CDN Creative Placemaking Convocation

Workshop with Sally Dix

October 8, 2020 at 3:45pm EDT

English Transcript

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>> SALLY: We will give it a couple minutes, it is 2:45 p.m. I know it has been a long couple days so we will give a little bit more time.

>> SALLY: Good afternoon. I see one more person joining us. Good to see you. We are waiting for people to come in. I know it is hard to dive in especially on the afternoon sessions. It is 2:45 p.m. where I am, if it is 3:45 p.m. where you are or later, I know the days get long with all the Zoom meetings, for sure.

We will give it one more minute. And then we will get started so those who are here, we have a chance to have a good conversation.

We will give it another couple minutes.

We will ask everybody to update their screen times. A few will be able to do that. First and last and the community you represent or if you are part of a State Arts Agency, the state you represent and the pronouns, that would be helpful. If not, I think I could do it if you need me to do it. I can update if you can't. Sometimes different technologies are not always cooperative.

>> SALLY: We have Utah. I updated. I didn't follow my instructions. I updated myself and then I logged off and now I need to put it on again. I need put it in again.

If you could update your name on the screen to be your name, first and last, if that works. And then the city or the state that you represent. And your pronoun. That would be terrific.

I will try to slow down because I talk fast. So please feel free to flag me if I get going ahead of everybody.

And then, you know, out of respect for your time, maybe we will go ahead and just get started and hope that if more people join, that is great, if we get out early, I am sure nobody would be devastated to go take a walk. I appreciate you joining us today. I am Sally Dix. We were listening to Van Halen playing jump. I find it a song you have to turn up. You have to listen to loud.

I chose it a week ago, we had to send in our agendas a week ago, I am from Chicago. It reminds me of growing up and listening to the Cubs game and the 1984 season, they were almost good that year. A song I like to listen to in the afternoon to get the juices going. I live in Des Moines, Iowa now.

I lived here for 22 years. Which makes me laugh because we came here and never thought we would stay here. Why would anyone move from Chicago to Des Moines, Iowa, it is a wonderful community and we are happy. I am a mom and I am a wife and a daughter and a sister and a friend and playing the role of home school teacher and band instructor and lunch lady.

Seems like I am the full-time dishwasher. I don't know how I got that one. But all of you wearing many hats in this interesting time. I am fortunate to be the executive director for BRAVO Greater Des Moines, our local arts agency.

And our mission is to leverage community resources to advance regional cultural priorities. Our organization is 99% funded by hotel motel taxes from 17 local government partners that fund us.

Steward the funds and make investments on behalf of the region that are more impactful than if the region wasn't working together and each suburb or community was making their own investments.

I have a 37‑member board of directors, which includes one representative from each city that invests in BRAVO and 20 other community members and cultural leaders. I have a little bit of experience on building common ground and finding consensus, building synergy. I don't have all the answers but we have done a couple things well and made good mistakes we learned from.

I thought maybe we could chat about how we leveraged alignment here and give you a tool I found useful you can take back to your own communities as well.

Couple technical things. We talked about updating your screen name with your first name, last name, the city and state and your pronoun. Session is being recorded so I like to say that, be on your best behavior. You never know who is going to be tuning in.

Also, I want to respect it is hard to manage a good dialogue in a virtual environment so we will use the chat, I think there is a raised hand function. Feel free to do that. Not everyone likes to type their thoughts into the chat.

Put your name in the chat and we will manage it that way. I fancy myself a multitasker so we will see how I do.

I want to have a good conversation. It will be brief, couple minutes talking from me and then we will engage all together and you can share your experiences. I want to make sure we follow the you plus two rule.

If you have something to contribute, we absolutely want to hear from you but let's hear from two other people before you jump back in so we get good diverse voices at the conversation.

And in a few minutes, everyone will need a piece of paper and something to write where. Now might be a good time to think about that. Just something to write with.

So I get to know a little bit about you, we will do a quick chat storm. I am reading this great book with my kids, I have twin 11‑year‑old boys and we just read this terrific book called the Remarkable Journey of Coyote Sun Rise. It is sad and funny. They are traveling on a bus and you have to answer three questions before you can get on the bus. All the things you need to know about a person. I will ask you the three questions from the Remarkable Journey of Coyote Sun Rise.

