

MINUTES

EDMONDS PUBLIC FACILITIES DISTRICT/EDMONDS CENTER FOR THE ARTS JOINT BOARD AND STAFF RETREAT September 23, 2023

The Edmonds Public Facilities District/Edmonds Center for the Arts Joint Board and Staff Retreat convened at 8:42 a.m. in the ECA Center Classroom and via Zoom.

EPFD Board Members Present

Ray Liaw, President
Bill Willcock, Vice President
Suzy Maloney
David Brewster

EPFD Board Members Absent

Wayne Grotheer

ECA Staff Present

Liz Dawson, Dir. of Programming & Communications
Nicole Giordano, Dir. of Patron Experience
Echo Johnson, Production Manager
Kathy Liu, Incoming Executive Dir.
Lexie Marsters, Administrative Assistant
Lori Meager, Interim Executive Dir.
Sarah Mixon, Dir. of Rental Events & Hosting
Diana Ortega, Dir. of Education & Community Engagement
Gracelynn Shibayama, Event Planner & Stewardship Asst. Mgr.
Amy Stagno, Dir. of Major Gifts

ECA Board Members Present

Lindsay Geyer, President
David Schaefer, Immediate Past President
Mike Rosen, Vice President
Rick Canning Secretary/Treasurer
Michael Chong
Matt Cox
Laura Ellis
Jeff Lewis
Corbitt Loch
Heidi Napolitano
Victoria O’Gorman
Tanya Sharp
Nick Sweers
Jeanne Thorsen
Courtney Wooten

1. Call to Order

Board President Liaw called the EPFD Board meeting to order.

EPFD Board Member Suzy Malone, meeting facilitator, welcomed incoming Executive Director Kathy Liu. EPFD and ECA Board Members and Staff introduced themselves and the reason they choose ECA.

2. Land Acknowledgement & Equity Statement

ECA President Lindsay Geyer read the Land Acknowledgement Statement and the Equity Statement.

3. PFD Board Business

- **Joint Board of Directors and Staff Retreat**

- **Objectives**

Board Member Maloney reviewed objectives for the retreat:

- Level setting
- Alignment of 12-18 month priorities
- The critical few priorities
- Identify possibilities
- Community building

➤ **Strategic Business Plan**

ECA Board VP Mike Mayor Rosen provided a short history of the ECA Strategic Business Plan:

- SBP process
- Research Methodologies
- SBP process
- Creation of SMART long, medium and short term objectives
 - Inclusion and accessibility principles are embedded in each strategy and objective and must be the filter for all objectives
- Original SBP adapted over time
- What we didn't do: Define our north star
- The country changed, and so did we
 - COVID
 - George Floyd's death
 - January 6th

➤ **Top 10 Successes Since Last Retreat**

ECA Board President Geyer and EPFD Board President Liaw reviewed the top 10 successes since the last retreat:

1. Pandemic management
2. Windows to the Arts
3. 2021-2022 Season
4. Capital positioning
5. Growing IDEA throughout ECA
6. New organizational structure
7. Improved operational infrastructure
8. Interdepartmental collaborations
9. Summer series & 23/24 season
10. Leadership transition

Discussion followed regarding cash reserves, robust financial reporting, importance of donor support, ability to rebuild, accomplishments under Mr. McIlwain's leadership, and development pivoting during the pandemic.

➤ **Current Programs and Activities**

Development

Director of Major Gifts Amy Stagno and Event Planner & Stewardship Assistant Manager Gracelynn Shibayama reviewed:

- Current Priorities
 - Priorities coming up on year end
 - Gala
 - Onboarding Director Major Gifts Amy Stagno
 - Running a successful YE Direct Mail campaign

- Initiatives going into the 23/24 season
 - Continuing with M&G, Center Circle receptions
 - Finding opportunities to engage Kathy with our donor family
 - Additional revenue streams through hospitality sponsorships, partial season sponsorships, and pipeline creation from annual fund and our patron base
 - Consistent engagement with all three boards

Questions followed regarding planned giving and what is considered a major gift.

