



SAY Sí ignites the creative power of young people as forces of positive change. We value artists, empower marginalized communities and advance culture.

APPROVED

Say Sí

Board of Directors Meeting MINUTES

Friday, August 11, 2023, noon-1.30pm

Location: AIT – American Indians of Texas, 1616 E Commerce St., San Antonio

Board Members Present:

Kathy Armstrong (Interim Executive Director), Jason Moran (Chair), Ana Cude (Treasurer), Mike Schroeder (Founder), Mario Moreno, Léo Lee, Guillermina Zabala, Jim Mendiola (12:26)

Quorum: yes

Board Members Excused: Ricardo Romo

Guests/Staff: Roberto Trevino and Brian Petkovich (San Antonio Philharmonic), Denise Thieme (Development Manager), Ashley Perez (Visual Arts Studio Director), Jon Hinojosa (Vamos Abrazos), Sabine Senft (Board Liaison)

12:03 **Intro**

Ramon Diego Vasquez gave a warm welcome and introduction on AIT's mission on youth work and programs in Bexar County.

12:11 **Call to Order and Approval of Minutes from May 12, 2023 – Jason Moran**

Motion by Ana to approve minutes was seconded by Mike. Unanimous approval.

12:12 **San Antonio Philharmonic Presentation – Roberto Trevino and Brian Petkovich (Chair of Philharmonic Board)**

The Philharmonic is proposing to take over a 20,000 ft² section of the Say Sí building with a long-term lease as classroom, library, rehearsal space and equipment storage to re-establish themselves in the community. They propose a 50-year lease at \$1/year and offer to collaborate on projects with SAY Sí. Students would be welcome to attend rehearsals and workshops. The first \$400K construction phase will establish their library, admin and rehearsal space. Recording studios will follow when more funding is available. Total timeline is 2-3 years. Roberto shared floor plans. Jon noted that the Philharmonic will only receive City funding after three years of operating.

12:26 **Vamos Abrazos and Building Campaign Update – Jon Hinojosa**

Total \$3,903,950 New Market Funds to feed construction

Total balance \$4,457,249

Current construction update: roof 80% done, starting exterior and parking area.

Bi-weekly [Architect Owner Contractor meetings](#) (AOC). A site visit with Chris Huang, Opportunity Fund, and Kathryn Mc Hugh, Blue Hub, confirmed they were content with construction progress. They recommended 3 companies for structuring the finances of



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Vamos Abrazos: Armstrong Vonn and Associates (didn't respond to Jason's contact, Jon to follow up), Morrison and Associates, Arightco.

Capital Campaign Update: Upcoming local grant applications for Kym's Angels, Newman Family Foundation, Mays Family Foundation Rogers Family Fund, Charles Butt Foundation. Philharmonic proposal: real estate broker is concerned that Say Sí will not be creating revenue from it. The 25K [Culture Fund Project](#) individual grant will also fund a second year at 25K. Ana requested detailed accounts and a breakdown of the Frost Campaign Funds. Discussion about future spokesperson for Vamos Abrazos and not mixing funds for Vamos Abrazos and SAY Sí Program Support. Jon submitted a letter to the full board with concerns on July 24, 2023.

12:45 **Visual Arts Program Update – Ashley Perez**

The Visual Arts High School Studio has been at capacity with full classes since beginning of the year. WAM, the Middle School program, will be at capacity in the fall. New "cozy corner" for neurodivergent students, inspired by spring professional development class. Field trips to Central Library, Artpace and Blue Star. Visiting artist: Lenard Brown, master screen printer. Ashley presented quality student work samples. Other partnerships with Trinity's Mexican American Studies Program and alum Dalex Zenteno. Ashley passed out oil painting zine. Students and alumni participated in a commission opportunity with AIT. Career day at Beacon Hill Academy. SAY Sí instructor Michael Foerster participated in a professional development workshop in TN and a residency in MN partially backed by SAY Sí funds.

