

Board Meeting Minutes

The Vancouver Life Drawing Society

Wednesday June 10, 2020; 6:00 PM

Due to the on-going Covid-19 Pandemic and regulations prohibiting group meetings, the meeting was held via Zoom video conferencing software program.

In attendance: Douglas Smardon (president), Suzanne saint pierre (vice-president), Ron Bijok (treasurer), Paul Kernan (secretary), Alain Boullard, Dean Gazeley, Nick Jackiw (IT Manager)

Meeting Chair: Doug Smardon

Standing Items:

1. The meeting was called to order at 6:05 PM
2. The President advised participants that due to the amount of business to be conducted each item had a designated time limit. Where voting was required the President would abstain unless to break a deadlock.
3. Agenda approved. Addition item introduced by Alain: Outside Events, to be discussed under Gallery agenda item 4, New Business.
4. Minutes of previous meeting: May 18, 2020 minutes issued to members via email and posted to the website.
5. Financial Report
 - a. Ron provided a brief financial update:
 - i. No significant changes since last meeting
 - ii. We continue to pay rent

- iii. Losing approximately \$2,700 per month due to studio closure
 - iv. Ron requested Van City to stop making automatic transfers in April, but this has not happened. Ron will follow up on this.
6. Addition of Nick Jackiw as Board Member
- a. Ron proposed the following motion, seconded by Dean: It is Resolved that Nick Jackiw be appointed to fill the vacant seat on the board of directors for the Vancouver Life Drawing Society.
 - b. Doug, as President, abstaining, all 5 other members voted in favour of the motion. **Motion Passed.**

Old Business:

- 1. Rent Deferral
 - a. Paul indicated that the City of Vancouver is not currently deferring rent.
 - b. Paul also reported on a discussion with the City of Vancouver's Business License Group concerning the option of teaching sessions. The City indicated that based on the lease, the permitted use for the space is "art gallery, artist drawing and painting studio." They further indicated that if teaching was to be permitted a separate "school" license would be required, and that the Planning Department would need to confirm that this was a permitted use under the area zoning regulations. Paul will follow up with the Planning Department.
- 2. Round Table Discussion

a. Doug requested that each Board member, in turn to speak to the following questions. (Each member given 5 minutes to speak to their points followed by 25 minutes of roundtable discussion):

1. System changes and restart scenarios

- a. The existing (old) model.
- b. Reserve a block of Studio time to members.
- c. Sublease studio to a small group of members for one or two years.
- d. Running virtual sessions out of the studio.

2. Additional operational changes

3. Challenges or hurdles the Board must overcome to make your options viable?

4. Solutions you propose to overcome them

5. Health and safety management plan

6. Cashless online business model

7. Teaching

b. Suzanne

- i. We're close to having a plan for scenario a. Some details still to be worked out, should be fairly easy. Payment and registration will require work. Will take longer than a month. Trial-run with board members may be useful. Virtual studio (scenario d) is an option in the interim. Has spoken to a couple of session managers and they are keen to resume sessions. Recommends no free sessions and a standard fee of \$20 per session. Supports the idea of sub committees to tackle aspects of the reopening scenario. Proceed with scenario a.

c. Nick

- i. In favour of scenarios a and d. No need to rent out the studio. Doesn't see other restart scenarios. Outdoor drawing is a good idea but difficult to implement. Challenges; we don't have an effective process for making decisions, haven't accomplished anything externally visible during Covid, largely as a result of never reaching effective decisions. To move forward we need real effort, and to figure out how to move forward as a group, in following the clear provincial guidance for restarting operations like ours. We should adopt the simplest answer to each question or obstacle, if it gets us out of a stall, even if it's not the best long term solution. Not concerned with the details of payment, or whether the bathroom is cleaned. COVID will require us to insist on higher accountability from session managers when it comes to following rules. Effort, agreement, and accountability are the challenges; the way forward is continuing with the required safety plan.

d. Alain

- i. Originally thought that the studio space was dangerous with respect to Covid. Would personally not like to attend sessions (with 15 people) as there is a high risk of the virus spreading if an infected person attended; close proximity and difficulty in controlling movement of people. However, risk is low in BC. Challenge is to reopen some sessions, but

not to lose money. Open one or two sessions first to try out; only continue with sessions that don't lose money. Scenario b (studio rental) likely won't work if we can't teach. Virtual sessions are a good idea, at least for the next winter if the situation gets worse. People may be afraid to come back, and with summer weather may prefer outdoor drawing and painting options. Should open one or two sessions to start.