First one is your favorite book. Put that in the chat. Let's see if we get anything people love. Doesn't have to be your only favorite book. It could just be a book that you love.

Somebody has a cat. Hitchhiker's Guide to the GalaxyGood choice. Red Badge of Courage. Totally optional. second one your favorite place. What would that place be? I didn't know the never-ending story was a book. I didn't realize it was a book.

Couple people reading business books. That is good for you. I can't do that right now.

The Family Cabin. Emerald Isle, North Carolina. Love that. Lake Tahoe. Good. I like that screen change. Now we can see. Maybe that is your favorite place. Well done.

The third question the most important question, you have to know this, what is your favorite sandwich. I don't know what this tells you about a person. These are the three questions you have to answer in Coyote Sunrise. What is your favorite sandwich? The little girl's answer was a bacon, lettuce, tomato sandwich on white bread. Egg salad. I love a good egg salad. Tuna melt.

You are fast on the sandwiches. Sandwich you could commit to and go all in.

Hummus wrap.

This is a silly exercise to get to know everybody. It is a great framing and I appreciate you being on this journey with me. I would let all of you on the bus if I were responsible.

Now I wish one of you brought a sandwich too. We will see.

Moving into the complexity of what we are here to talk about a little bit today. Helping communities find common ground and ways it could amplify support, that is a really big question.

I am going to share a little example of how we have done that in Des Moines. Actually, the example I am going to give is the formation of the organization that I work for. BRAVO Greater Des Moines.

We were formed almost 16 years ago because our region found common ground. That is how we ended up coming into existence.

For those who may not be aware of the geography, Des Moines is under the staple in your atlas, when you open it up, we are under the staple. Depending on the orientation and where Alaska falls. we are in the middle.

We are surrounded, the city is surrounded by 20 suburbs, depending on the count that make up our MSA and we have 750,000 people living into the staple in the atlas.

Here is the thing, as you may or may not be aware, there are no mountains here. We don't have oceans here and we don't have professional sports teams or any other major draws.

We are within about six hours of Minneapolis, Chicago, Kansas City and Omaha, cities people think of as destinations.

And we have great universities that are training our students, our young people here but they are leaving to go other places.

So we had to think about how to not only build a strong business infrastructure but make sure we are a place where people want to come and where they want to stay. Visionary business leaders came together and said we don't have some of the other elements that make other places competitive to quality of life is what we will have to do.

We will have to make an investment on quality of life and they defined that with arts and culture at the center.

We were really fortunate at the time the conversation was happening, we already had a number of strong assets and amenities. We had a science center and a strong performing arts center, we have a zoo, an opera. Some of the elements you would expect for a city of our size.

But there wasn't anything intentional in place about supporting them or about lifting them up as part of the region's story. They were off to the side, that is nice that we have that but there wasn't a cohesive way of incorporating them.

What we did is we said ‑‑ we have to be intentional, we as a community have to be intentional. The business leaders knew part of being intentional was identifying the funding stream.

You have to know where the money is going to come from. A couple business leaders identified hotel motel tax as a potentially sustainable revenue stream and approached the two largest cities in the metro and asked the cities if they would be willing to invest a portion of the hotel‑motel tax. It is a tax on outsiders, not a tax on those living in your community.

And the two cities said yep, I am in. If you get seven more.

The two big ones said we will do it but we are not going to carry the full load, you have to get more.

By those two cities saying yes, those two cities housed the majority of the cultural amenities and attractions so the other cities were willing to pay in as well knowing residents benefit from the amenities housed in the city center.

We ended up with nine cities that invested a portion of their hotel‑motel tax dollars around this common goal, arts and culture at the center to drive quality of life and economic development.

It took me 5 minutes to go through that story. It was more complex than I am making it sound but there is something to the simplicity of the story. The community identified a shared goal. They knew how far we were from the goal and they worked with allies to overcome the barriers so everyone had a stake in the outcome and that is how we got it done.

That is how we are being sustainable and making sure we are doing what we were charged with doing.

If we let the process be simple, it kind of can be and I think that is what we are talking about today, how can we take these complex processes and simplify them down so we can eat the elephant one bite at a time. How can you guide the communities you are working with toward that shared goal and help them overcome all the challenges.

How do you identify that and figure out who is going to help you get there?

We will spend the rest of our time doing just that.

