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## Arts and Culture, Meeting #4

September 20, 2021, 4:00 PM | 2 hours

Documented by: Ayanna Watkins

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### MEETING MATERIALS

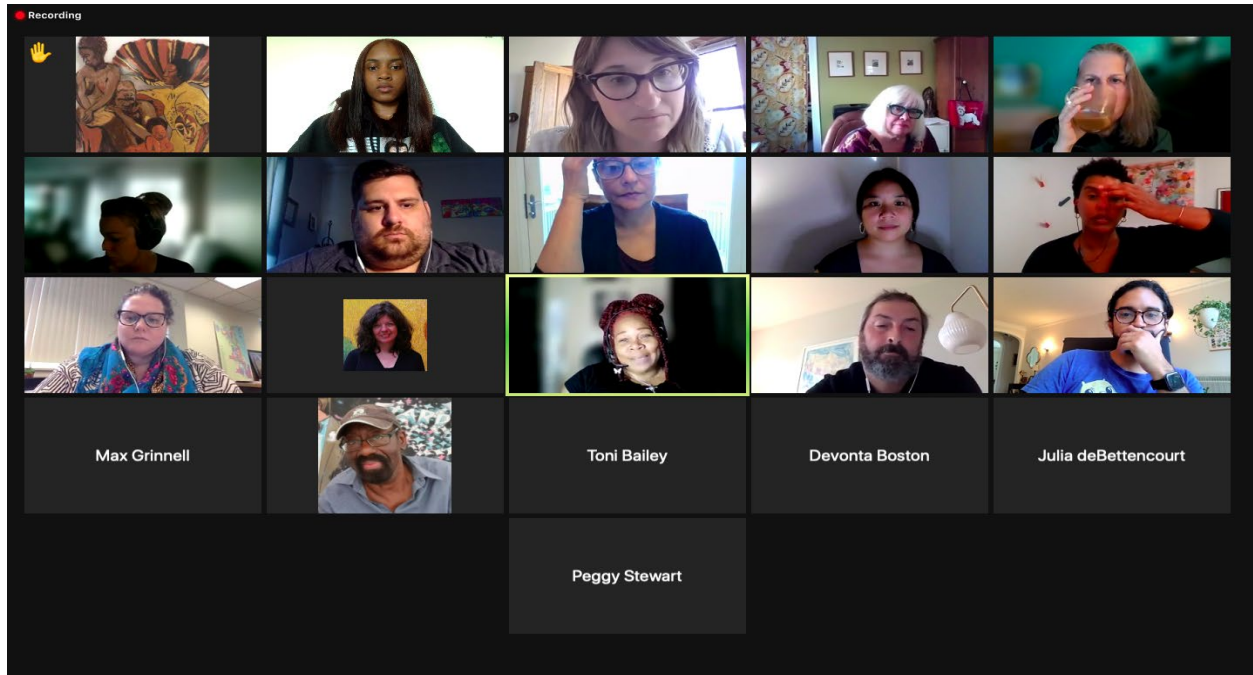
[Agenda <Link to Agenda>](#)

[Presentation](#)

### ATTENDEES

- Erin Harkey
- Alicia Alexander
- Jarol Rendon
- Dawn Posey
- Julia de Bettencourt
- Kristin Larsen
- Maritza Nazario
- Peter Vega
- Devonta Boston
- Melanie Wang
- Cathy Breitenbach
- Gabriela Jirasek
- Jennifer Ligaya
- Julie Burros
- Krystal Amevor
- Max Grinnell
- Rose Olea
- Aaliyah Christina
- Clevan Tucker
- Henry Wishcamper
- Jeremy Dunn
- Kim Lewis Jay
- Lynn Basa
- Natasha Tarpley
- Wisdom Baty

Recording



A Zoom meeting grid showing 16 participants. The grid is arranged in 4 rows and 5 columns. The first row contains 5 video thumbnails. The second row contains 5 video thumbnails. The third row contains 5 video thumbnails. The fourth row contains 5 name tiles. The first name tile is 'Max Grinnell' with a video thumbnail of a man in a cap. The second name tile is 'Toni Bailey' with a video thumbnail of a woman with red hair. The third name tile is 'Devonta Boston' with a video thumbnail of a man with a beard. The fourth name tile is 'Julia deBettencourt' with a video thumbnail of a woman with glasses. The fifth name tile is 'Peggy Stewart' with a video thumbnail of a woman with glasses. A yellow hand icon is visible in the top-left corner of the grid.