e. Ron

- i. We are currently permitted by health authorities to open. No need to wait for Level 3 status as this is primarily related to mass travel. Offices, art galleries and restaurants are all allowed to open now. Convinced we are permitted to be open provided we have a safety plan. Debate is not about whether we can open but is about what safety protocols we should implement. Would support any, and all, reopening scenarios (digital sessions, outdoor sessions). But each needs a champion. Recognizes risks but believes there is a wider cultural understanding of these and how they can be mitigated. Not proposing to open 11 sessions; open slowly and test the waters.

f. Dean

- i. Main thing is to open the studio in its normal function (Scenario a) as permitted under current restrictions. Other scenarios are independent of this and should also be implemented if someone wants

to take them on. Confident that a 15-seat arrangement is possible and reasonable. Pricing (session fees) are also independent of the selected reopening scenario and this is not the time to change. Need to look at pricing in the future. Session managers should not have to pay. We've done the right thing in following regulations from the start, and as soon as we get a safety plan finalized we can open. Complying with rules is not that complicated and people are used to maintaining distance etc.

g. Paul

- i. Not in favour of live sessions at this time. Don't believe it's easy to implement; we're in a high risk category. Live sessions at this time will not benefit the majority of our members. Likely that we will lose money on the proposed sessions. Not convinced that it's easy to develop and implement a safety plan. If there is a second lock-down in fall or winter we'll be back to square one. Instead we should take the opportunity to implement a range of changes we've talked about for a number of years. Old financial basis of Basic (up to 25 artists in some sessions to compensate for less well attended sessions) is no longer valid. The future will be digital and online. Although there will always be live sessions it will no longer be the main source of revenue. Recommends suspending operations for a couple of months and start thinking about how to

implement a new system to take Basic digital; model booking, payment, sessions and a new website.

Current operating model has been in place for 40 years; we need to start to move to a new model and the situation we're in provides the opportunity. Get member input via questionnaires, plan a larger online AGM in the fall to introduce new ideas and implement.

h. Doug

- i. Have narrowed options down to a and d. For scenario b we need permission from City to sub lease studio space. Focusing on a and d the issues are, safety, software (for online systems). Too many issues for the full board, need smaller sub committees (technical, virtual sessions, health and safety, type / format of sessions). Like the idea of a soft, dry run, start, but imperative we have a health and safety plan. We have to deal with a long list of items and questions (see agenda). Lots of energy and good ideas, need to work together in small committees.

3. Additional Discussion

- a. A group discussion followed where further ideas were expressed with no definitive conclusion. After the allotted time of 25 minutes was reached the President halted discussion so the meeting could be moved onto the next agenda item.

4. Gallery Shows

- a. Alain indicated that the Betty Woo show is scheduled for July but may not happen due to Covid 19 situation.
- b. Alain would also like to have a show.
- c. Ron indicated that the proposed health and safety plan could be modified to include gallery shows.
- d. Doug suggested that studio sessions are a higher priority.
- e. Outdoor sessions were also discussed. Nick indicated that recent experience suggests these are difficult to arrange because of weather and other issues.

5. Phase 3 Reopening Proposal

- a. Motion proposed by Ron with 4 amendments, seconded by Dean.
- b. Amendments:
 - i. Delete “Level 3” and replace with “Level 2”.
 - ii. In preamble add after “resume operations” “for 3 trial sessions”.
 - iii. In preamble, add after “Basic Inquiry shall” “starting on June 20, 2020”.
 - iv. Delete item “Session manager is not exempt from fee (form now).”

Given that provincial health authorities have allowed Level 2 relaxations to COVID-19 closures, allowing offices, restaurants, art galleries and museums to reopen (with conditions), and given that our operations are not exactly, but roughly covered by different parts of those uses, Basic Inquiry shall resume operations under the following conditions:

1) As an added measure to mediate risk, operations shall not resume until Level 3 relaxations have been approved by the provincial authority, and shall cease operations if Level 3 relaxations are rescinded,

2) Safety measures shall be implemented in accordance with the “Safety Plan”,

For information, these outline measures shall be implemented (refer to details in “Safety Plan”):

1) Attendance limited to 15 persons, including model and session manager

2) Fees

Only members may attend (memberships are currently extended indefinitely)

Cost of attendance is \$15

Session manager is not exempt from fee (for now).

