



Minutes

Gorman Arts Centres Resident Advisory Group

Meeting #G-23-002-G

Date: 03 August 2023 **Venue:** Gorman Arts Centre Main Hall
Start time: 10:06 am **End time:** 11:29 am
Meeting Chair: Louise Davidson, Strategy and Finance Manager Canberra Youth Theatre

Residents Attending:

Ben Drysdale, Rebus Theatre
Cherylynn Holmes
Debora Di Centa, Ausdance ACT
Eleri Harris
Emma Batchelor, QL2 Dance
Franki Sparke
Helen Wojtas, Canberra Youth Theatre
Hugh Withycombe
Kimmo Vennonen
Kirsten Biven
Louise Davidson, Canberra Youth Theatre
Lucy Alexander
Phoebe Porter
Ruth Osbourne, QL2 Dance
Stuart McMillen

Arts Capital Board/Staff Attending:

Andreo Esguerra, Marketing and Partnerships Manager
Isabelle Sheppard, Business Administration Assistant
Carly Davenport Acker, CEO Arts Capital, Director A+G
Claudia Santangelo, Arts Capital Board Member
Jenni Curry, Marketing and Partnerships Liaison
Lauren Honcope, Arts Capital Board Chair
Leslie Pan, Arts Capital Board Member

Apologies:

Luke Rogers, Canberra Youth Theatre

Agenda Item

Item 1 Welcomes, apologies, introductions, and Acknowledgement of Country

Carly Davenport Acker (CDA) began the meeting by welcoming everyone and acknowledging the Traditional Owners, the Ngunnawal Peoples in an Acknowledgement of Country. CDA introduced and thanked Louise Davidson (LD) for chairing the meeting, then introduced Arts Capital Board Chair Lauren Honcope (LH), and recently appointed Leslie Pan (LP) and Claudia Santangelo (CS). Board members then each described their backgrounds and excitement about joining the organisation.

Isabelle Sheppard (IS) stated apologies and LD began the meeting.

Item 2 Arts Capital Operational Update

LD informed the group of various updates within Arts Capital's operations and a summary of action items from the previous Advisory Group meeting. She reflected on recent training opportunities, positive outcomes from the First Nations engagement workshop, hosted by Geoff Richardson and Arts Capital earlier in the year, and the emergency evacuation training facilitated by FERST¹ that week.

On the topic of training opportunities, CDA informed the group of a survey being sent to Residents to gather interest in potential workshops later in the year. Topics include accessibility and inclusion, First Nations engagement, enlivening Arts Capital's pending Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP), and mental health & wellbeing. CDA provided further information on operational updates, reflecting on a busy few months, that included a meeting between Arts Capital and the Minister for the Arts, Tara Cheyne relating to various impacts leading to and post centenary renovations. CDA passed to Andreo Esguerra (AE), to elaborate on updates to Resident communications.

AE updated the group on the recent decision to cease the Resident Bulletin, explaining the decision was made for communications to be redirected to the Resident Portal. Arts Capital will continue to provide email updates of new information and resources on the Portal, reiterating this is to help streamline communications and provide a singular place for essential information and resources to be stored. Hugh Withycombe (HW) raised, in relation to the Resident Portal, the benefit of having pictures and bios of Arts Capital staff to aid in



navigating staff changes. AE encouraged the group to please contact marketing@ainslieandgorman.com.au for any further feedback, questions, or assistance with the portal.

Phoebe Porter (PP) joined the meeting.

ACTION: Arts Capital to send training survey to Residents

Item 3 Resident Operational Update

LD introduced the next item, asking the group if they had any Resident related operational updates or topics. HW noted that publishing the Advisory Group agendas further in advance and with more detailed items would be beneficial in future meetings. Lauren Honcope (LH) noted in regard to Advisory Group improvements, that she had the benefit of a brief meeting with HW and CDA, on issues he had raised. LH and CDA have requested HW as well as other Residents interested to please inform them of any suggested improvements from reviewing the Terms of Reference, available on the Resident Portal.

Moving on, the group discussed communications between Residents and the Arts Capital Board. HW and SM enquired as to whether Resident needs are discussed in Board meetings. HW noted the benefit of increased collaboration between the parties relating to input and vision within Arts Capital operations.

Ben Drysdale (BD) joined the meeting.

LH welcomed the feedback, stating she is raising an ongoing standing agenda item in Board meetings relating to Resident needs and concerns. LH expressed that transparency and accountability as Board Chair is one of her key responsibilities and values. Further stated that she is looking into the publishing of applicable and relevant information arising out of Board meeting minutes. She relayed that CDA informs the Board routinely of actions, concerns and feedback in Arts Capital's monthly Operational Reports – which capture key issues arising from Advisory Group meetings and business operations. LH informed the group that she is available for Residents to reach out to her, and furthermore that she is available to meet anytime to discuss needs, concerns and feedback.

LH informed the group of a Board related operational update. Stating that since April 2023, the Board has implemented holding monthly Finance Audit Risk Management (FARM) Meetings, and whole Board meetings are now bi-monthly.