We are almost to the part where everyone will need a piece of paper. If you don't have a piece of paper, find the paper and your pencil.

We will pop up a poll, how many have seen the movie the "Wizard of Oz"? Yes or no and who was your favorite character.

I don't know where we are. We will share the results of the poll.

100% have seen the movie. I was worried it wouldn't be that many. Tie between the scarecrow and the cowardly lion. anyone want to share why they chose the character they chose?

Optional. Would love to hear from someone.

I chose Dorothy because of the shoes.

>> SPEAKER: I chose the lion because we could relate by being afraid.

>> SALLY: But at the end of it he showed he was brave. Anyone else want to share? It is not part of the exercise, I am just curious. I will have to turn on Van Halen if we don't start diving in, otherwise it will be a long 40 minutes of you listening to me. the exercise and using that classic film as a backdrop, I will take you on a little bit of a journey to the Emerald City.

Gali put us on slide one, please.

Great. This is what I would like for you to draw, if you having. It does not have to be perfect. It does not have to look like this. But generally, we want to know where you are putting your Emerald City, top right corner, doesn't have to be there but I will want to know where it is. Put a yellow brick road down to the forest, which is where we will start in the forest.

We want the poppies to show up somewhere, the flying monkeys, even though they creep me out.

And a circle for your friends.

Again, we will spend a couple minutes on that. Can play music from the Wiz, get everybody in the mood.

Excellent. Good drawing. That was fast.

I will wait until I see eyeballs up on the screen.

Everybody close to having six circles on the page? Ready to move to the next step? What you may not know, the "Wizard of Oz" is just a planning exercise. It is just a strategic planning exercise.

The yellow brick road is something we can all follow to tackle complex problems and reach the end goal, which is especially the Emerald City.

My friend at Americans for the Arts developed this exercise. we did it a couple years ago. I can take no credit for it but it always stuck with me. Let's walk through the slides, if you would, Gali, the next one for me.

We start with the Emerald City, it is your destination, your ideal, your end goal. In the example I shared it was Des Moines as a thriving region. That was our end goal with arts and culture at the center, you have to be clear on where you are going or you will wander around in the forest.

Speaking of the forest, the next slide shows why we have those trees at the beginning.

Your forest is where you start. Your forest is the starting point. It is the history, where you acknowledge the baggage that comes with whatever work you are trying to do and call it out and name the preconditions of the work you are about to do.

If you don't know where you are, it is hard to know how far you have to go moving forward.

The next part of the journey are the poppies. Those are challenges and the barriers and the concerns and the fears. What are the things you know are going to hold you up? What are the things you know you will have to deal with or address? You can lay them out there and makes them seem a little bit more manageable if you having get them in one circle.

The next slide, your resistance. Flying monkeys. Those are the people that will be against you or the groups that will say this is a bad idea.

The ones that say this isn't how we have always done it or the ones that say we need to keep going with the status quo, people that are benefiting from the current structure opposed to the change.

You will have to know who will be standing there blocking your path and then the next place you go is you go to the bricks. What are your opportunities? Your capacities? What are your skills? What are the things you, your organization, the group you are working with, whatever model you are in, what do you have to bring to the table to overcome the challenges?

And then finally, of course, you want to have your allies. Who are your friends? Who are your supporters? Who is going to stand with you and make sure that you are successful in achieving your end goal?

"Wizard of Oz." A strategic planning exercise. Right?

Hopefully you were adding the different categories along as we were putting them out there. We will leave them up there for you for a minute to make sure everybody gets there.

I thought we could just practice and do an exercise.

Usually the first time I did this it was a several hour exercise. And we don't have that kind of time. We have 30 minutes. But I bet you can start flushing out something maybe that you are working on or something on your desk.

Let's start ‑‑ let's go to the next slide. Let's start with articulating your Emerald City, where you want to go and what is your forest, your starting place? Try be as articulate as you can with the end goal, filling it in with as much detail, imagination, that vision, if you close your eyes, what are you seeing?

It can be specific details. Or it can be more what you want people to feel or think once you are at that end goal. And with that end goal in mind, go to the enchanted forest, what is your starting point? Where you are now. What you are thinking about now. How you are feeling. What you want. What you have. What you don't have. Let's take 5 minutes to work on that. It is 3:13 p.m. let's take 5 minutes to think about that and we will come back together.

