

**Draft Minutes from the East Town Business Partnership Board of Directors Meeting**  
**Wednesday, October 12, 2022, 9:00 a.m.-10:30 a.m.**  
**Gamut Gallery, 717 South 10th Street, and Via Pedestal Technology**

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**I. Host Welcome and Art Selection**

Once Executive Director Shannon Fitzgerald distributed the documents needed for the instant meeting to those in person and by email to those online, she started the meeting at 9:06 a.m.

Then Cassie Gardner, Director at Gamut Gallery (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/cassie-garner-034900118/>), welcomed everyone and pointed out the interior space and the courtyard in the back filled with murals created live by artists during their events. She advised GG is 10 years old (<http://millcitytimes.com/news/gamut-gallery-to-celebrate-a-decade-of-art-and-community-in.html>), and this is their second location after moving from Marquette Avenue South and 10th Street (the former Handicraft Guild Addition, [http://www.placeography.org/index.php/Handicraft\\_Guild\\_Addition%2C\\_1004\\_Marquette\\_Avenue%2C\\_Minneapolis%2C\\_Minnesota](http://www.placeography.org/index.php/Handicraft_Guild_Addition%2C_1004_Marquette_Avenue%2C_Minneapolis%2C_Minnesota)). Gentrification came in, the building was sold, condominiums were built (<https://www.artistryon10th.com/>), and they were forced to relocate. They landed here, love it here, and got two beautiful glass wall doors. She referred to their location (off Centennial Place) as the “Bermuda triangle” of Minneapolis and unless you’re coming to this area for a specific reason, you don’t know it’s here. If you get here, how you’re going to get out is the running joke with people who come to the gallery for the first time.

Cassie kept the art up from their annual Call-4-Work Pinky Promise show that ended on Saturday (<http://www.gamutgallerympls.com/2022/08/09/c4w2022-pinky-promise/>; <http://millcitytimes.com/news/c4w2022-pinky-promise-curated-by-jamie-owens-featuring-28-lo.html>) so that we’d have something to look at besides blank white walls. They’ve done these international C4W shows 9 out of the 10 years they’ve been open, the first year was spent off in relocating. Artists in the exhibit are from Mexico, Indiana, Illinois, California, Wisconsin, and a lot from Minnesota, which is awesome considering they’re a small-town gallery space that still not a lot of people know about locally. There is no theme in the C4W and it has a different curator every year who brings their lens and perspective into the show. They had 1,223 submissions and ended up with 31 pieces in the show. According to Cassie, Pinky Promise is like a three-layered cake:

- Layer 1 is the fluffy icing and bright colors that bounce off each other and the walls to make one feel good.
- Layer 2 goes deeper and is unapologetically juvenile in nature, and although the artists are established and have fine arts background, the work is carefree, and hanging onto those last days of summer before one has to buckle down.
- Layer 3 goes even deeper into mental health during the pandemic when the curator didn’t think his work was worth it, so the title “Pinky Promise” is Jamie Owens’ promise to these artists that they are good enough, that their work deserves to be shown and sold, and not to compare themselves to other artists.

Shannon then asked everyone to choose which works of art in the Pinky Promise exhibit we preferred and why. She went first stating she loves stories and chose the two sculptures by Richard Wehrs ([https://www.facebook.com/commerce/products/9-blarg%E2%80%99s-stunning-bass-aria-performed-on-opening-night-a-thousand-years-ago-reverberates-through-the-galaxy-still-by-richard-wehrs/5640250086036555?ref=photo\\_fullscreen&referral\\_code=product\\_tag\\_on\\_photo\\_fullscreen\\_527112042756351](https://www.facebook.com/commerce/products/9-blarg%E2%80%99s-stunning-bass-aria-performed-on-opening-night-a-thousand-years-ago-reverberates-through-the-galaxy-still-by-richard-wehrs/5640250086036555?ref=photo_fullscreen&referral_code=product_tag_on_photo_fullscreen_527112042756351); [https://www.facebook.com/commerce/products/10-alvin-would-someday-learn-that-the-first-middle-school-dance-is-awkward-for-everyone-by-richard-wehrs/5538082672923463?ref=photo\\_fullscreen&referral\\_code=product\\_tag\\_on\\_photo\\_fullscreen\\_527112042756351](https://www.facebook.com/commerce/products/10-alvin-would-someday-learn-that-the-first-middle-school-dance-is-awkward-for-everyone-by-richard-wehrs/5538082672923463?ref=photo_fullscreen&referral_code=product_tag_on_photo_fullscreen_527112042756351)).

