

MINNESOTA DANCE ADVOCACY TASK FORCE
MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, September 9, 2024 – 5-7PM – Threads/Zoom

In attendance:

Karen Charles (facilitator), Elayna Waxse, Mathew Janczewski, Louise Robinson, Mary Harding, Gary Peterson, Raymond Terrill, Sarah Larose-Holland, Valerie Oliviero, Zhané Jackson, Ricardo Torres, Jim Lieberthal, Dana Kassel, Tamara Nadel, Laurie Van Wieren, Michael Pettee, Kristen Brogden, Linda Soderstrom, and Kathy or (Cathy)- apologies, no name provided

Summary:

The meeting began with introductions from participants, sharing their names, affiliations, and current emotional states. The group discussed the need to engage a broader group of individuals and shared a “call to action” draft for people to respond to. They also talked about creating a brochure based on their ideas and feedback, aiming to support the dance community in Minnesota and foster a sense of community and vitality.

Val Oliviero and others discussed the need to improve inclusivity and outreach efforts for the “Call to Action”. They emphasized the importance of representing diverse perspectives and voices in the dance community and the need for explicit language to convey inclusivity and value for all voices. Michael Pettee also discussed the need for additional funding and hiring consultants to support the organization's goals. There is a focus on scheduling community focus groups, with a suggestion to start as soon as possible within the next few months.

The group discussed potential event hosting opportunities and the need for resources, including equipment and funding. They also considered the timeline for planning and promoting future events, as well as the importance of visually appealing invitations to attract a diverse audience. Zhane expressed the need to identify specific individuals to drive the task force forward and emphasized the urgency to take action. The meeting concluded with a discussion of the need for feasibility studies and funding conversations in the RFP to support the formation of an organization, emphasizing the importance of sustaining the organization and raising funds for its long-term goals.

Chapters & Topics:

Camera and Permission Issues

Arena Dances and Mary Harding address camera placement concerns and the difficulty in obtaining permission to access meeting notes. Mary shares her efforts to organize things and seek permission, while Arena expresses confusion over not receiving an email notification about the permission request.

Introductions and Feelings

Participants took turns introducing themselves, sharing their names, affiliations, and current emotional states. Some mentioned recent experiences, such as trips and activities, while others expressed feelings of excitement, hope, and exhaustion. The section provided a glimpse into the diverse perspectives and emotional states of the meeting attendees.

Discussion on Call to Action and Brochure Layout

During the discussion, Karen Charles led the conversation on engaging a broader group of individuals and shared a call to action draft for feedback. They also discussed creating a brochure to support the dance community in Minnesota, aiming to foster a sense of community and vitality. The group considered different formats for disseminating the information, such as social media and email, and discussed the need for a clear timeline for the project.

- * Call to Action Draft

Discussion on Inclusivity and Outreach Efforts for Dance MN

Val Oliviero leads a discussion on the need to enhance inclusivity and outreach efforts, highlighting the importance of representing diverse perspectives and voices in the dance community. The group emphasizes the need for explicit language to convey inclusivity and value for all voices, as well as the importance of conducting in-depth research on different dance styles and cultures to ensure broad inclusion.

- * Graphic design and visual promotion

Community Engagement Opportunities at Northrop and O'Shaughnessy

Michael Pettee and Kristen B from Northrop UMN discuss the possibility of DanceMN having a table at the Northrop open house, with Kristen providing details about the event, including the community arts expo and the availability of unstaffed areas for materials. There is also a mention by Dana Kassel of a potential table at O'Shaughnessy lobby during SOLO performance, will confirm and let us know, and the availability of DanceMN and MN Dance Task Force materials at the Northrop box office.

- * Promotion and outreach for events

Discussion on Hiring Consultants and Scheduling Community Focus Groups

Michael Pettee emphasizes the need for more funding and hiring consultants to support the organization's goals. The discussion also revolves around scheduling community focus groups, with a consensus to start as soon as possible within the next few months. There is a mention of a tight-knit theater world and a suggestion to schedule the activities to keep things moving.

Discussion on RFP for Consultant to Lead Focus Groups

Michael Pettee shares his reservations about assuming a consulting role and proposes involving other individuals, including his husband. The discussion highlights the importance of an RFP to ensure equitable opportunities for people of color and emphasizes the need for transparency and specificity in the RFP process. Mary Harding emphasizes the importance of broadening the audience for the RFP and ensuring that the consultant's role is well-defined.

Concerns about Consultants and the RFP

Linda voices concerns about consultants' understanding of homelessness complexities, proposing alternative leaders for the project. Mary emphasizes the importance of inclusivity and transparency, stressing the time needed to engage with diverse communities. Michael provides an update on the completion of the RFP work.

Funding and Sustainability Discussion

Michael Pettee raises the need to include feasibility studies and funding conversations in the RFP to support the formation of an organization. He emphasizes the importance of sustaining the organization and raising funds for its long-term goals, highlighting the issue of continuous funding and the negotiation of consultant fees.

Discussion on Task Force Structure and Urgency

Michael Pettee discusses the struggle in finding the right approach for inclusivity within the task force and emphasizes the urgency to address the existing problems. The conversation also touches on the need for a consultant to facilitate the process and the importance of creating a space for marginalized individuals.

Planning for Future Events and Resource Allocation

Michael Pettee leads a discussion on potential event hosting opportunities and the need for resources, including equipment and funding. The group also considers the timeline for planning and promoting future events, as well as the importance of visually appealing invitations to attract a diverse audience. The conversation touches on the challenges of prioritizing community needs and the importance of strategic planning for sustainable support.

- * Finding a space for meetings and events

Action Items:

- * Ricardo, Val, Zhane and Louise to finesse the "Call to Action" language, with equity and inclusion lens - first and foremost.
- * Michael Pettee and Louise will work on timeline and budget to assist in the ask for McKnight Foundation increased funding
- * Matthew, Sarah, and Erinn Liebhard will review recent survey findings (9/19)
- * Louise and Karen will draft and distribute RFP for consultant, try for end of Sept .
- * Laurie Van Wieren to talk to Stephen Magner about graphic design, Jim to ask friend for in-kind graphic design assistance— Elayna Waxse can provide Canva design if needed
- * Dana Kassel will circle back if table at O'Shaughnessy lobby during SOLO performance is possible
- * Marketing efforts to Promote the January/February focus groups ready and out in November and December
- * Michael Pettee will reach out to potential corporate donors for space and funding
- * Zhane/Tamara Nadel will reach out to the Center for Performing Arts for potential meeting space
- * Mathew will reach out to McKnight about available dates for meetings in January/February

Key Questions:

- * How can we engage a broader group of individuals to participate in this process?
- * How can we ensure inclusivity and transparency in the process?
- * What is the urgency in getting this process together?
- * Is there someone here that has a connection to proper camera/microphone equipment we need for live meetings?, or simply schedule at facilities that have proper equipment for a good zoom experience?

NEXT MEETING, 9/23 5:00pm - 7:00pm: ZOOM only

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84985441156?pwd=Galbjmq6KTorp3mCamDixYLBjJXEXzp.1>

Meeting ID: 849 8544 1156

Passcode: 752934