Programming, Marketing & Communications

Director of Programming & Communications Liz Dawson reviewed:

- Current Priorities
 - 23/24 Season
 - Successful promotion of season & strategic marketing initiatives
 - Revenue generation
 - Stewardship of subscribers
 - Audience development & patron communication
 - Strategic addition of shows – special engagements
 - 24/25 Season
 - 2024 summer series
 - 24/25 season
 - Development of series within our season
 - Marketing/communications/Brand
 - Capacity!
 - Website refresh
 - Institutional marketing & branding
 - Revenue generation via ad sales
 - Restructuring the Marketing Committee

Discussion followed regarding Boulder Theater and Uptown Theater in Kansas City that have marquees and offer classic movies during slower times.

Community Engagement and Education

Director of Education & Community Engagement Diana Ortega reviewed:

- Current priorities
 - Evaluating Community Engagement and Education in our community
 - Artist residences and community engagement
 - Reinvigorate festivals
 - Kidstock & WeSpeak
 - Strengthen partnerships
 - Elevate continuous learning: embracing teachers, parents and students
 - Educator Preview, side by side concerts & matinees
 - Prioritize accessibility through transportation
 - Expand statewide arts access
 - Windows to the Arts (W2A)
 - Inclusive programming for all youth and expanded reach to engage broader community
 - Cultivate in-house educational programs to provide tailored experiences
 - Summer camps & in-house teaching artist programs

Ms. Ortega responded to a question regarding when Kidstock will return.

Rentals & Hosting

Director of Rental Events & Hosting Sarah Mixon reviewed:

- Current Priorities
 - Rental client care and feeding is always number one
 - Get Mclalwain Access Fund up and running
 - Streamline whole process
 - Working with marketing/box office tracking web/ticketing/advertising progress
 - Work with production/FOH on the needs of upcoming events
 - Production meetings
 - Event summaries
 - Balance client hosting needs with workflow to prevent burnout
 - Develop reporting systems for staff report to better tell our story

Questions and discussion followed regarding appreciation for rental staff working with other departments, the number of rental events annually, flexibility in rental spaces, and importance of the information included in the monthly staff report.

➤ **Committee “Show & Tell” Speed Round**

Steering Committee

ECA Past President Schaefer and Interim Executive Director Lori Meagher reviewed:

- Chair: Daid Schaefer
- Staff: Kathy Liu, Lori Meagher
- Committee Members: Ray Liaw, Bill Willcock, Lindsay Geyer, Mike Rosen, Rick Canning, Ann McMahon, Mat Cox, Heidi Napolitino
- Strategic Purpose: Manages ECA’s standing committees and makes recommendations to PFD Board on policy, functional goals and expectations, budget, facilities, executive performance evaluations, board & committee chair appointments, strategic planning and resource allocation.
- Top 3 Priority Focus Areas
 1. In partnership with Leadership Transition Team, develop and oversee a successful, effective and informative onboarding of the organizations new executive director that will ensure both the leader’s and company’s future success.
 2. Oversee the development and execution of a SBP and visioning process to arrive at ECA’s next 3-5 years SBP.
 3. Ensure the work and recommendations of the IDEA Committee are interwoven throughout the organization, into the SBP, and in standing committees.

Board Governance Committee

ECA Board Member Laura Ellis reviewed:

- Chair: Ann McMahon
- Staff: Lori Meagher, Lexie Marsters
- Committee Members: Laura Ellis, Matt Cox, Cheryl Foster, Mike Rosen, David Schaefer, Lindsay Geyer
- Strategic Purpose: Responsible for the overall composition of the board with the goal of creating and maintaining a broad and deep range of expertise influence and community representation. Committee submits recommendations for new board members to the ECA Board for approval. The committee also works to develop overall board capacity to successfully complete its work.
- Top 3 Priority Focus Areas:
 1. Recruit diverse board candidates with expertise required to address committee/organizational needs identified in board surveys and by committee chairs.

2. Create and pilot a Board Committee Operating and Best Practices Guide with accompanying orientation for committee chairs and staff leads.
3. Respond to overall ECA focus areas identified in the 2023 ECA Joint Board Retreat.