Hopefully you will share and what your wrestling with and how it fits in the model. We will turn on the model because it helps you think, it is hard to get your brain going in the afternoon but we will reconvene. If it is distracting, turn it down and lift your eyes back up in 5 minutes.

>> SALLY: One or two more minutes. You won't get it all done today but a couple more minutes at this stage and then we will come back together.

>> SALLY: I would love to hear from anyone who is interested in sharing kind of ‑‑ share what the problem is that you are working on, if that is what you want, the Emerald City, the end goal. Your starting point or share what is easy about this or hard about this.

Even this beginning stage, does it apply to things you are working on, does it call in questions for you? Let's have a conversation.

I was told you know each other and you are chatty and you have common ground. Hopefully that will be the case here.

>> SPEAKER: I don't know if it is my computer but I can't see everybody anymore. I just see the slide and you. That is the only option I have. I can't do gallery view.

>> SALLY: We can drop the image if that will help and maybe that will refresh gallery view. Let's close the PowerPoint ‑‑

>> SPEAKER: Yeah. Now I can see everybody.

>> SALLY: Welcome. Maybe we will start with you. Do you have anything from the exercise or the activity that you want to share?

>> SPEAKER: I ‑‑ it is a difficult exercise when you are thinking about ‑‑ working on the state level. There are so many unknowns right now.

I tried to think of it from my previous past work in a community in eastern North Carolina where I did this work.

I can just think about, you know, the forest would be ensuring that the local government folks and state government folks understand the importance of this work as communities move to ‑‑ through recovery and resiliency.

It is going to be vital.

Articulating that in a way ‑‑ in the ways they understand.

Sometimes that is hard. That is part of my forest.

>> KAREN: We don't all know each other so it would be awesome ‑‑ we have our names and states and everything, but there is some new faces here. Rather than have people introduce themselves now, I just wanted to put that out there. I think if we could take another while and add that piece into it. We probably would be more chatty.

You have that, it has been a long afternoon for some folks.

And you have the fact that this isn't a day long retreat, which this tool would be awesome for.

I have three forests and three goals.

I am like my goal is to clean house. My goal is figuring out the public-school system issues here in Wisconsin, where I live. And where we have a big divide based on the school board members issue around the Black Lives Matter Movement and community response to that in both directions.

There is a goal to fix that one. I went down that rabbit hole and working with communities around the states.

The general X community becomes stronger and heals divisions.

Which is a mighty Emerald City in and of itself. Interesting for me to kind of identify those three top of mind ‑‑ I didn't get anywhere in terms of filling the bubble.

>> SPEAKER: By the way, congratulations on your award.

>> SPEAKER: Congratulations.

>> SPEAKER: Congratulations.

>> SPEAKER: Congratulations.

>> SPEAKER: I thought you would be having a martini for celebration. I thought that is why she won the award.

>> KAREN: Thank you. And thank you for taking this on at this hour.

>> SPEAKER: I am tony. We don't have ‑‑ we have two positions but they are both open and frozen at the moment.

My perspective is agency wide.

The exercise was fantastic, actually, we have been working on our strategic plan and finalizing it. One thing I noticed, not hard to notice it, in particular, the perception of arts and culture. Often times it is nice to have and off to the side and elective and other things.

During the course of the recession in Nevada, northern part of the state where I live in Reno but the agency represents the state, one of the ‑‑ Las Vegas is its own entity in and of itself and reliant on travel and tourism and that rev news provides a tremendous amount of revenue for the states.

Reno has been a city longer, Reno sparks is the sister cities, they developed arts and culture, quality of life issues during the recession. It made a difference of coming back from the recession and attracting people from the Bay Area, Silicon Valley in particular, to think about moving here, moving here, businesses and organizations doing the same.

As the pandemic struck, we started to see a little bit of the differences between the economies of the north and the south and those that diversified more from the traditional ways we did it, are seeing less of an issue.

Still, we went through a primary in June and officials were running for office who said well, so much for arts and culture, funding arts and culture at the time, now everything is out.

It is a constant battle. Nothing new for us as an industry. Part of what we have done for our vision and goal for the agency is really to make sure the arts are recognized for what they do. And how they enrich the lives and improve the quality of life and help improve the economy all the time. That constant consideration.

