

Oregon Arts Commission Meeting Minutes



March 12, 2021

Teleconference

Commission Members Present: Anne Taylor, Chair; Jenny Green, Vice Chair; Avantika Bawa; Michael Dalton; Harlen Springer, Matt Stringer.

Board Members Absent: Christopher Acebo

Staff Present: Brian Rogers, Executive Director; Kat Bell, Grants & Office Coordinator; Carrie Kikel, Communications Manager; Eleanor Sandys, Interim Visual Arts Coordinator/Registrar & Research Specialist; Liora Sponko, Community Arts Coordinator; Deb Vaughn, Arts Education Coordinator

Call to Order and Welcome, and Chair's Report

Anne Taylor called the meeting to order at 8:39 a.m.

Taylor said Hawaii was wonderful.

Board Minutes December 12, 2020

Taylor asked if there were corrections or comments. She asked for a motion to approve the minutes.

Motion: Harlen Springer moved approval of December 12, 2020, minutes. Seconded by Avantika Bawa. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Executive Director Report & Legislative Process

Brian Rogers presented his report. He expects another round of CARES Act funding from the NEA and it will likely be awarded to Operating Support recipients.

He is working with Nick Batz of Business Oregon to advocate for holding the Arts Commission budget even.

Jenny Green asked if the reduction includes the FTE. Rogers said yes but the grantmaking program would likely take the bulk of the reduction.

Michael Dalton asked about the item for rural opportunities initiatives. Rogers said there is a big push at Business Oregon to better serve rural areas. He will gather more information.

Springer asked if we are now at the point in the process where the CAC is doing advocacy. Rogers said yes, we have asked them to advocate for holding the budget and FTE even.

Arts Advocacy Day will be on April 23. We are sharing information with the field.

Discussion about how staff works with the CAC. The POP for an increase in the Percent for Art program is not moving forward.

Springer asked if the Commission could receive an update on the conversations with the CAC. Rogers said the CAC Executive Director was invited to this meeting but wasn't available.

Dalton asked if minutes for meetings with the CAC were posted or if meeting dates are posted. Rogers said he would share the meeting schedule and ask if Commissioners might attend. The next meeting is 9 a.m. on April 23.

Green asked if the capital projects use general funds. Rogers said the funds come from lottery bonds. If the projects are under \$500,000 they might come from lottery funds. The Arts Commission works with Business Oregon to manage the contracts. Green asked if we receive a fee for managing the funds; Rogers said no there is actually a cost to us for legal fees. He asked Kat Bell to pull out the DOJ costs.

Rogers said this is the first year the Cultural Trust raised more than \$5 million. There was a 17.5 percent increase. There were more than 2,000 new donors and over 11,000 gifts. The staff presented at more than 160 virtual board meetings. The result is there will be more money for grantmaking.

Rogers updated the Commission on the design for the new Cultural Trust license plate. Carrie Kikel gave an overview of the design process.

Arts Access Reimbursement Update

Deb Vaughn presented report.

Artist Relief Program Report

Sandys presented her report. Checks have now been mailed to almost all of the artists.

Matt Stringer congratulated Sandys on a wonderful effort; he wishes there were more applicants from his region. Sandys said we want to serve artists from everywhere and we have a plan with the Ford Foundation for an artist registry so that we can share opportunities with them.

Bawa said we need to do more promotion and social media.

Stringer asked if there are plans for additional relief programs. Sandys said we continue to have conversations but there are no current plans.

Discussion about applying the same level of outreach to all funding programs.

Green said it's very impressive work and she loves the idea of an artist registry. She thanked Sandys for her work.

Discussion about recruiting interns to manage more social media including Instagram.

Joint Committee Governance Structure

Rogers presented his report.

Springer gave an overview of the Oregon Solutions report. We have until August of 2022 to come up with a proposal. We are thinking about the big benefit that will come out of combining the two boards. Everyone should benefit from the new structure. We've developed some interesting concepts. We need to move arts and culture from a nicety to a necessity. We want to touch more Oregonians more frequently. Most people don't understand the difference between the agencies. We need to convince funders and the legislature that what we do is valuable.

