Erin Harkey spent some time diving deeper into the significance of the DataArts report she referenced earlier. The data report concentrates on communities on the South and West Side. There’s a specific section that touches on organizations that are and are not eligible for DCASE funding as well.
- Rachael Smith now takes the lead to transition folks into two separate break out rooms. She says, “We really wanted each group to be able to dig into both of these questions and that’s why we’re going to have a little bit more time to report out.”
  - Each group will discuss both Guiding Questions 3 and 5. Once everyone is in their set group, members will have ten minutes to review the questions and brainstorm. They are able to make comments on the Google Doc if need be.

- “We want to brainstorm policy ideas and really think about: How can we make this happen? If we know what our objectives are, what are the tools that we can employ to really make that happen?” - Rachael Smith

### Breakout Group 1 (Main Call)

- Rachael Smith gives members some time to review the Google document before discussion. Here are some key takeaways:
  - Guiding Question 3: How can we ensure that artists and cultural organizations are active in, and contribute to, the life of all Chicago communities?
    - Program ideas
      - Embed the arts into the work of ongoing city planning initiatives.
      - Fund community-generated pop-up events; performances at block parties; public art creation.
      - Provide technical assistance and professional development support for neighborhood presenters.
  - Guiding Question 5: How do we promote and build awareness of Chicago’s arts and culture assets within and across communities, citywide, and beyond our borders?
    - Program ideas
      - Recognize locally generated art alongside touring art and festivals that enjoy Chicago's great fan base and huge consumer market.
      - Provide grants, technical support, and other resources to community organizations
      - Help culture makers access marketing expertise (good publicists are expensive)

**RESOURCES**

**SMU DATAARTS**

[Southern Methodist University's data and resources hub for arts organizations, as referenced by DCASE Commissioner Erin Harkey](#)

**DCASE WEBPAGE**

[Webpage for the city of Chicago's Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events](#)

**ARTS & CULTURE PILLAR**

[We Will Chicago website](#)



#### NEXT STEPS

- Between now and the next meeting, the We Will Chicago team plans to integrate all additional feedback into the notes already produced.
- In the coming weeks, the city will send pillar members the refined language for the objectives and guiding questions
- The next We Will Chicago Arts & Culture meeting is scheduled for March 21, 2022, from 4 to 6 p.m.
- Participants were told that the next meeting would be a continuation of what took place today—the central focus will be on Guiding Question 4 supported by a guest speaker from Chicago Public Schools.