12:54 **Development Updates – Denise Thieme**

Small Scale: Denise hopes to see board presence at all events and the finale; 5 restaurant stations confirmed. Denise invites donations and recommendations for the planned Friday Happy Hour events in the run up the final event (Aug 25/Sept 1/Sept 8/Sept 15). Around 90 artists have donated works for Small Scale Art Exhibit and Auction.

Big Give: Barbie themed party with online donation page. It is a weeklong process Sept 13 -21. Board agreed to suggested board donation page. Denise will create board page and share. She shared examples of what donations can fund as a tool for board to solicit donations. Big Give donations are unrestricted and will go towards operating expenses.

13:03 **Executive Director Search Update – Jason Moran**

62 applicants. Executive Director Search Committee and Board Liaison finalized interview questions. Staff had provided a list of 50+ questions that was incorporated as well as feedback. Staff will have the opportunity to ask questions at the meet and greet with the finalists. Kathy clarified that the EDS package with timeline and process roles has been sent out to the board and has been carefully considered to protect confidentiality of the process. All communications with potential candidates is through the Board Liaison, who has posted the



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position on various professional platforms and been tracking applications in a database. The Board Executive Committee will review applications and select interview candidates.

13:07 Union Update – Jason Moran

New collaborative approach on Interest Based Bargaining. Ground Rule negotiations on Wednesday, Aug 16.

13:10 2023 Q2 Financial Report and upcoming Audit of SAY Sí – Ana Cude

Union work created expenses: SAY Sí owes Ogletree still \$78,000 of the original debt of \$103,000. Services with them were suspended. Since May John Ferguson is representing Say Sí through the Union Process. Their \$10 K retainer has already been exhausted. Ferguson is mindful of unnecessary expenses and more cost efficient than Ogletree.

SAY Si lent Vamos Abrazos \$162K for the closing of NMT Credits. Request for the amount to be paid back to Say Sí's operating account.

Say Sí owns an American Express card with \$50K debt with \$900/mth interest. All other cards have been canceled. Only the Interim Executive Director has a credit card for supplies and services. New charges are paid off monthly. Working with Frost Bank to refinance the American Express debt.

Ana thanked new Development Manager Denise Thieme for her activities. She also thanked Kathy Armstrong for structuring expenses and organization while asking for a reduction in her hours and a pay cut to help SAY Sí through its financial situation.

Cloud Book keeping was hired in 2022 after a resignation. Aiming to cut this expense and redirect bookkeeping to the Operations Manager.

Kathy and Lindsay Byrne, Operations Manager, are looking for new savings: insurance, contract work payment.

Bottomline: "Watch the expenses and bring in new revenue. We are meeting our budget numbers for this year but debt needs to be paid down."

Discussion about money lent to Capital Campaign Vamos Abrazos. Jon pointed out that Say Sí has no building debt and owns the property without mortgage.

13:22 Management Report – Kathy Armstrong

Kathy's main concerns are low cash balances, the need to grow programs and to create revenue. She thanked to Léo for Saturday Sessions and commended the quality and impact of the art programs. She also praised the positive engagement of students and instructors.

Kathy tasked Lindsay Byrne, Operations Manager, with analyzing expenses. Lindsay is also stepping in to perform some program assistance. Holly presented a snapshot of grants activity.

Kathy noted that by hiring Denise and Lindsay, she has built capacity for SAY Sí, prepping the way for new ED to take over.



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Two unsolicited donations: Angela and Trey Rabke, \$20K; and smaller donations in memory of Annie B Coiner, who named SAY Sí in her estate.

13:31 **Meeting Adjourned**

13:40 **Executive Session**

- discussion of Philharmonic proposal; board consensus on moving forward with discussion on a cooperative agreement with Philharmonic"
- discussion on roles for individual board members, executive committee and full board. Board bylaws to be redistributed and additional attention on external communications.
- discussion on relationship between Vamos a Brazos and SAY Sí. Executive Committee will have a Vamos A Brazos board meeting next week and SAY Sí board members were invited to submit topics.