**Responses from Board Members at Gamut Gallery (listed alphabetically)**

- ❖ Lynn Burn, Compass. She chose the ghost with the blue boots, Apparition (<https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=5673559182694467&set=pb.100063726801401.-2207520000>.) because it’s going into the fall season.
- ❖ Cassie Garner, Gamut Gallery. Pinky Promise also did a “Best in Show” award selected by the opening night attendees and she chose Apparition by Desirée Forç t before she learned what it was about. While Forç t was working on it, Roe v. Wade was overturned, so she painted a sheet over herself because she felt her identity as a woman was being wiped away from society and her feet are firmly planted on the ground representing her hope for the future.
- ❖ Cyndy Harrison, Sawatdee Thai Restaurants & Zushiya. She also likes the paint boxes but chose Fake Tan by Jordan Shepherd because she loves textiles ([https://www.facebook.com/commerce/products/26-fake-tan-by-jordan-shepherd/6053571538010765/?ref=mini\\_shop\\_storefront&referral\\_code=product\\_tag\\_on\\_photo\\_fullscreen\\_5673559186027800](https://www.facebook.com/commerce/products/26-fake-tan-by-jordan-shepherd/6053571538010765/?ref=mini_shop_storefront&referral_code=product_tag_on_photo_fullscreen_5673559186027800)).
- ❖ Julia Lauwagie, MN Adult & Teen Challenge. She chose the Prince portrait in the courtyard on the right that has sheet music as part of his features by Kristi Abbott (<https://www.kristiabbott.com/prince>) who formerly occupied space next door.

- ❖ Brian Maupin, Allied Parking. He also chose the frosting on the cake (i.e., the four paint boxes by Jeremy Jones' 4-year-old daughter) and likes that older pieces were reused.
- ❖ Eric Merriman, Thrivent Financial. He chose the frosting on the cake (i.e., the four paint boxes by Jeremy Jones' 4-year-old daughter ([https://www.facebook.com/commerce/products/20-see-the-monkeys-1-by-jeremy-jones/8331462573532205/?ref=mini\\_shop\\_serp&referral\\_code=product\\_tag\\_on\\_photo\\_fullscreen\\_5679568148760237](https://www.facebook.com/commerce/products/20-see-the-monkeys-1-by-jeremy-jones/8331462573532205/?ref=mini_shop_serp&referral_code=product_tag_on_photo_fullscreen_5679568148760237), [https://www.facebook.com/commerce/products/21-see-the-monkeys-2-by-jeremy-jones/797869522205707?ref=mini\\_shop\\_serp&referral\\_code=product\\_tag\\_on\\_photo\\_fullscreen\\_5679568148760237](https://www.facebook.com/commerce/products/21-see-the-monkeys-2-by-jeremy-jones/797869522205707?ref=mini_shop_serp&referral_code=product_tag_on_photo_fullscreen_5679568148760237)).
- ❖ Reid Struck, Sherman-Williams. He chose No One Sleeps in Tennessee because it reminds him of when his daughter said to him after undergoing surgery a year and half ago and seeing him first upon recovery, "you're the only ten I see."
- ❖ Carletta Sweet, Downtown Minneapolis Neighborhood Association. She didn't tour the entire gallery but felt she subconsciously sat across from what she thought were the most vivid pieces (i.e., the four paint boxes by Jeremy Jones' 4-year-old daughter).

**Responses from Board Members Online (unintelligible due to poor microphone reception)**

- ❖ Jacquie Berglund, FINNEGANS Brew Co. She chose the sculpture next to Cyndy, and Apparition now that she knows the story.
- ❖ Amy Carlson, Hennepin Healthcare Foundation
- ❖ Jenifer Freeman, Aramark
- ❖ Richard Kiemen, Sherman Associates
- ❖ Kirsten Walstein, Krause-Anderson

**Board Directors Absent**

Charlie Boeckenheuer, Minnesota Vikings  
 Jacob Gale, People Serving People  
 Svetlana Hanley, Elliot Park Neighborhood Inc  
 Brent Hanson, Wells Fargo Corporate Properties Group  
 Tom Jollie, Padilla  
 Michael Noble, The Normandy Inn & Suites  
 Aimee Robertson, North Central University  
 Wendy Underwood, Catholic Charities of St. Paul and Minneapolis

**Staff Absent**

Christie Rock Hantge, Executive Coordinator

**II. Call to Order**

After the art selection exercise, President Julia Lauwagie called the meeting to order at 9:17 a.m., and advised she was postponing the consent agenda until the November Board meeting because the minutes from September 8th were just received that morning, and the Executive Coordinator was absent and unavailable to answer questions about the Treasurer's Report and Executive Coordinator's report for the period 9/1/2022 to 9/3/2022.