IDEA Committee

ECA Board President Lindsay Geyer and Ms. Meagher reviewed:

- Chair: Lindsay Geyer
- Staff: Lori Meagher, Liz Dawson, Nicole Giordano, Diana Ortega, Gracelyn Shibayama
- Committee Members: Wayne Grotheer, Corbitt Loch, Niles Peacock, Nikki Okimoto Glaros, Kendall Hill
- Strategic Purpose: Responsible for the design and oversight of organization-wide planning to ensure access to ECA's performances, programs and facilities for all – including community members that have historically been underrepresented. Responsible for ensuring there are systems and policies in place to create a supportive and welcoming workplace environment in which employees of all backgrounds and demographic characteristics can work together. Committee members bring passion for and deep commitment to this work; wide ranging experience with community outreach and diversity/equity work; and the ability to build trust quickly inside and outside the organization.
- Top 3 Priority Focus Areas:
 1. Community Outreach: Community reception and building trusted relationships within targeted communities. Revisiting Land Acknowledgement and our commitment to local tribes.
 2. Building Equity Culture at ECA: Racial equity training of all staff, boards and volunteers (so many new people!). Building a culture at ECA that creates a sense of belonging for all.
 3. Providing Universal Access: Identify opportunities to make ECA's campus accessible to all.

Admin & Finance Committee

ECA Board Member Matt Cox and Ms. Meagher reviewed:

- Chair: Matt Cox
- Staff: Kathy Liu, Lori Meagher, Sandra Nestorovic
- Committee Members: Christian Anderson, Rick Canning Lindsay Geyer, Ray Liaw, John McGibbon, Mike Meeks, Mike Rosen, David Schaefer, Steve Shelton, Jeanne Thorsen, Dave Turley, Bill Willcock
- Strategic Purpose: Responsible for ensuring the development and oversight of organizational policies and procedures pertaining to all financial matters, risk management, and human resources for ECA, and to make recommendations to the EPFD regarding those policies and procedures. The goals of the committee are to ensure financial health and stability, legal and regulatory compliance, and risk control. The committee utilizes the full range of skills and experiences of its members, including (but not limited to) financial services, human resources, and project management expertise, as well as deep institutional knowledge, to achieve its goals.
- Top 3 Priority Focus Areas:
 1. The 2024 budget lays the operational foundation for a 5-year plan for net positive revenue from operations.
 2. Partnering with internal stakeholders to define a Capital Plan for ECA's campus that integrates Inclusivity and Accessibility.
 3. HR policies and procedures are reviewed for regulatory compliance and with IDEA principles applied and developed and updated as needed.

Philanthropy

ECA Board Member Victoria O’Gorman & Ms. Shibayama reviewed:

- Chair: Vicki O’Gorman
- Staff: Kathy Liu, Lori Meagher, Katherine Smith, Amy Stagno, Gracelynn Shibayama, Brent Gibbs
- Committee Members: David Schaefer, Rick Canning, Bill Board VP Willcock, Suzy Maloney, Jeanne Thorsen, Tanya Sharp, Laura Ellis, Nancy Fleck, Cheryl Foster
- Strategic Purpose: Responsible for ensuring the development and oversight of the annual and long term fundraising plans to achieve contributed revenue necessary to sustain the work of ECA. Our goals focus on: Development of diverse funding sources to include board gifts, major gifts, individual gifts, corporate sponsorships, foundation grants, government grants and special event revenue. Development and recommendations for donor recognition guidelines, annual plan and related benefits. Development of recommended strategies for securing planned gifts and gifts to the endowment. Provide oversight and actively support ECA Signature Events which include Center Stage and Annual Gala & Auction. Serve on and/or support the auction procurement subcommittee. Secure auction and gala chairs. Serve as advocates for ECA in the community. Build strategic and innovative partnerships throughout local and regional community to help achieve the organizations philanthropic goals.
- Top 3 Priority Focus Areas:
 1. Database Transition: Steward the upgrade of our fundraising database to ensure compatibility of systems and consistent information across platforms/department.
 2. Legacy Giving Program: Finalize and implement a full and effective Legacy Giving Program (this is Planned Giving).
 3. Major Gift Development Program: Develop a defined, well-organized program with clear financial goals and objectives with defined portfolios for board and staff members.

