



**Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees**  
Monday, December 12, 2016

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A meeting of the Cuyahoga Arts & Culture (CAC) Board of Trustees was called to order at 3:30 pm in the Miller Classroom at the Idea Center at Playhouse Square, 1375 Euclid Avenue, Cleveland.

The roll call showed that Trustees Mark Avsec, Gwendolyn Garth, Joe Gibbons, Steve Minter and Charna Sherman were present. It was determined that there was a quorum.

Also in attendance were: CAC staff: Karen Gahl-Mills, executive director; Jill Paulsen, deputy director; Roshi Ahmadian; Meg Harris; Jessica Kayse; Dan McLaughlin; Jake Sinatra and Nicole Thomas.

**1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Motion by Trustee Minter, seconded by Trustee Sherman, to approve the minutes from the November 14, 2016 Board meeting. Discussion: None. Vote: all ayes. The motion carried.

**2. PUBLIC COMMENT ON MEETING AGENDA ITEMS**

The following made public comment on the individual artist funding discussion, item #6 on the agenda:

David Bergholz (Cuyahoga County resident), Tom Schorgl (Community Partnership for Arts & Culture), Christine Mauersberger (past Creative Workforce Fellow), Deb Crane (CAC Street Team), James Levin (Ingenuity Festival), Robin Van Lear (past Creative Workforce Fellow), Josh Maxwell (Cuyahoga County resident), Brendan Trewella (Night Market Cleveland), Dale Goode (Cuyahoga County resident), Nancy Heaton (BAYarts), Karen Sandstrom (Cuyahoga County resident), Ray Caspio (past Creative Workforce Fellow), Pamela Wallace (Cuyahoga County resident), Laura Dumm (past Creative Workforce Fellow), Sean Watterson (Community Partnership for Arts and Culture), Mimi Kato (past Creative Workforce Fellow), Jimmy Kuehnle (past Creative Workforce Fellow), Stephen Yusko (past Creative Workforce Fellow), Laura Paglin (past Creative Workforce Fellow), James Page (Cuyahoga County resident), Kristen Cliffl (past Creative Workforce Fellow), Libby Chaney (Cuyahoga County resident), Liz Maugans (past Creative Workforce Fellow), Jan Thrope (Cuyahoga County resident), Matt Bott (Boys & Girls Clubs of Cleveland), David Hansen (past Creative Workforce Fellow), Louis Burroughs (Cuyahoga County resident), Eric Schmiedl (past Creative Workforce Fellow), Kaela Geschke (CAC Street Team), Nelson Beckford (Saint Luke's Foundation), Amanda Powell (past Creative Workforce Fellow), Tom O'Brien (Neighborhood Connections), Lisa Kenion (Cuyahoga County resident), Ann Albano (Sculpture Center), Kevin Cronin (Restore Cleveland Hope), Darice Polo (past Creative Workforce Fellow).

Trustee Gibbons thanked all those that made public comments and added that all CAC Board meetings take place in public. He noted that CAC continuously strives to receive feedback from the community, as it is a public agency and needs to make decisions in the best interest of County residents.

Trustee Avsec added that he is impressed by CAC staff for their due diligence. He mentioned that he believes there is a right solution and process that will achieve CAC's mission without leaving artists out.

Trustee Garth noted that she will like to understand the process and why certain people have historically been left out of funding for artists. She stressed the importance of opening up the process to be more inclusive, since the data shows that very few Black artists received CWF funding in the past. She added that there has been a cultural gap in the definition of artistic excellence, and urged artists to reach out to their Black counterparts and teach them what they know, making our community of artists stronger. Trustee Garth concluded that CAC can bridge the racial divide.

Trustee Minter said that he is very encouraged by CAC staff and the consultants the agency has worked with to plan for its next 10 years. He noted that he is excited about the places where CAC plans to add special emphasis, and added that he is pleased to discuss the CAC's roadmap for the next couple of years later in this meeting.

### **3. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Ms. Gahl-Mills welcomed attendees to CAC's final Board meeting of 2016. She brought the Board's attention to the items on the meeting agenda, starting with the agency's organizational planning. Ms. Gahl-Mills stated that staff will present CAC's Planning Roadmap—the culmination of the organizational planning work that began in mid-2015—for the Board's approval. She reminded the Board that the agency had over 2,000 conversations with residents of the county and worked with experts in the field and local leaders that made up its Sounding Board, and made sure to place cultural partners, as well as residents, at the center of this deliberate listening. She noted that the document includes an affirmation of CAC's mission statement as well as revised statements of the agency's vision and values. It further outlines primary areas of focus for the next ten years.