Fees to be etransferred to payment@lifedrawing.org in advance of attendance

Models are to be paid by etransfer

3) Attendees

Shall be instructed to maintain 2m social distance between themselves at all times

Shall be instructed to wash their hands at one of the two sinks before and after sessions

Shall be instructed to wipe down donkeys before and after use with provided anti-microbial spray

Shall be instructed to wear masks at all times

Shall be instructed to not attend if they exhibit any symptoms of COVID

Shall bring their own drawing materials and drawing boards

Shall inform Basic Inquiry by email if subsequent to attending Basic Inquiry they are diagnosed with COVID (to assist in contact tracing)

4) Session managers

Shall wipe down with provided anti-microbial spray:

Front and rear door and bathroom handles

Model stand surface

Shall open front and rear doors at all times the model is not posing, and shall not turn on the HVAC,

Shall announce the rules for attendees

Shall remove any attendees not complying with the Safety Plan

- c. Doug, as President, abstaining, the Board members voted as follows; Alain, Ron, Nick and Dean in favour, Paul opposed, Suzanne, abstaining. **Motion passed.**

6. Virtual Life-Drawing Sessions

- a. Nick indicated that due to time constraints he would not go through the proposal in detail, but indicated that to date he has not spent any money, and has found models and cameras.
- b. In addition, has investigated the issue of internet access from the studio. Has checked the studio space and confirmed there is no incoming internet cable. Unfortunately at the moment it is difficult to get wiring installed due to the Covid situation. Based on this there would appear to be two short-term options for internet access; a) use of a high speed mobile plan, or b) borrow or buy access from a neighbour, e.g. Le Petit Belge.
- c. Nick reported that a session-specific health and safety plan is also necessary to start the virtual sessions. The plan developed by Ron is a good basis for this plan, but not entirely sufficient.
- d. Nick indicated that the previously approved start up budget of \$200 would be sufficient to pay models for 3,

two hour sessions. Beyond this additional funds will be required.

- e. Alain indicated that he has met the owner of the Le Petit Belge store and will contact him regarding internet access (item b. above).
- f. Nick also responded to a suggestion by Doug that he consider getting volunteers from the greater membership to be trained in and charged with running virtual sessions. Given the cost and value of the two high end laptop computers he employs to run the virtual sessions, he presently manages for Chieh, he would not necessarily trust others to be responsible for his equipment, or want to leave it unattended in the Studio.
- g. Given no motion was in place to make a decision about virtual sessions and the allotted time for discussion was used up, further discussion was tabled to the next meeting where Alain would report back on his success in acquiring use of offsite wifi from one of the studio's neighbours, Le Petit Belge.

New Business:

- 1. Model Request for Facebook Advertisement Distribution
 - a. Nick indicated that Emily Cheung (model) has asked if she can advertise her sessions via the Basic Inquiry to our members mailing list, with a disclaimer that this is a third-party modelling opportunity. Emily would also like to do the same thing via our Facebook page which has a different audience (members and non-members. Nick indicated that the results of the recent membership survey

suggest that members would welcome notifications of this type.

- b. Motion to allow Emily to advertise as described, moved by Nick, seconded by Ron.
- c. Doug raised the issue of security, specifically Zoom bombing related to these sessions. Nick indicated that Emily is aware of the problem and has taken precautionary steps. However, this is primarily an issue for the model(s) running these sessions.
- d. In discussion Nick amended the motion to extend the facility to any models wanting to advertise sessions.
- e. Doug, as President, abstaining, the Board members voted as follows; all in favour. **Motion passed.**

2. Covid Safety Plan for Basic Inquiry Studio

- a. The H&S Plan proposed by Ron for the approved start up sessions is the accepted plan for now. As the given plan is organic in nature and open to adjustment as required and as the meeting was close to reaching its 2 hour time limit further discussion was Tabled.

Next Meeting

- a. It was agreed the next board meeting would take place on July 8th at 6:00 - 8:00 PM location to be determined, either via Zoom, or at the Basic Inquiry Studio

The Meeting was adjourned at 8: 05 PM.