Education & Community Outreach (ECE) Committee

ECA Board Member Tanya Sharp and Ms. Ortega

- Chair: Tanya Sharp
- Staff: Diana Ortega, Nick Williamson
- Committee Members: Courtney Wooten, Heidi Napolitano, David Brewster, Michael Chong, Laura Ellis
- Strategic Purpose: Responsible for the strategic leadership and oversight of ECA’s ECE programs. The committee reviews and makes recommendations to the ECA Board and staff regarding community partnerships, programming, marketing/communications and evaluation/reporting mechanisms related to ECE. Recommendations are based on alignment with ECA’s mission and values and demonstrated need in the Edmonds School District and community at large.
- Top 3 Priority Focus Areas:
 1. Championing Representation and Diversity: Commit to bolstering diversity and representation in all educational programs, ensuring arts play a central role in everyone’s life through practices rooted in equity.
 2. Deepening and Broadening Community Engagement: Concentrate on maintaining and amplifying our community partnerships and collaborations.
 3. Enhancing Measurement and Data Collection: Prioritize sustained and expanded efforts in data collection and evaluation for both current and upcoming programs.

Facilities and Operations Committee

Ms. Meagher reviewed:

- Chair: Norm Brown
- Staff: Lori Meagher, Sandra Nestorovic

- Committee Members: Ann McMahon, Rick Canning, Corbitt Loch, Jeff Lewis, Wayne Grotheer, Scott Chelgren, Noah France, Bob Gregg, Francisco Gomez
- Strategic Purpose: Lead strategic stewardship of ECA's physical facility including oversight of maintenance required to preserve the building and guidance in the planning and construction of capital improvements to the facility. Make ECA a place that is an accessible and enjoyable experience for all. Committee comprised of members who bring diverse expertise to the table including design, construction, development, project management, municipal administration, maintenance & operations and finance/banking.
- Top 3 Priority Focus Areas:
 1. Repair Building Envelope: Complete the analysis with Mithun team to identify sources of water intrusion, assess structural vulnerabilities (seismic and other associated with envelop failures), assess the extent of damage, target repair strategies, and provide budget cost estimates of repairs needed. Plan for and start executing phase construction project to perform repairs.
 2. Decide future of the 1921 Administrative Building - function and physical structure. Retain and repair option; or demolish and replace with a new building that will be designed for ECA's (and other co-users?) current and future program needs.
 3. Accessibility: Engage in receiving a comprehensive assessment of the facility to identify accessibility opportunities for all users. Obtain budget costs of recommended improvements prepared. Work with internal stakeholders to develop Facility Accessibility Plan to prioritize projects, plan for the design and construction necessary to execute them, and funding to achieve.

Hosting Committee

ECA Board Member Heidi Napolitano and Ms. Mixon reviewed:

- Chair: Heidi Napolitano
- Staff: Sarah Mixon, Beck Cole, Lori Meagher, Diana Ortega, Nicole Giordano
- Committee Members: Norm Brown, Christian Anderson, Ray Liaw, Nick Sweers
- Strategic Purpose: Support hosting staff in the development of the policies and procedures and enhance the rental program's visibility among board members. Participate in the allocation of Joe Mclalwain ECA Hosting Access Fund discounts to qualified nonprofit organizations. Regularly review revenue and expenses of the hosting program and provide feedback/ideas to help generate new business and new revenue.
- Top 3 Priority Focus Areas:
 1. Work with staff and IDEA committee to finalize Mclalwain-ECA Access Fund parameters and application process.
 2. Support the hosting staff in defining the parameters and determining the eligibility of rental clients to become partner organizations.
 3. Work with staff and Steering Committee to create meaningful reports for the Board.

Patron Experience (formerly Services)

Director of Patron Experience Nicole Giordano reviewed:

- Staff: Box office, volunteers and event managers
- Strategic Purpose: Patron Experience encompasses all the key touch points of a guest's journey with ECA, and beyond. By ensuring someone's experience in relation to our events and historic building is seamless, friendly, accessible and impactful we will build audiences, retain volunteers /donors, build our community and ultimately serve our mission.
- Top 3 Priority Focus Areas:
 1. Connecting the vision of the SBP to the realities of our physical space, budgetary restrictions, and infrastructure so programs can be carried out effectively. This is done by baking FOH and Experience into existing and relevant work done by committees.

2. Budgeting for outdated needs starting in the next year including key staff, design, janitorial, repairs, etc.
3. Upgrading to the next level of our ticketing system and implementing scheduling software. Directors/managers lose many valuable hours having to manually coordinate even when a coordinator is present.