**III. Consideration of Agenda**

The agenda was then approved as amended (CS/BM).

**IV. Action Items**

None to consider.

**V. Ongoing Discussion of 2022-23 Strategic Planning Goals**

**A. Business Forums**

1. **Joint Forum on September 27th.** Shannon sought feedback on the joint forum held with the Minneapolis Downtown Council at Thrivent Corporate Center (<https://easttownmpls.org/etbp-mdc-business-forum-on-september-27-at-thrivent-corporate-center/>). Brian loved how they took elements from their original buildings and carried them through, how they integrated into downtown and turned the building to face the EastTown community, keeping areas of the building open for all, the woodwork and style all make it an impressive office space.

Cyndy loved all the amazing art and history. Coming from a small business it was really different to just see corporate America because she never does.

Eric explained the building is oriented to be connected to East Town and has that glass stair tower on that end, so for them it's a great experience and great views. They have a parking ramp in the building so people can drive in and stay within that little bubble if they want to but at least there's that connection to the rest of downtown. And in response to Julia's inquiry about whether there's corporate messaging for when people should return to work, Eric advised it's being left to each team manager and their employees. In today's work culture, that means people are mostly working from home and a lot of large meetings are held in the building. Half their traffic is being driven by large teams.

Shannon noted shared office space could be a topic of conversation for even smaller to mid-size offices. Then she thanked Eric for their hospitality, noted it was a great partnership with the MDC, and guesstimated there were about 50 or so attendees.

- 2. Future Business Forum Topics.** Shannon distributed a list of possible topics that former Executive Director Dan Collison prepared before his departure and explained there are now just three more to plan for the season: the week of January 23, 2023; the week of April 17, 2023; and a summer (July/August/September) event hopefully in partnership with the Minneapolis Downtown Council which is also cutting back on their Business Forums because attendance is significantly different than it was 2 years ago. After she reviewed MDC's list, there was one in particular she thought would be great to partner with them on, i.e., speaking with the Vikings' new General Manager Kwesi Adofo-Mensah (<https://www.vikings.com/news/kwesi-adofo-mensah-general-manager-announced>), or head coach Kevin O'Connell (<https://www.vikings.com/news/kevin-oconnell-head-coach-announcement#>), or both. If anyone has thoughts about other options, let her know.

Amy advised Hennepin Healthcare is reimagining its footprint in downtown Minneapolis and a possible massive reconstruction. She'll check with Tom Hayes, Vice President of Public Relations and Marketing (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/tomdhayes/>), to determine if there's an opportunity to present to the ETBP onsite in 2023.

Because of the investment Sherman-Williams makes on their public realm improvements (\$10,000 for 3 months to water the grass and trees), Reid is interested in learning more about the Downtown Improvement District's greening plans (<https://www.mplsdid.com/green>) for the next 3-5 years. Shannon suggested this could be a regular update from Public Works instead of a public forum from DID and in other organizations they do it regularly and we could also offer it; that's part of that sector committee work.

When asked about the arts as a forum topic, Cassie explained no matter how much engagement she tries to do with other people and networks, they don't get a lot of reaction, so they're on their own island keeping it bright and cheerful. Then she added, there's a massive uprising in homelessness and addiction in the area, e.g., she had to kick out a young kid who was squatting between their building, then he moved to the alleyway; he rejected the help he was offered and she's never seen it this bad in the 7 years they've been here.

Brian suggested innovative ways nonprofits are changing homelessness is a topic that should be done as well as return to the office because we need bodies downtown to work, dine, and spend money. And small business growth in Elliot Park could connect with Hennepin Healthcare and its development. These are all hot topics that he thinks touches upon everyone at the table.

Shannon mentioned the social outreach and impact presentation given by Shane Zahn, Director of Safe Initiatives at the Minneapolis Downtown Improvement District, and Joe Kreisman, Social Impact Manager, at NūLoop Partners on Tuesday, October 11th, which includes a training session.

Cassie suggested piggybacking off the community resources folder a neighbor developed that is being handed out to businesses in Elliot Park, and it should include the amazing document about the three community pillars – a vibrant, multifaceted, connected community (<https://easttownmpls.org/about/>) – the Board updated last year.