Ms. Gahl-Mills also noted that staff will ask the Board to approve CAC's operating budget for 2017, which will include dollars for General Operating Support and Project Support grants, as well as a modest amount to experiment with for funding organizations CAC has traditionally not reached. She also reiterated that the budget includes funding for a program for individual artists, the essential elements of which will be brought to the Board for further discussion later in this meeting. She noted that there will be ample opportunity to hear from all segments of the community in designing this new program's direction.

Ms. Gahl-Mills stated that the meeting will also include an annual executive session to discuss the compensation of the agency's public employees. *[Please note: the executive session was later tabled to the next meeting on February 13, 2017.]*

Finally, Ms. Gahl-Mills mentioned that the meeting will include CAC's annual Records Retention Committee meeting, which will begin when the regular meeting is concluded. She added that all Board members are welcome, but not required, to attend.

### **4. FINANCE REPORT**

Ms. Harris gave a report on Cuyahoga Arts & Culture's finances. She provided an overview of the organization's financial results year-to-date, stating that revenue through November 30 was \$13,674,379. This figure is \$104,379 (.77%) better than forecast year-to-date but 5.45% below revenue for the same period in 2015. Interest revenue through November was \$189,238. This figure exceeds forecast by \$79,238 through November.

Ms. Harris stated that cash expenditures through November were \$14,111,350 This figure is \$379,662 below budget through November due to the timing of grant payments, the deferment of expenses associated with the NEA grant to 2017 as well as lower than expected expenses related to our organizational planning.

Ms. Harris added that the revenue to date in 2016 is approximately 5.5% below revenue for 2015. This decline in tax receipts is slightly above the amount budgeted for 2016 however we anticipate tax receipts at year end will be \$870,000 less than the previous year. Annual expenses are tracking below budget by approximately \$345,000 due to a variety of factors summarized above.

Trustee Gibbons asked that knowing that the revenue was 5.5% below the previous year, what percentage of decline does CAC normally project in its budget from year to year? Ms. Harris responded that the projection is typically at a 7% decline.

## **5. BOARD ACTION**

### **Approval of CAC Planning Roadmap**

Ms. Gahl-Mills introduced CAC's Planning Roadmap to the Board. She noted that the agency began thinking of its direction for the next 10 years in 2015. The Phase 1 of the organizational planning involved qualitative and quantitative research. In Phase 2, CAC aimed to answer the big question: how can we best support the creative life of residents today and for years to come? With open ears, CAC began listening deeply to its community of cultural partners and residents. Through the help of the planning team of local and national experts, as well as its Sounding Board of local leaders, CAC was able to create the Roadmap, which outlines two primary areas of focus for the next 10 years: 1) continued support for a wide variety of cultural organizations, artists and creative people and 2) explorations of ways to recognize and equitably support our community's varied cultural ecology. Ms. Gahl-Mills noted that CAC's mission will guide its work, as well as its vision (All Cuyahoga County residents experience a meaningful cultural life) and values: Connection, Discovery, Equity, Service, Stewardship and Trust. She concluded that the 2017 budget before the Board later in this meeting will include dollars dedicated to this work, making these efforts more sustainable for the future.

Mr. Sinatra brought the Board's attention to a document that provides evidence and includes the summary of the background research that informed the Roadmap. The summary of learnings within this document is the work of Nick Rabkin and Holly Sidford and includes key learnings supplemented by appendices.

Trustee Gibbons stated that he is in favor of the Roadmap and the information within it that has been discussed at this and previous meetings. He noted that it is important to explore these findings further in the long run and continue listening to inform the agency's work.

Trustee Avsec added that this Roadmap is the culmination of a lot of valuable work and is compatible with future growth.

Trustee Minter noted that the organizational planning process has been a great learning experience for him. He commended CAC staff on the terrific work, which he added was exactly what they had set out to accomplish. He further echoed that CAC will continue to listen and allow folks to feed into this learning.

Ms. Gahl-Mills added that CAC will host another event for the artistic community—including artists and cultural partner organizations' staff—in the new year.

Trustee Sherman also expressed that the Roadmap encapsulates the learning to date well.

Trustee Garth noted that while she agreed with the plans outlined in the Roadmap document, she had suggestions for making the language used less ambiguous in CAC's vision statements.

Trustee Gibbons responded that as per usual practice, the Board will be approving the general concepts outlined in the document, and not the exact word choices used. He mentioned that as with all other CAC documents, there is opportunity for evolution after Board approval.