Making sure we are invited to the table when it comes to discussions on relief and the like.

That is the end goal, how do we work to continue to get recognized and not be that afterthought.

For the forest, you know, we are a state arts agency, 53 years in existence, being a state agency has its challenges, that is not where the forest is but it is what it is. We have a 796,000-budget cut to our agency. We are reliant on tourism. I appreciate and understand the hotel tax too well.

That has been devastating to us. Our agency has been hit hard by that, as well as live entertainment tax, which is a component of our agency.

We are faced with that and as I mentioned in the beginning of my conversation here, we have two positions that are ‑‑ community arts development that are open, a total of five positions open and frozen with a 13 member staff. We are struggling to make sure we can maintain and do the work we want to do.

And we are an agency in transition. That is essentially our starting point of where we are.

>> SALLY: Thank you so much. That is a lot on your plate. I love the vision of the Emerald City as the arts invited to the table and not an afterthought. What a great concept in how to define ‑‑ what I want to acknowledge, what Karen said, this is not a day long retreat, I knew I only had an hour to get through but sometimes my tendency is to complicate things, if I don't have a day long, I can't get anything done, sometimes it is as simple as putting a pen in the Emerald City and saying this is what my vision is.

Sometimes it is so complicated in our own minds that a simplification of it on a one sheet of paper can help get the wheels turning and help acknowledge some of the things that are coming down the pike.

Anyone else want to share about this phase? We did have a new friend join us.

>> Reporter: Apologize for not doing introductions. They told me you knew each other so I apologize I misheard that. We have an interesting group but a new person joining us.

We are working our way through goals and using the "Wizard of Oz" as a back drop for our arts and culture conversation.

Anyone else want to share what worked, what was hard, what was easy?

>> SPEAKER: I think what you are dealing with and I just invented this syndrome we have, when you are on Zoom for three or four hours you become a Zoombie.

>> SALLY: Yes. Totally understand. If you want to call it and say now we have the exercise and we know what to do, that is fine.

>> SPEAKER: That needs to be a T‑shirt.

>> SPEAKER: There is a really, really terrible "B" horror movie called Zoombies, what happens when zoo animals become zombies.

>> SPEAKER: Maybe you will tell us how you came across that.

>> SPEAKER: We are participating walking Zoombies.

>> SPEAKER: I understand.

>> SPEAKER: I took the easy way out. Emerald City, why don't I pick a project I am working on. A physical project and I can make that the Emerald City. I will try to be quick here.

The forest, I took as the starting point. The forest for me, the starting point was I had two challenges at the agency. I am deputy director at the Illinois Council Agency in Chicago. like other agencies we support local arts agencies and we have what we call the local arts network.

Which is meant to be a self‑leading group of local arts agencies. We provide a special projects fund for them every year of $10,000.

It used to be $20,000s but at the end of the year they would say we didn't do anything with 15,000 so we got it back to $10,000. I inherited the land group about three years ago. At that time, they were trying to ‑‑ they were offering scholarships for conferences to local arts agencies. Mostly around professional development, really great things.

But there was little movement and part of it for the arts council was about community development.

Some of it is just the profiles of the agencies. Like other arts councils, we have local arts agencies in larger urban areas and some local arts agencies that are in rural areas and all volunteer that have very minimal resources, et cetera.

When I came on board, I thought this is great that you are offering scholarships for conferences around marketing but that is not going to help someone who is three people volunteering and all they want to do is put a flyer together. The land group was about community development because local arts agencies are about community development.

If we just put that lens on that that would create a mission and the work for the land in a truly substantial way.

The thought was they would work with smaller under resourced local arts agencies and help develop their funding sources or programming or whatever professional help they could specific to that agency and that community.

My second challenge was that east St. Louis is in Illinois, and I don't know if people know about east St. Louis but east St. Louis is like a war zone. It is underserved. The population is constantly shrinking. Government, state resources and federal resources are almost nonexistent.

And we know this at the agency because every year we get applications from organizations in east St. Louis and we will work with applicants in getting their applications in shape or making them eligible.

The applications from east St. Louis were so bad there was nothing we could do beyond having them resubmit an application and we couldn't do that.

Those were my challenges. The land group and east St. Louis.