Shannon concluded it sounds like a public safety forum and Hennepin Healthcare forum, and smaller things like a

conversation with Public Works and return to office through Zoom. The committees will go deeper into them when planning.

## B. Committee and Task Force Structures for the 2022-2023 Member Year

Because there hasn't been a lot of activity around the formerly established ETBP committees since the transition to the new ED, Shannon reviewed their purpose, scope, and meeting rhythm; shared her changes online for Board input; and submitted a revised structure for discussion in the instant Board meeting as follows:

### 1. Committees

- a. **Executive** is, according to the ETBP bylaws (<https://easttownmpls.org/about/>), comprised of all the officers and one or two At Large Board Members as appointed by the Board Development Committee, plus the Executive Director. Currently it's comprised of the President (Julia), Vice President (Carletta), Treasurer (Cyndy), and Ex Officio (Shannon). They'll be meeting once a month to set the agenda and provide overall direction.
- b. **Board Development & Governance** will explore ways to encourage active Board participation, cultivate Board members that reflect the district's business community, and ensure Board adherence to its bylaws.
- c. **Business Forum & Event** will conceive and plan these events to connect the membership to timely and relevant information concerning the district.

### 2. Task Forces

- a. **Restaurant, Bar and Hotel.** According to Cyndy, there hasn't been a lot going on with this group lately but there are a lot of things we could do that would be beneficial, especially if we want to get more of these businesses involved. The forums we've had over the lunch hour was the main thing we do throughout the year, and now we're cutting them back and moving them around, so if that is what we're offering to restaurants, bars, hotels, etc., the question is does that work for them? If we want more of them to be a part of ETBP, what are we providing them? At this point we're not providing them with anything, so why would they join? When the Lake Street Council (<https://www.visitlakestreet.com/>) had Eat Street events, they had more staff and budget that enabled them to engage the community better, so what can we do for the businesses and community without those things? Places are closing and openings and we don't know what's happening. She didn't even know that Off the Rails (<https://www.otrmpls.com/>) was there. Then in response to Julia's inquiry, she explained Sawatdee's clientele in the evenings is mostly people who live in the area, and around lunch time the clientele is mostly people from businesses; they have a lunch buffet on Mondays and Fridays so people know those are the days to come. She knows The Commons still has food trucks which is a draw especially when the weather is beautiful, and some skyway places have reopened but she doesn't know what and where and some people do come in and say this is the first time they've been back downtown. She further noted that a lot of businesses have been contacting them for lunch and dinner catering because they can't find places that'll deliver to them after 5 p.m. It's not just that they need business, but companies are coming back downtown and having meetings and suddenly they have to figure out who's actually open and still doing this work.

Brian noted if we want to attract more restaurants, we can hopefully connect them to the businesses because we have a lot of big corporations who have plenty of employees that need to have lunch; to somehow facilitate and make that happen would be attractive for restaurants whether that's a card or flyer. To engage more restaurants is very valuable to have Shannon's time which is stretched super thin because she probably can't find anyone to work.

Shannon stated in the context of cutting back our programs is the opening of support groups for specific sectors and providing a space where people can come together to understand what we can do to support. Then she asked whether we felt this, i.e., *hospitality or business sector* should be a committee?

Jacque liked the idea and appreciated what Cyndy was saying; it's been a tough landscape and terrain in East Town for the hospitality area. Listening to what folks need and how we can drive traffic... and all those good things, she thinks we just need to give it another try.

Richard supported that point of view...

Shannon advised the role of that committee is going to be about making creative space for these smaller events. We'll all need to work together; the host should be in attendance and it means we can bring guest speakers.

- b. Engagement and Advocacy.** Cassie said she was a part of this task force but they never met or had a task to task.

Shannon noted the themes and aspirations for the year were not printed, i.e., creating, communicating, amplifying, elevating. To her, it's a Board vibe initiative as opposed to a task force and questioned its necessity.

Cassie doesn't see it as necessary unless we were potentially having an event down Chicago Avenue and checking boxes was needed.

Shannon suggested leaving it as a task force and to think about it as *marketing and communications*.

Shannon then asked everyone to submit their committee choices and she'll further flesh out their purpose and scope. For the time being, she'll lead each and get the first meetings on the calendar.

