

**JAM Board Meeting Minutes**  
**February 13, 2024 Meeting**  
**Via Zoom**

Attendees: Samantha Davidson Green, Tracy Hutchins, Tamara Waraschinski, Joe Major, Jim Zien, Craig Sterrit, Sean McIntyre, Daniel Maxell-Crosby

Absent: Sam Kaas, Alex Torpey

Others Present: None

Meeting called to order by Tracy Hutchins at 5:34pm

**Minutes:** The board reviewed the minutes from the November 20, 2023 Budget Meeting and the December 12, 2023 regular board meeting. Dan made a motion to approve the minutes; Jim seconded. The motion passed with all in favor.

**Financial Report:** The Board reviewed the most recent financial report.

Dan asked for a comparison between last year's consulting fees and the expected fees for the coming year. Samantha noted that several of last year's consulting expenses - a Strategic Planning consultant, a WRIF consultant - were one-off expenses, but that JAM is, overall, retaining the services of more consultants that CATV historically did. Samantha also noted that over the past year, other professional services have been rolled into the Consulting line, and the intention is for this to be broken out more accurately in the coming year. Bookkeeping expenses can also be streamlined in the coming year.

Dan made a motion to accept the financial reports; Craig seconded. The motion passed with all in favor.

**Director's Report:** The board reviewed Samantha's Director's Report, which was "jam packed" (pun possibly intended) this session. Samantha noted a new format for the report, which is more narrative and uses the Strategic Plan as a guideline for activities. Samantha feels that "we are really already starting to live our strategic plan." Samantha reports that the JAM space is serving the organization well, the Briggs Opera House relationship has "settled," and the ongoing renovation of the Newbery Market Space is going well. She notes a goal of improving and streamlining "cash systems" this year, as the organization is now handling more complex transactions, estimates, and grants than ever before. Samantha feels that the beginning-of-year financial position of the organization is strong.

Sean notes that he can help advise on saving merchant fees, which have increased this year.

Tamara requested an update on the Gates Briggs Building, as David Briggs has continued to discuss selling the building to a developer. Samantha reported that, while we continue to monitor the situation, most businesses in the building have 2-3 year leases, and Briggs is investing in significant build out improvements in some of those spaces. Samantha felt that any development is still "a few years" down the road, and Sean agreed.

Samantha highlighted several instances of collaborations with new artists and creatives, and the continued growth of WRIF, which is ahead on ticket sales, and is seeing strong engagement in sponsorships and additional activities.

Samantha also highlighted staff stability as central to improving quality for the organization. She is focusing on staff and professional development opportunities whenever possible. She feels that “our batting average is very strong.”

Samantha reports that the organization’s accountant would like to review finances quarterly instead of monthly. Dan thought this proposal “seems reasonable,” but wanted to confirm the frequency with which the accountants would review the finances. Samantha will forward the accountant’s proposal to the finance committee for review and approval.

### **Strategic Plan:**

Samantha proposed that the board discuss each of the strategic goals, and how best to incorporate them into the board’s operations.

The board offered ideas for ways the board could engage with the first strategic goal - “Build a Durable and Sustainable Home for JAM” - in the Zoom chat (the following are direct transcriptions from the chat; some have been edited for spelling and typos):

*Jim Zien: Sustainable Funding: Initiate a "Sustaining Donor" program in which donors commit to automatic monthly or quarterly contributions by credit card or debit account that continue until canceled.*

*Tracy, UVBA: Form a nominating committee to recruit additional board members, analyze makeup of board to recruit members to assist in priorities*

*Tamara Waraschinski: Board members can commit to reach out to their own networks to help build more creative alliances, find new donors and supporters*

*Sean M: Start to look at the cost to secure a vehicle and work up the costs associated with outfitting it so we can begin to work this into our budget.*

*Craig Sterritt: If we don't have one already, establish a committee to identify grant/funding opportunities on an ongoing basis.*

*Jim Zien: Sustainable Funding: Prepare a development report for each board meeting that presents donations month by month and in comparison to the previous year's giving.*

*Joe Major: Hire a grant writer to continuously look for and find funding*

Samantha asked whether the board should review its committee structure, in order to better assign tasks. Tamara proposed a revised fundraising and development committee.

Tracy asked if it might be possible to invite those who worked on the strategic plan to join committees. Samantha agreed

The board then offered ideas pertaining to the second strategic goal - “Cultivate a Thriving Media Arts Community in the Upper Valley”:

*Sean M: Look to develop local and regional relationships as pipelines for professional media employees. Consider and develop new sources of interns and production staff. Colleges, trade schools etc.*

*Tracy, UVBA: I think in Priority 2 the board has to be an advocate for JAm and to connect JAm with other organizations and partners*

*Jim Zien: Creative Alliances: Recruit/partner with one nonprofit each year to significantly improve its capabilities to utilize media to advance its mission, programs, fundraising.*

*Sean M: Leverage board members networks to help spread the message and develop more relationships with other non-profits and municipalities.*

The board then offered ideas pertaining to the third strategic goal - "Improve the quality of life in the Upper Valley through high quality, locally-generated media":

*Tracy, UVBA: encourage and budget for ongoing professional development opportunities for staff*

*Tamara Waraschinski: Again, leveraging own connections to foster partnerships and raise awareness about JAM in the community*

*Craig Sterritt: Find channels to broadcast the idea of WRIF as a destination festival to select target audiences*

Samantha and Tracy suggested a Programming committee to help further these goals. Samantha will draft a proposal for new committees.

Meeting adjourned at 7:40pm.

Minutes compiled and submitted by Sam Kaas, Board Secretary. (Minutes compiled from a recording of the this meeting).

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