It is obvious but it wasn't obvious to me at the time to join the two challenges and say I should bring east St. Louis to the land group, we should have a discussion about this and what I can do is provide the local cultural arts groups that have been applying to us to the land group.

We could reach out to them and go to east St. Louis and do a cultural assessment town hall meeting with them to see what's happening there and meet people.

Part of our goal in going to east St. Louis was to find one of those cultural groups to see if they had the infrastructure to become a local arts agency. We would give them a special projects grant to do that. They would apply to local arts agency, receive funding through the arts council for that and they would make them eligible to apply for our regranting funds so they could create a regranting program in their community.

We got to east St. Louis and we ‑‑ before we went to east St. Louis, I received a call from a senator from that region asking me if there was anything I could do for east St. Louis and that just came out of the sky. I said as a matter of fact we are going to east St. Louis. I know the problems there.

There was a partnership there with him and he connected me to the local state rep in that community. We had state officials involved on this. I asked if they could recommend a place to meet to have a town hall and they recommended the Jackie Joyner‑Kersee foundation.

The name is familiar, she was an Olympics multigold winner. She has a youth sports center there.

We had our meeting there. 9:00 a.m. no one showed up. It was a group of local arts agencies that came, I told them we may have one person, we may have 10. I have no way of knowing. They said they were going to come. Fortunately, 9:15 a.m. they all got there. 19 people. They were so excited we were in east St. Louis.

Before the hour was over ‑‑ we had the town hall from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. within the hour of them arriving, they were posting on Facebook they are delighted the Illinois arts council come to east St. Louis and the NEA was there. I was, like, okay. I am not the executive director and the NEA isn't here with us but that is how excited they were.

What happened is we realized ‑‑ you know, like everyone, they were looking for funding. We realized we needed to make fishermen out of them rather than give them a fish. In other words, we are not going to give you a grant, we will come back here and doing a day of grant writing with you guys to help develop your skills.

That was great and we felt accomplished about that but we didn't find a group that had any kind of infrastructure that would be close to be a local arts agency.

We were talking about the fact there wasn't a group there and how devastating it was to visit the community because it was nothing there.

On the way back, wait a minute, what about the Jackie Joyner‑Kersee foundation? We saw children's arts work on the wall and I talked to the deputy direct there, we do art work, this is a little bit of what we do. I knew they were engaged in the arts.

We decided when we came back for the grant writing workshop, we would have a meeting with the foundation and talk to them about the possible of expanding their arts programming. Talk about the possibility of becoming a local arts agency. And applying for regranting, which was a lot for them.

We can't explain what that meant, et cetera. And we said we will give you a $10,000 special projects grant so you could hire a grant writer and expand your arts program and that will help your budget.

The morning of the grant writing ‑‑ we met a young lady who seemed to get it all, she was a free-lance grant writer, we called her that afternoon, because we knew she was free-lance to see if she was interested to write their grants and the payment would come through the special project.

>> SALLY: You are moving down our path. You are moving into your allies and you are moving down the path. Sounds like it was a success story. Couple things I heard you say that I think are valuable is that had this big vision goal but it was complicated and there were lot of things there and it wasn't everybody's Emerald City and I love you reimagined you have your rural communities and urban communities and how can you come to something that everyone can get behind.

Sounds like you made good progress. I hate to cut you off but I want to make sure that we ‑‑ you are so far down the path, you identified some of your other resistance and things and your allies. You are ahead of the game.

Super.

>> SPEAKER: We haven't really ‑‑ we haven't gotten to the Emerald City part, that is to have a thriving cultural arts community in east St. Louis that leads itself. I wanted to mention that I used to ‑‑ the "Wizard of Oz" analogy around grant writing workshops. Rather than Emerald City it is Dorothy who had the secret all along and could go home by clicking her heels.

In grant writing it ends up with in the end, you had the secret within yourself all along. You are the best grant writer. I wanted to mention that. Thanks.

>> SPEAKER: Awesome. Strategic planning and grant writing, it was a metaphor for all the things we have to do in addition to sparkly shoes.

I love the conversation and the dialogue and I know that this is ‑‑ you know, whatever, 75 minutes we weren't going to get through it all anyway.

Gali, pull up the slides and we can walk through the other four circles with everybody and make sure there is clarity on how to tackle those or approach those. Some things that might fit in to the different areas.