Max Grinnell

Toni Bailey

Devonta Boston

Julia deBettencourt

Peggy Stewart

MEETING GOAL

*The Arts and Culture pillar’s third meeting focused on the need for inclusive artistic expression and resources in Black and Brown communities. The conversation highlighted strategies already put in place across the city, as well as the needs of communities.*

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

Basic resources such as school art classes and trash cans are heavily needed in the South and West Sides of the city. The people want to beautify their communities, but lack of resources and knowledge sustain major setbacks.

2

Pushing a “cultural asset map” as a tool suggested to provide information on artists/spaces and what they stand for. This tool could help towards potential funding and networking for Chicagoans and their work.

3

The people desire public funding for the arts as an inclusive reflection of the wants and needs of all Chicago communities.

CONVERSATION HIGHLIGHTS

*“There’s also not a lot of resources for art programs [in the Chicago Lawn community]—no art class at the local high school. Art is not a top priority.”*

**Devonta Boston** | President and Co-Founder, TGiMovement

*“Sometimes we need just the basic basics [such as trash cans] that will would help with the beautification piece [on the South Side]”*

**Wisdom Baty** | Honey Pot Performance, Artist-Organizer

*“I think [the Cultural Asset Map] is more to create an artist-to-artist network, but I think it also has functional utility for anybody that’s attempting to go into the community and understand something about supporting culture there.”*

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

*“How can we reimagine what sector giving is without alienating the big players, get them on board or expand what it means for them to exist in communities across Chicago? [...] Make public funding of these larger institutions contingent to having a presence throughout the city.”*

**Enrique Morales** | Honey Pot Performance, Artist-Organizer

## NOTES

**Kickoff and Introductions** (Source: [We Will Chicago](#))

Provided below is the framework that the “Arts and Culture” Pillar stands for and the work done thus far:

- Public comments to date have involved the following themes:
  - Equal access and opportunity for the creation and display of art
  - 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
- The Arts and Culture Artist-Organizer Team
  - Aaliyah Christina (Honey Pot Performance)
  - Wisdom Baty (Honey Pot Performance)
- Artist-led community engagement teams will work with community stakeholders to explore ways to express concerns, identify goals, and bring new perspectives to ideas and concepts that are important to Chicagoans.
- These concepts may involve performance art, sculpture, music, paintings, spoken words or other opportunities that ensure all members of the public have multiple opportunities to express and receive information about the We Will plan. We Will’s focus on arts and culture will also involve discussions about their roles within public policy and budget recommendations, where and how art is expressed and consumed, and how to make people more sensitive to the art that currently exists all around them.
- Previous Arts & Culture Events:
  - "Affirming A Safer South Side Community: Community Walk and Plant Day," on Monday, September 20 at 6:45 am. Join Wild Yams and South Shore residents as we share our stories of resilience and affirmations of protection and safety while planting crystals and seeds along our walk. Wear white. Gather on 71st and Jeffery (near the Bank). Walk begins at 7:00 a.m.

**Overview**

- Artist Report Out:
  - Enrique Morales:
    - Speaks on various initiatives that activate the city through games and interactivity activities. He is a part of the mobile artist team and uses these spaces to activate, engage, and uplift the city of Chicago. Participating in these events promotes community-building and allows mobile artists to gain knowledge on the thoughts/feelings of the people.
  - Wisdom Baty (Honey Pot Performance, Artist Organizer):