### **C. Community Engagement**

According to Shannon, a perfect example of community engagement that is tied to recruitment, are neighborhood conversations as discussed at the July 12th Board strategic planning session held at Padilla. At that time, each Board member was encouraged to conduct 10 community conversations over the next year with people who are *not* in their building or part of their organization to become more familiar with what's going on in the district. Having these conversations with the hospitality sector, as Board members of that sector suggested earlier, would be a great way to introduce ourselves and obtain meaningful information about their needs.

Shannon also believes we should reach out to some of the other sectors, e.g.: at the Hennepin Healthcare meeting, she reached out to Steve Treichler, Senior Pastor of Hope Community Church (<https://hopecc.com/leadership/downtown-leadership/steve-treichler/>) because that is a sector involved in homeless work; she wants to connect with the leadership of First Covenant Church (<https://www.1stcov.org/>) which is undergoing a transition; she's had a conversation with the Program Services Manager at MacPhail Center for Music (<https://www.macphail.org/leadership-staff/>) who reached out to her for information about the concrete street barriers on South 2nd Street (<https://www.minnpost.com/cityscape/2022/07/are-the-minneapolis-mill-district-street-diverters-actually-a-good-idea/>); and staff at Meet Minneapolis (<https://www.minneapolis.org/about-us/staff-list-contact/>) who connect to restaurants.

### **D. Membership Recruitment**

There are also other ways to become involved, especially when one has a list of different places, e.g., the law firms and other businesses nearby. Shannon is working on the MDC-DID's Ginkgo mapping system (<https://marketplace.city/p/ginkgo/>) but it's slow in happening because it's a little more complicated. Let her know if anyone else would like to participate.

Because of the difficulty in hearing each other, Brian recommended approving a portable Bluetooth speaker. Shannon will investigate the Owl (<https://owllabs.com/>) meeting technology because she wants to be able to move to different meeting spaces. She'll also follow up on the community resources package and business cards, then she encouraged everyone to fill in the spreadsheet with people they know for the community conversations.

## **VI. Updates**

- A. Executive Director Monthly Overview.** Shannon Fitzgerald provided no report.

- B. Downtown Minneapolis Neighborhood Association.** Carletta reported on the Land Use Committee projects she submitted on the Board Members Only page: (1) Chloé, the new restaurant by Chef Vincent Francoual who owned Vincent A Restaurant going into the former Bacon Social House space in the Canopy by Hilton Minneapolis at 700 South 3rd Street; and (2) Milly's Wine Bar & Bistro going into the corner property at 1129 Washington Avenue South.

Richard advised Sherman Associates is excited about the opening of Chloé's this fall and advised Francoual is in partnership with the father and son who own EaTo (<https://www.startribune.com/vincent-francoual-is-returning-to-downtown-minneapolis-with-a-new-casual-french-restaurant/600204961/>). He believes activity begets activity and the more ability they have to draw people downtown and to the options in East Town. the safer and more vibrant the community will be. He then elaborated on all their East Town projects (<https://www.sherman-associates.com/development/east-town-minneapolis-developments/>), and advised they'll be back in the J.I. Case building on floors 3 and 4 at the end of March and as construction progresses he'll take us on a tour. He recommended art and history of the area that reveals hidden gems as a forum topic and it ties into the DMNA and Dianne Walsh's efforts on the Historic Signage Project for J.I. Case (<https://www.thedmna.org/historic-signage/j-i-case-building/>), Advance Thresher/Emerson-Newton (<https://www.thedmna.org/historic-signage/advance-thresher-emerson-newton/>) which creates a more neighborhood feel.

**C. Elliot Park Neighborhood Association.** Because of Svetlana Hanley's absence, no report was provided.

**D. Minneapolis Downtown Council.** Reference Shannon's update on Business Forums.

**E. Membership.** Because of Christie Hantge's absence, no report was provided.

## VII. Logistics

**A. Board Meeting Locations and Time.** Please use SignUpGenius <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60b0444a5a823a7fe3-etbp>.

**B. Next Board Meeting.** Because there was good turnout for this morning's meeting, we'll stay with the original meeting day for the time being, so the next one is on the first Thursday of the month, November 3rd, 9:00 a.m.-10:30 a.m. at Gamut Gallery, 717 South 10th Street.

**C. Board Happy Hour.** She'll put a standing one on the calendar to just get together and buy our own drinks to socialize and learn more about each other and the community. This will start on Thursday, November 17th, 4:30 p.m.-6:00 p.m. at FINNEGANS House, 817 5th Avenue South and then shift locations.

## VIII. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:22 a.m. (BM/CS).