We started with the Emerald City, this is the last slide, let's think about the poppies. The challenges. Sometimes it is just as easy to start with the hurdles you have to get over to.

With this, what are the things that you know are going to get in the way? One thing we find as we have done this exercise in other places, fear is a big ‑‑ what are you afraid of? What are the people you are working with afraid of? Sometimes just calling that out and putting that down on paper and acknowledging that is a helpful ‑‑ is a helpful tool.

They can be systemic things, environmental things people are afraid of, social and emotional challenges and how are we going to pay for it? Who is going to do the work? Who is going to do it?

These are real fears and concerns. I sometimes think we skip this step as planners and facilitators because we are focused on the end goal. Honing in can help make sure you are not caught off guard down the path, the yellow brick road.

The resistance, the flying monkeys. It is hard to acknowledge this can be individuals, sometimes it is hard to name that but there are sometimes people in our way. Sometimes people tell us we can't do it. Sometimes people mean to be on our side but are telling us all the reasons why our idea are bad. These might be people who are comfortable and benefiting from the status quo.

People who don't have the inertia to move forward and it is easier to stand still. Sometimes it helps to be empathetic and understand and define where they are coming from.

Why is that a barrier for them? Why are they coming at us this way?

The next thing you want to do, once you articulated all the barriers, it is time to think about how to move them, how to move the hearts and minds, the strategies forward. Is it something you can move? Is it a log on the yellow brick road? A tree that has fallen that you can lift up or work around or is it something that is not movable?

An example from my situation, as I mentioned, we had a 37‑member board of directors with 17 elected officials. That is not how anyone would ideally design it but that is how it is going to work. No negotiating around that.

How can I name that and acknowledge that as a barrier and figure out a way around it. What is the different path? If you can't go straight down the road, how can you get around those things?

The bricks are those opportunities, the things you can build on, the things you have in your bag of tricks, your tool kit. Whatever you want to call it. These can be people.

These can be ‑‑ you could be building stuff, if you have a shop and you need stuff, you could be building stuff. Talking about marketing. Maybe you have someone will to do that work, not just the seminars but how do you put together a one‑pager, how do you make sure everybody has what they need?

Those bricks are hopefully a longer list than the poppies.

And then your allies. Your champions and your supporters, who is your tin man, your scarecrow, who is going to have your back? The cowardly lion being the favorite character, why is he the favorite? He is so lovable and he was the first one to jump up and put his fists up when the Wicked Witch of The West came. who are those people? Who can you bring in? Who are the champions for your cause?

In a best-case scenario, you would want those allies to be the ones that can address the resistance. You want to understand why the resistance is resisting and then you want to make sure you have allies that could neutralize the arguments and that can remove the barriers once you understand what the challenges are.

Make sure you bring people along on your side who can help get you over those things. Be strategic about the allies too.

Once you mapped it out, took us 11 minutes, how hard could it be? You will see gaps. As I said at the beginning, this is multiple hours or potential full day exercise but also it can be as simple as a starting place. Once you have seen this on the short form, you will identify the gaps and see I am not 100% clear on the resistance, what sure why we are not there yet, do I have the right goal? I have a board member who asked me aggressively what is the problem you are trying to solve?

Make sure there is clarity. If everyone isn't pulling in the same direction, maybe you don't have the right emerald City yet. Once you got that worked out, hopefully you will get parameters about what is missing, what the linkers are that you need in order to create that advocacy.

There is always hard work to do but hopefully over the course of the last hour you have surfed the elements that can help you frame the conversation and the questions and challenges and I hope it is a valuable starting point as you head back to do the complicated work you are doing.

I don't know if there are final thoughts or questions. I appreciated the opportunity to spend time with you.

Any closing thoughts before we hand it over to ‑‑ yeah?

>> SPEAKER: The project I am working on is creating a program around SNAP benefits, I know different states have them and I have been meaning to send it out so I thought I would ask.

>> SPEAKER: I think New Jersey has that.

>> SPEAKER: Thank you.

>> SPEAKER: This is potentially another workshop, I don't know most people here but I am here ‑‑ I am working as an evaluator with the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts. I worked with the Indiana arts commission. As a research and evaluation capacity building.

One thing I have been working on and we are beginning to think about with the work in Pennsylvania, we have a grant program where there are partnerships that are required.