Green said the meetings have been like a master class watching Springer move us through the process. There is potential excitement about what might come from the process.

Bawa said the Trust board members want to ensure that all areas of culture is protected in the new structure.

Taylor asked about other states that have combined structures and if they could help identify the benefits. Springer said almost every other state has arts and culture combined.

Springer said the group met with NASAA yesterday and heard about some states that have done a good job with advocacy and protecting funding. There are some good models we can follow.

Rogers said we are bringing a CAC board member into the conversation.

Planning Process

Rogers presented report.

Liora Sponko said the Arts Services gathering was very informative. There was a lot of discussion about capacity and wanting to serve the needs of the community.

Dalton asked whether there could be some cross pollinization between the listening sessions and the governance committee. Rogers said that is important to keep that in the front of our minds.

Springer said to do a big strategic plan before we've decided on the structure wouldn't make sense. Could we just extend the current plans until we decide on the structure? It would be helpful if the listening sessions provided feedback to the governance committee.

Rogers said the big value is the listening sessions. It might be we get one major theme like capacity and we can focus on that. We may not need a formal plan until the governance structure is determined. It's not a necessity to do a formal plan.

Sponko said the value is listening and trying to be responsive during recovery.

Springer said the listening sessions are critical. He is very supportive of that.

Rogers said he will share the dates of the sessions and encourage participation.

Taylor called for a 10-minute break at 10:20 a.m.

Taylor reconvened the meeting at 10:32 a.m.

Percent for Art Update

Sandys presented her PowerPoint.

Discussion about an increasing reliance on contractors to manage projects and the need to rehire the Visuals Arts Coordinator position.

Green asked if we could ask for funds to be set aside for maintenance. Sandys said that is a possibility but it's not a law nor a policy so it would be harder to get people to do it. Risk management offices are more receptive to the concept.

Discussion about routine maintenance versus conservation.

Springer said his public art projects always include a recommended maintenance schedule.

The current administrative fee does not cover the staff time to manage the program.

Springer said this is a great example of great artwork around the state that is deteriorating. We need to communicate that to the legislature.

Discussion about the POP not moving forward as it would increase the cost of construction. It does not have Governor support.

Operating Support Program Report

Sponko and Vaughn presented report.

Stringer asked whether a Data Arts profile is required for 2020 because it will be an anomaly. Sponko said yes.

Rogers walked through the approach to the funding formula.

Commissioner and Staff Updates

Sandys presented her report.

Sponko presented her report.

Green volunteered to lead the Operating Support New Applicants panel. Stringer volunteered to lead the Arts Learning panel.

Sponko invited ideas for a rural outreach list she is developing.

Vaughn presented her report. She highlighted the Virtual Poetry Out Loud State Contest that is taking place at 4 p.m. on Saturday, March 13, on the Arts Commission Facebook page. She thanked Sponko for taking on additional responsibilities after her transition off the team. Green said thank you we will miss you. Echoed by other Commissioners. Virtual toast to Vaughn.

Bawa said the Artist Relief Program has helped a lot of artists. Her show will be open for two more weeks.

Green said the Roundhouse Foundation gave the High Desert Museum a \$6 million grant which will expand their arts programs and collections. Scalehouse started an artist relief program with applications open on a rolling basis.

Stringer said the Oregon Department of Human Services gave Four Rivers an award for their work with disadvantaged young people. He shared the story of a student the center supported who passed away four days after high school graduation. He asked when Commissioners might be able to gather together again. Discussion about the vaccination schedule. Four Rivers is a vaccination site and so far 6,800 have received vaccinations there. Discussion about how arts and culture centers can pivot to serve community need.

Springer gave a shout out to the Lane Arts Council on their move to the Mid Town Arts Center, which is also housing several other arts groups and a gallery. He thanked Kikel for her work to get word of the Arts Commission's programs in rural media.

Rogers said it's been an honor and a privilege to work with Vaughn and cited her many contributions including managing the Poetry Out Loud program.

Taylor added her thanks to Vaughn for her support and wisdom.

Adjourn

Taylor adjourned the meeting at 11:45 a.m.