- Emphasized the needs for basic resources in Black and brown communities. Things as simple as trash cans are not accessible in all areas on the South and West Sides. She also mentioned the need to build relationships amongst the community.
  - Last community event was September 20, 2021, and it was centered around spiritually cleansing communities.
- Guiding questions follow-up discussion:
  - How have historical inequities impacted arts and culture in your neighborhood?
    - Based on the above question, people responded by stating the following:
      - Gentrification prevents knowledge on the historical essence of neighborhoods and their cultural impact to the city of Chicago
      - Lack of resources and funding within school systems prevents the thriving of arts programs
      - Lack of inclusiveness and collaboration amongst all artists and their work being showcased in communities
- Pillar Trends + Health and Race Equity Impact Assessment (HREIA) Overview:
  - During this meeting, participants took the time out to revise guided questions in a way that reflects the needs of all people within the city:
    - How can we foster a resilient creative sector that embraces and supports a diverse and varied creative workforce, recognizing that past support has not always been equitable?
    - How can we reimagine the means of support for arts and culture to realize a healthy and sustainable level of investment that ensures vibrancy, equitable allocation and community relevancy of the creative sector?
    - How can we ensure that all Chicago communities can participate in, have access to, and benefit from the ability of arts and culture to build social capital, bridge divides, and provide healing?
    - How do we provide support for, and access to, culturally responsive arts education for young people, workforce development for creatives, and creative engagement for learners of all ages?
    - How do we build awareness, promote, and remove barriers to access to Chicago's arts and culture assets within and across communities, citywide and beyond our borders?
    - New posed question: *How do we grapple with the role Chicago's municipal support has had in providing significant public benefits to the city through arts and culture, while acknowledging some priorities, assumptions and strategies that guided past investment and actions have also led to inequities and harm?*

- Throughout this process, it took a while for people to warm up and truly voice their opinion. This could possibly be caused by the feeling of being overwhelmed. There was a lot of information shared during this time.
  - Overall, participants were very detailed-oriented with the wording. Funding of the arts was also something that was mentioned.
- Data analysis:
  - A data analysis was shown to paint a picture of the current data pulled on Chicago's arts and cultural climate. (Refer to screenshots below)
- From Fall 2020 to Winter 2022, We Will Chicago plans to put the following plan in action to provide recommendations towards city-wide progression:
  - Pre-planning:
    - Host 28 conversations and workshops to formulate topics for each pillar
  - Research:
    - Select over 200 individuals and organizations to actively and engage guiding questions. The goal of this setting is to conduct activities that would further push participants to seek broader reactions to those questions.
  - Policy and Action Plan:
    - By Winter 2022, the goal is to expand and design engagement in order to "move the needle" through policy and grassroots work.

## RESOURCES

### **We Will Chicago**

[More resources and information on We Will Chicago including details on the other topic pillars and ways to participate.](#)

### **Honey Pot Performance**

[Learn more about the Afro-diasporic feminist collective that co-led this meeting.](#)

### **Cultural Asset Mapping Project creates a 'braided web'**

[Read about the initiative dedicated to partnering with artists to document and create sustainable art on the South and West sides of Chicago.](#)

### **Mayor Lori Light Spending Plan**

[Check out how Mayor's FY 2022 distributes funding.](#)

### **Census 2020: "Black people aren't leaving Chicago...they're being forced out"**

[Dig into Census data to see the impacts of structural racism.](#)

**Chicago artists use boarded-up storefronts to make a creative statement and make a difference**  
[See an example of how artists have transformed storefronts during last summer's uprisings.](#)

**New Project: Inequity for Sale**

[Learn more about this project led by National Public Housing Museums' Artist-as-Instigator, Tonika Lewis Johnson.](#)

**Shame of Chicago**

[Read about this documentary series which tells the story of segregation in Chicago.](#)

**Cultural Asset Map: Chicago Creatives**

[Find resources, artists and storytellers in Chicago using this map.](#)

**NEXT STEPS**

- Participants were encouraged to continue to add/edit the working document from the meeting. In addition, "We Will Chicago" is looking for more resources to build upon (data, research studies, etc) that relates to Arts and Cultures. If anyone has resources please add them to the spreadsheet/working document.
- With "Past Plans and Review" participants are encouraged to spend more time reviewing plans and adding any additional comments to further push the needle.
  - Deadline Wednesday, September 29, 2021, or at least before next meeting