I am thinking how to evaluate the health and strength of the partnerships and seeing how the program can strengthen the partnerships. I am wondering if you have thoughts about the work of aligning people so they are working with the same Emerald City. They applied with it for the grant, right?

And have agreed upon a goal, but that is by no means a given they all have the same goals. Part of building that ‑‑ strengthening the partnership is figuring out how the goals can align and come ‑‑ parallel, if not being the same goal.

That is my challenge, thinking how to get people on the same page.

>> SPEAKER: I was looking forward to that too. That is a very real issue.

>> SPEAKER: I listened to the initial conversations she is having, this idea of understanding what every partner's values are in relationship to the goals and finding ways ‑‑ when the values aren't shared necessarily, finding ways to align them or ensure the other partners understand them. Does that make sense? I am done talking.

>> SPEAKER: I run the creative districts program, that is lot of the work, visioning of what values are. Even if you have organizations that are separate values, different values, having them come together to define common values is part of the process.

For us, when communicates are involved, that is where we start from.

We are, like, who are you and what is it you value and how will you use that as a spring board for moving forward.

There is exercises out there that could help you do all that stuff and get people in that creating a vision board of values, if you will.

>> SPEAKER: I wonder if ‑‑ you know, this exercise, which doesn't have to work for everybody, I wonder if this exercise is a possible way of doing that too, getting groups together to figure out what the shared Emerald City is and what are their shared goals. I think it could be done as an individual and it can be a tool to ask people to define some of the things. One of the challenges, people have a hard time naming it.

Once we start to name it and talk about it, there is more clarity. Not necessarily more alignment but more clarity. Maybe this partnership isn't the right one but we have the same allies or the same challenges so maybe a new Emerald City rises up as part of stating some of these things.

Maybe the path forward to start those conversations and maybe this is a way to start the conversation. There are tons of tools out there for guiding those conversations.

A lot of the success that we have found in our community is from iterating through the conversations and once we get to the ‑‑ a shared goal, the alignment is easier. If you are trying to align people on a goal they don't share, that is where sometimes it gets to be a bumpier path.

>> SPEAKER: One thing we found is when the going gets tough, if you have the shared values, everybody can refer back to that, let's use this as our way to move things. That has been successful for our communities.

>> SPEAKER: I do not have an answer but next Wednesday I am talking about a similar problem, which is a project I have been managing for our state. Our difficulty measuring it and trying to come to an agreement of a way to manage, to massager our seven divisions within our department, working in a single community.

I feel like I can just ‑‑ you know, word vomit on the things we have considered.

>> SPEAKER: Right. I am not ‑‑ those Wednesday sessions are not for the partners and I am part ‑‑ come to this because I am doing ‑‑ I am doing a workshop next Thursday. A breakout like this on measuring your impact.

One is a learning community role and helping the ‑‑ bring the communities together to learn from each other. This is giving me a lot of ideas how to do that. As an evaluator part of me doesn't care. Tell me what your goal is so I could measure it and be done with it.

I think there is a part of me that is realizing I have been trying to get them to articulate the goals for me so I can set up the data systems and do this whole thing.

And realizing there isn't necessarily ‑‑ part of the task is getting them to that place.

>> SPEAKER: They told me there would be an evaluation session. We just tripped all over ourselves trying to do that in our community and are about to publish our metrics, it is off to get metrics around arts and culture. I wish I could listen to your session next Thursday.

I want to respect everyone's time and Karen won an award and going out for drinks. I don't want to keep her. Gali has been running our tech here and had a couple closing remarks.

I want to thank you for your time and for the chance to walk through this with you.

Hopefully things will get better next time. Thanks for the opportunity to be a part of the conversation and for the work you do.

>> SPEAKER: Thank you.

>> SPEAKER: There is a real person behind the logo. I want to thank you for coming and sticking through to the end of the week. I want to remind everyone our next session is Tuesday, October 13 at 2:00 p.m. eastern time.

And I am going to copy and paste the Zoom information and you will get an e‑mail next week so you will be overcommunicated to about that.

And on behalf of NASAA, our place and Looking Glass Creative and hope you have a safe and reflective weekend. Goodbye. See you on Tuesday.

>> SPEAKER: Thank you. Good to meet you.

>> SPEAKER: Goodbye.