The conversation moved on to discussing improvements to supplementary services and car parking. The possibility of creating an informal car parking



policy was noted as a way to mitigate egress issues in the front car park, as raised by SM. CDA acknowledged the frustration expressed by Residents receiving small invoices for printing and copying. Stating that the bundling of these services is an action being taken into consideration. CDA explained that delays in receiving the new Head-License from artsACT, which is due to broader issues of ACT Government zoning considerations, there is limited capacity to update Sub-Licenses and agreement service offerings.

Cherylynn Holmes (CH) joined the meeting.

The conversation moved to the upcoming Open House event, hosted in collaboration with Residents. PP raised concern about the event giving the impression of a closing celebration, in relation to renovations. CDA responded, clarifying that the event's intention is to celebrate the diverse, accomplished work and practice of Residents, not a 'closing/pre renovation finale'. Kirsten Biven (KB) suggested set times for the open studios, so Residents have opportunities to engage with offerings in the event, it was noted that this suggestion has been implemented into the Open House event program.

ACTION: Arts Capital to investigate adding staff bios and pictures onto the Resident Portal and/or website.

ACTION: Arts Capital Board meetings to consider ongoing agenda item re: Resident needs and concerns

ACTION: Arts Capital Board to consider publishing applicable information/minutes from Board meetings.

ACTION: Arts Capital to provide Lauren's email upon request to Residents.

ACTION: Arts Capital to investigate the creation of an informal Gorman Car Parking policy.

ACTION: Arts Capital to investigate bundling of service offerings.

ACTION: Arts Capital to review received suggestions to the Terms of Reference.

Item 4 Open Conversation – Resident's creative/ professional exchange

LD introduced the last agenda item, explaining that it had arisen from feedback in the previous Advisory Group meeting in May. LD passed over to the group for any topics, news or updates they would like to discuss or share.



Gorman Arts Centre

The group discussed various concerns relating to Centenary renovations. In response to queries surrounding the starting date, LH confirmed that artsACT have remained to provide a starting date of April 2024 and date of completion as the end of 2025. Further confirming that the preference of artsACT is for staged renovations. CDA additionally confirmed that the Gorman Commons spaces will remain a part of the Centre's offerings after renovations.

The group discussed various sentiments surrounding Renovations. HW indicated he did not think a statistic from artsACT stating that *95% of Residents were happy about renovations*, was accurate. HW asked if any other Residents questioned the accuracy of the 95% statistic, Kimmo Vennon (KV), KB, Ruth Osbourne (RO) and Emma Batchelor (EB) raised their hands in responseⁱⁱ.

Helen Wojtas (HW) and BD shared that despite the impact of delays and uncertainty, the improvements resulting from the Renovations provide a positive outcome to look forward to.

LH acknowledged the frustrations and negative impacts of the uncertainty around renovations has posed on residents. Emphasising that this was a key concern relayed to the Minister in the recent meeting with Arts Capital. Furthermore, LD expressed that a more detailed timeline and staging program would be beneficial. Noting that the timeline on the Resident Portal is limited due to lack of clarity from artsACT.

Franki Sparke (FS) left the meeting.

EB shared that she has a role on the Minsters Creative Council, of which they are aware of the statistic mentioned. EB acknowledged that the statistic and survey that it arose from is an ineffective method of understanding the array of sentiments towards renovations.

LH returned to her earlier statement and encouraged the group to please provide any feedback on how the Board can help mitigate concerns and frustrations experienced by Residents.

LD noted the time and with no further items raised, concluded the meeting by thanking everyone for their time and valuable contributions.

Meeting concluded 11:29am.



Summary of Action Items

#	Meeting	Action Item	Owner	Status
1	#G-23-001-G	Organise and facilitate training opportunities in coordination with Resident's interests and aims.	Arts Capital	In Progress
2	#G-23-001-G	Facilitate First Nations Engagement workshop.	Arts Capital	Completed
3	#G-23-001-G	Enhance the visibility of the Resident Portal on the website.	Arts Capital	Completed
4	#G-23-001-G	Investigate resource-sharing possibilities within the Resident Portal.	Arts Capital	In Progress
5	#G-23-001-G	Create dedicated time in the Advisory Group agenda for Resident focused open discussion and professional exchange.	Arts Capital	Completed
6	#G-23-001-G	Invite Boards of Resident Organisations to connect regarding Cultural Heritage concerns.	Lauren Honcope	In Progress
7	G-23-002-G	Distribute training opportunity survey to Residents.	Arts Capital	New
8	G-23-002-G	Arts Capital Board meetings to consider ongoing agenda item re: Resident needs and concerns.	Arts Capital Board	New
9	G-23-002-G	Arts Capital Board to consider publishing applicable information/minutes from Board meetings.	Arts Capital Board	New
10	G-23-002-G	Arts Capital to provide Lauren's email upon request to Residents.	Lauren Honcope	New
11	G-23-002-G	Investigate the creation of an informal Gorman Car Parking policy.	Arts Capital	New
12	G-23-002-G	Investigate bundling of service offerings.	Arts Capital	In Progress

ⁱ FERST is a specialised emergency training, products and consultation company that runs twice-yearly emergency evacuation training at the Centres.

ⁱⁱ It is noted that not all responses may have been captured by the minute-taker due to lack of visibility and apologies to the meeting.