

Oregon Arts Commission Meeting Minutes



July 9, 2021

Teleconference

Commission Members Present: Anne Taylor, Chair; Jenny Green, Vice Chair; Avantika Bawa; David Harrelson; Harlen Springer; Matt Stringer

Board Members Absent: Christopher Acebo, Michael Dalton

Staff Present: Brian Rogers, Executive Director; Kat Bell, Grants & Office Coordinator; Carrie Kikel, Communications Manager; Eleanor Sandys, Interim Visual Arts Coordinator; Liora Sponko, Community Arts Coordinator.

Staff Absent:

Others Present:

Welcome and Call to Order

Anne Taylor called the meeting to order at 1:03 p.m. She welcomed David Harrelson to the Commission and asked everyone to introduce themselves.

NEA American Rescue Plan Funding Proposal

Brian Rogers presented the proposal in the packet. The staff recommends Option 2.

Matt Stringer asked if this was separate from a communication Liora Sponko recently sent out listing ARP grant opportunities. Sponko said yes, this was not included in that list.

Jenny Green said she knows some organizations are doing just fine and other are really hurting. The Museum of Warm Springs, for instance, needs a lot of help right now. It's hard to know who needs it.

Rogers said he's been hearing that as well. It is hard to tell. With the CARES Act fund we asked for budget information and adjusting as needed.

Harlen Springer said to delve into that detail would be a lot of work and take a lot of time. You'd be opening yourself up to criticism about who received funding. He supports Option 2.

Discussion about small awards to large organizations and whether they need the funds.

Springer said Option 2 is a good balance. Do the large organizations promote us?

Taylor said she thinks about the number of people the large organizations receive and she thinks a \$10,000 award would be meaningful. It might help them bring their programs to rural parts of the state.

Rogers said the advocacy by the large organizations was a big factor in securing the ARP funding recently awarded to the Cultural Trust.

Kat Bell said it is required that all grant recipients post our logo and recognize as a funder.

David Harrelson asked about the administrative overhead for small grant awards.

Bell said the staff spends half an hour to 45 minutes processing each grant, regardless of the size of the award.

Green asked if Oregon Folklife Network receives Operating Support. Bell said yes, they do.

Motion: Springer moved approval of Option 2 for ARP funding. Avantika Bawa seconded.
Motion passed unanimously.

Motion: Green moved approval of the additional \$1,000 award for Small Operating Support recipients. Stringer seconded. ***Motion passed unanimously.***

Rogers asked Sponko to talk about the proposal from Oregon Folklife Network to support folklife artists. They don't have as much access to funding opportunities. We supported them in putting together the program.

Sponko presented the memo.

Bawa asked about the nominations. What if there is a wonderful quilt maker no one knows about?

Sponko said there would be different levels of people on the nomination list, people who know the entire scope of workers as well as those who know artists in geographic areas.

Bawa said it would be important to allow people to self-nominate.

Stringer said OFN knows a broad group of artists and there aren't that many awards available.

Sandys said there was a lot of consideration given to the process and this is the recommendation.

Discussion about how many people might self-nominate.

Springer said he supports what Bawa is saying. Limiting it to a nominating process seems to run counter to inclusion.

Harrelson said if this were an ongoing program he would agree but for a "one off" he is fine with it. He asked how the \$5,000 award figure was agreed.

Green said she likes viewing it as a trial and consider doing again in the future. She said a self-nominating process would allow us to learn about new artists.

Rogers said \$5,000 is our typical fellowship award and we will be asking the artists to create work. He said we can include a self-nominating process.

Bawa asked if there would need to be a focus on the arts or any folk worker?

Discussion about folk artists and disciplines to include. Sandys said we should discuss with OFN whether we should limit disciplines.

Rogers said there is a distinction between folklife and folk and traditional arts.

Green asked about the allocation for administration. Sponko said it covers their staff time and she thinks it's fair.

Motion: Springer moved approval of the Oregon Folklife Network proposal with the addition of self-application opportunity. Bawa seconded. *Motion passed unanimously.*

Springer asked about the \$50,000 for administration for the NEA ARP funds and whether it will add FTE. Rogers said we are about to post the Visual Arts position and we are recreating the Assistant Director position. We'll also hire the Arts Learning position. We hope to use the \$50,000 for a new grant application system.

FY2022 Draft Program Allocations

Rogers presented the memo. The Governor hasn't yet signed our budget bill but should soon.

Green asked if we considered having performing and visual arts annually.

Rogers said the reasons they alternate is funding and staff resources.

Bell said visual arts rotates with performing, media and literary.

Bawa said another issue is getting panelists. It's a lot of work and we don't compensate.

Rogers said we are working on that.

Stringer said people shouldn't be paid for a special community service.

Bawa said not paying limits those who can afford to participate. It's a way of honoring and thanking people.

Stringer said it's a gesture recognizing the work. He supports it.

Rogers said the staff agrees we should provide a fee for service. He said the Artist Relief Program was able to pay panelists through the Oregon Community Foundation. We've had people turn us down when we can't pay.

Rogers asked for feedback on the options.

Springer said Option 3 reducing Operating Support by only \$30,000 but increases support to Small Organizations significantly. He thinks that's worth doing.

Rogers said we'll bring this back for the July 23 meeting.

Updates – Board and Staff

David Harrelson it's good to be here and thanks for the welcome.

Adjourn

Taylor adjourned the meeting at 2:28 p.m.