



Minutes
Varley-McKay Art Foundation of Markham
Monday, January 15, 2024
6:00 - 8:00 p.m.
Art Gallery

Attendance

Board of Directors Present: Jim Schmidt (Chair), Amin Giga (Treasurer), Connie Leclair (Governance Chair), Deputy Mayor Michael Chan, Carolyn Le Quéré, Councillor Reid McAlpine, and Nik Mracic

Staff Present: Niamh O’Laoghaire, Director, Varley Art Gallery; Francesca Dauphinais, Cultural Development Officer, Varley Art Gallery, Laura Gold, Clerk

Regrets: Craig McOuat (Vice-Chair), Emily Li, Lisa Joy-Facey, and Arpita Surana

Item	Discussion	Action
1. Call to Order	The Varley-McKay Art Foundation of Markham convened at 6:15 PM with Jim Schmidt presiding as Chair.	
2. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interests	There were no disclosures of pecuniary interest.	
3. Minutes of The Varley-McKay Art Foundation of Markham Board Meeting held on February 15, 2023	A minor edit was made to the attendance. Moved by Nik Mracic Seconded by Connie Leclair That the November 13, 2023, Varley-McKay Art Foundation of Markham Minutes, be approved as amended. Carried	
4. Business Arising from the Minutes	There was no business arising from the Minutes.	
5. Director’s Report	Niamh O’Laoghaire, Director of the Gallery, provided the Directors Report. Some of the highlight of the report include:	

Item	Discussion	Action
	• Congratulated the Foundation on the success of the Glitter and Gold event. • Announced that the Varley Staff won the “Innovation in Collections Based Exhibition” award at 46”. • Thanked Jim Schmidt for covering the printing cost of the Varley Brochures. • Shared the 2023 Varley Attendance figure, noting that the overall there were 51,325 attendees. • Presented the 2024 request for financial support from the foundation, noting that the amount being requested is \$35,000 (same as last year). Amin Giga, Treasurer, requested that the Gallery’s request for financial support from the Foundation be deferred to the next meeting, as the financial update will be provided at that meeting.	
6. Development Officer	Francesca Dauphinais, Cultural Development Officer, provide and update on the Glitter and Gold Event. The net profit from the event was \$22,000. The Directors provided the following feedback on the event: General Comments About Event • Congratulated the team on a successful and impressive event. • Noted that the event had a positive energy. • Impressed with how the event came together given the short timeframe it was planned under. • Impressed with the quality of the music. • The Board of Directors should have name tags to wear at the event. Notice and Event Attendance • Could have had more attendees if the event had been planned earlier, as more notice could have been provided to potential attendees. • Noted that it is easier to get patrons that have attended a Varley Fundraising event in the past to attend another event.	

Item	Discussion	Action
	• Suggested that the Directors provide a complimentary ticket at their cost to start a relationship with potential long-term donors, as if they come to one event, they will likely come again. • Need to work on increasing the number of new attendees at Varley fundraising events. • Noted that the holiday season is a difficult time to get people to attend, as there are many other events happening at the same time. • Noted that the attendance and profit of the event could easily be increased if each Director brought a few more guests. • Noted the importance of the Directors being in attendance at the event. • Suggested that patrons need to be educated that patrons get a tax receipt for their purchase of tickets. Sponsorship • Hoped that the sponsors were happy with the event. • Need to diversify who the Directors are approaching for donations and sponsorship, as everyone is going to the developers. • Suggested reaching out to Chris Rickett to obtain support and advice on fundraising (The Chair to reach out to Chris). • Suggested asking Members of Council for advice on who the Directors could reach out to for sponsorship. • Suggested the event should have a prime sponsor. • Should provide potential sponsors with more information on what their funds are being used for, such as to purchase artwork, supporting a children's program, or paying for school buses (make them feel as if they are buying something tangible for the Gallery). • Suggested possibly creating a video to visually show what the donations support. • Noted that Foundation will have to follow through with any fundraising promise they make.	

Item	Discussion	Action
	• Need to better understand the Gallery's sponsorship needs prior to fundraising for a specific program or purchase. Event Set-Up • Suggested that there should be some tables and chairs, as attendees from some demographic groups may need to sit down. • Encourage more mingling of guests. Silent Auction • Suggested the silent auction should be hybrid in the future to serve different demographic groups and in case their issues with the Wi-Fi; • Suggested that the presentation of the artwork could be improved, as the location did not encourage the fluid movement of viewers. • Noted that the grids may need to be rented next time as the grids used were borrowed and did not have legs, which limited where the artwork could be displayed. • Suggested spreading out the silent auction pieces. Food • The Unionville Arms expressed an interest in providing the food for the next Varley Fundraising event. • Need one or two food items that really stand out. • Impressed with the food at the event. Ticket Price • Noted that the price point of the ticket may have deterred some demographic groups from attending. • Noted that getting a tax receipt for the purchase of the tickets appeals more to people of a certain income bracket. • Discussed the appropriate price point and generally agreed to keep the price point as is for the next event.	

Item	Discussion	Action
7. Financial Report	There was no Financial Report presented at the meeting.	
8. Committee Reviews	a. Fundraising Committee The 2023 fundraising event was discussed under the Development Officer Report. b. Art Acquisition Committee There was no report provided. c. Governance Committee There was no report provided.	
9. New Business	Councillor Reid McAlpine advised that the Mayor will be presenting his budget at the end of January. Councillor Alpine advised that he submitted a budget request to the Mayor to re-build the Gallery's courtyard. He also questioned if there were any other pressing needs of the Gallery that should be put forward as a budget request from the Board.	
10. Future Meeting Dates	The next meeting of the Varley-McKay Art Foundation of Markham will be held on February 12, 2024.	
11. Adjournment	The Varley-McKay Art Foundation of Markham adjourned at 7:45 PM.	