Ms. Giordano responded to questions regarding what is done with the data that is collected, outdated needs, and the number of active volunteers and new volunteers.

Production

Production Manager Echo Johnson reviewed:

- Strategic Purpose: Production Department comprised of skilled technicians that use their collective knowledge and experiences to provide the materials and talents required to “put on a good show.” Each subsection of the department - in conjunction with supervisors - oversees their own equipment and ensures that everything is up to date with industry and client standards. We are committed to providing a safe, pleasant, and top tier venue experience to all artists and patrons. To do that, we need to focus on getting our equipment and our processes up to speed as well as developing plans for future production needs as the organization continues to expand.
- Top 3 Priority Focus Areas:
 1. Create thorough inventory documentation that tracks needs for inspections, upgrades and repairs in future years.
 2. Continue to establish clear health and security protocols for events and ensure that the production team is fully trained for any occurrence.
 3. Develop a functional production internship career training program.

Ms. Johnson responded to questions regarding accessibility for those who are hard of hearing,

➤ **The Critical Few**

ECA Board VC Rosen explained the Top 3 Priority Focus Areas from each committee and department are listed on the board. He invited board members and staff, using color coded dots, to identify their first, second, third and fourth priorities over the next 12-18 months. Discussion followed regarding context for the exercise, next steps at the Steering Committee, priorities that will take longer than 12-18 months, and doing the exercise during lunch. The results of the exercise are as follows:

Priority #1

- ❖ Partnering with internal stakeholders to define a Capital Plan for ECA’s campus that integrates Inclusivity and Accessibility

Priority #2

- ❖ Decide future of the 1921 Administrative Building

Priority #3

- ❖ Building Equity Culture at ECA

Priority #4

- ❖ Upgrading the next level of our ticketing system and implementing scheduling software. Directors/managers lose many valuable hours having to manually coordinate even when a coordinator is present.

Priority #5

- ❖ In partnership with Leadership Transition Team, develop and oversee a successful, effective and informative onboarding of the organizations new executive director that will ensure both the leader’s and company’s future success

- ❖ Oversee the development and execution of a SBP and visioning process to arrive at ECA's next 3-5 years SBP
- ❖ Major Gift Development Program

EPFD Board Member Maloney advised the above priorities will go to the Steering Committee

➤ **What Else Might Be Possible?**

ECA Board VC Rosen referred to the survey sent to board members and staff about new ideas for consideration, grouped loosely in four areas: within the community, within the organization, facilities, programming. He advised following the retreat, the list of items will be returned to board members/staff with a survey requesting they put the items in four buckets: 1) absolutely do that now, 2) that seems longer term but we should start now, let's not wait, 3) that's interesting but we should probably wait until we have a SBP to decide so let's park that and not lose it, and 4) never say that out loud again. The list will then be forwarded to the Board Governance Committee.

Discussion followed regarding what the survey will include, ideas on the list that are already underway, ideas that will be considered by multiple committees, why the list would be reviewed by the Board Governance Committee, defining ECA partners, reporting back regarding how the list was prioritized, clarification of some of the items, expanding capacity or doing fewer things, having staff identify ideas that are underway before board members take the survey, concern with narrowing the list, sending PowerPoint slides that include the Top 3 Priority Focus Areas to board members and staff, how other ideas could be added, and timeline for the results.

ECA Board President Geyer thanked board members and staff for attending and participating in the retreat.

Board President Liaw thanked the retreat committee for organizing the retreat. The opportunity to be together and have a dialogue is important. She thanked board members and staff for attending and encouraged continued dialogues in committee, board and staff meetings.

➤ **Next Steps**

Board Member Maloney advised the PowerPoint slides will be provided to board members and staff. She requested a list of board members on both boards also be provided. The prioritization of the Top 3 Priority Focus Areas will go to the Steering Committee and the survey results regarding what else might be possible will go to the Board Governance Committee.

ECA Board Member Matt Cox provided background on the creation of the Best Practices Guide. The Board Governance Committee created a survey to help identify and implement best practices across committees and boards to advance our mission, build capacity, increase satisfaction, retention and impact as well as fully utilize the available talents and skills of board members and staff. The chairs and staff leads of each committee completed the survey. He provided examples of questions from the survey.

ECA Board Member Cox continued, the Board Governance Committee formed a task force to review the results and develop a Best Practices Guide. The goal was to provide actionable resources for committees and clarify goals and responsibilities to build better teamwork across the organization, maximize efficiency and effectiveness and provide tools for strengthening processes as needed. He provided examples from the Guide. He reviewed next steps for the Guide, the Board Governance Committee will conduct a final review next week, it will be reviewed by the Steering Committee and

once Steering approves it, he will set up a workshop for board members and staff leads to review it and begin implementation.

ECA Board Member Cox provided an update on Board Designated Funds. At the PFD Board's direction, the Board Designated Fund was established for the purpose of setting aside excess funds not required for operating and/or debt service purposes. He read from the policy related to establishing the fund, separation of the funds in a new general ledger account and separate bank/investment accounts, use of the funds, and EPFD Board approval required for all additions and disbursements from the fund. The current proposal is to move approximately \$1 million into the fund by year end.

Questions and discussion followed regarding whether the ECA Board would have an opportunity to provide input on the use of the Board Designated Fund, purpose of the fund to set money aside for future projects, intent to use the funds for long term capital, the funds not being a safety net for an operating deficit, and the Board Designated Fund policy formalizing past practice of not using sales tax rebate funds for operations.

ECA Board VP Rosen reported an RFP has been drafted for the development of a Strategic Business Plan, but the scope needs to be finalized. He recommended finalizing the RFP in the next 12-16 weeks, advertising it, and interviewing firms with the hope of completing the SBP in 12-18 months. He described next steps to finalize the RFP.

EPFD Board Member Maloney invited attendees to speak to any missed opportunity at today's retreat. Input included

- Use technology to include people participating remotely; missed an opportunity to capture input from the two board members participating remotely
- Consider how to get community input into the SBP including from the tribes
- Have more staff representation in deciding what the big priorities are
- Give Emeritus Board an opportunity to weigh in
- Appreciate the work that staff did on presentations
- Appreciate enthusiasm all brought to retreat

➤ **Reflections of the Day**

Heidi Napolitano and Laura Ellis led an exercise where attendees were provided paper to write 1-2 things that excited them about the future of the ECA, whether it was something they heard today, something they felt deep in their soul, something they'd been thinking about, etc.. Attendees then crumple the paper and tossed the crumpled papers away from them. Attendees read the paper nearest to them:

- More people having more exposure to more arts more often
- When the curtain goes up, my heart soars and the collective joy in the theater is palpable.
- The future of ECA is so bright I've got to wear shades
- New building capacity building question
- I'm excited about the beautiful work that Diana and team are doing to expand our education and community programs, specifically Windows to the Arts
- I'm excited by the vision of a new campus that can support our big dreams
- Universal excitement to expanding our reach, internally and externally, to connect via the performing arts
- The financial and mission driven future of ECA is in good hands. Excellent team
- Accessibility and access of education programming with new programs and discounted tickets, etc.
- Our amazing staff. Without them, none of this would be possible

- All the possibilities. Dedicated staff and boards collaborating to make it happen
- Making it possible for myself to see the individual
- Gratified by the work toward clear priorities for the ECA/PFD going forward
- We have an amazing, energized and capable staff
- Super excited for our new ED and the new chapter we're beginning. It's an exciting time for building sustainably and continuing to develop our community
- Excited to get more involved with the committee and I'm super excited about this option coming out
- Excited the future of ECA is in good hands
- Collaborating across departments for a bigger outreach to the community. Getting to know more about all of us, boards and staff
- Move the mailbox
- Developing a major gifting program
- The possible redevelopment of our building and campus and what that can mean for programming audience development and community impact
- The chance to engage and enlighten the community through connecting them with the performing arts
- All across collab departments
- Increasing partnerships to the broader community. Major gifts initiative is getting started
- New executive director and staff
- To evolve our mission and strategies
- Joining ECA and gaining a vibrant, exciting future together
- The future together
- Amazing enthusiasm shown by board members and staff
- Thanks to ECA Board VP Rosen for organizing the retreat, presentations, survey, etc.

4. Adjourn

EPFD Board President Liaw adjourned the EPFD Board meeting at 2:20 pm.