Trustee Minter also echoed this sentiment, adding that the Roadmap is a directional document that will have implications for CAC's future operations.

Motion by Trustee Sherman, seconded by Trustee Minter, to approve the Planning Roadmap. Discussion: None. Vote: all ayes. The motion carried.

### **Approval of CAC Operating Budget for 2017**

Ms. Harris provided a summary of the proposed operating budget for Cuyahoga Arts & Culture in 2017 (*see [2017 Operating Budget Memo](#)*).

Trustee Minter asked how much was remaining in the reserves. Ms. Harris responded that at year-end CAC will have approximately \$21 million in the reserve fund.

Trustee Gibbons asked what the change in allocations will be in 2017. Ms. Harris replied that the proposed allocation for 2017 is \$900,000 higher than the 2016 allocation.

Motion by Trustee Avsec, seconded by Trustee Garth, to approve the appropriation of Cuyahoga Arts & Culture's 2017 Operating Budget. Discussion: None. Vote: all ayes. The motion carried.

## **6. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS**

### **Appoint Trustee Avsec to Audit & Finance Advisory Committee**

Ms. Harris stated that Trustee Avsec sat in on the Audit & Finance Advisory Committee meeting in November, and that CAC staff is excited to have him appointed to the Committee.

Motion by Trustee Minter, seconded by Trustee Sherman, to appoint Trustee Mark Avsec to the Audit & Finance Advisory Committee. No discussion. Vote: all ayes. The motion carried.

### **Update to Paid Family Leave**

Ms. Harris provided an overview of the proposed updates to CAC's Paid Family Leave policy. The proposed change will allow CAC to provide eight weeks of fully paid family leave. The remaining four weeks could be paid through an employee's Paid Time Off bank. A copy of the proposed revision is below:

#### **Family Leave and Benefit Amount**

*(updates bold and underlined)*

Employees who qualify for Adoption/Childbirth leave may take up to 12 weeks of continuous leave as follows: (1) the first **eight** weeks paid at 100% of the employee's regular salary/wage; (2) the next **4 weeks unpaid**. For the duration of Adoption/Childbirth leave, employees are eligible to receive all Employer-paid benefits and accrue all forms of leave at their regular accrual rates as if they were in active pay status.

Motion by Trustee Minter, seconded by Trustee Sherman, to approve the Paid Family Leave policy. No discussion. Vote: all ayes. The motion carried.

## **Contracts**

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Ms. Harris gave an overview of the following contracts for Board approval.

1. Up to \$47,160 for Center For Performance and Civic Practice for a continued partnership as an outgrowth of CAC's planning work and intention to pilot experimental programs to provide CAC and its partners with professional development and capacity-building resources in 2017.
2. \$60,000 to Community Partnership for Arts & Culture for a final grant to cover one year's worth of staffing costs associated with the Creative Workforce Fellowship as CAC concludes its support for the program.
3. \$20,500 to DataArts for a one-year grant of \$20,500 to support CAC's 2017 participation in the Cultural Data Project, the online platform that CAC uses with over 100 of its cultural partners to help them track and assess program participation and financial measures.
4. Up to \$75,000 to Karamu House for a second year of technical assistance funds of up to \$75,000 to support 2017 financial management, programming and operational goals.
5. \$33,779 for authority for CAC to enter into a 2017 General Operating Support grant agreement with Morgan Conservatory, previously delayed due to a late submission of 2016 Mid-Year Report. Mid-Year Report due: June 30; submitted: November 27.

Motion by Trustee Garth, seconded by Trustee Gibbons, to approve the contracts listed above. No discussion. Vote: all ayes. The motion carried.

## **7. DISCUSSION**

### **New Direction for Artist Funding**

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Ms. Paulsen thanked the audience members that made public comments for their helpful thoughts. She mentioned that the recommendations staff will be making to the Board today for the future of funding for artists include many of the tenets discussed by public commenters. Ms. Paulsen mentioned that staff will continue to engage the Board and residents and open the topic up for discussion now, in 2017 and beyond. She continued that the clear guiding principles the Board will discuss today reinforce CAC's mission and allow for arts and culture to act as tools for strengthening community, and have been reinforced by many residents, CAC street team and staff.

Ms. Paulsen noted that this plan has been years in the making and does not reflect simply one voice or person; in fact, it is based on three key elements:

1. Past Board discussion,
2. Resident engagement, namely the voices of 2,000 residents that had conversations with CAC over the summer, and
3. Formal assessment and benchmarking against national colleagues.

Ms. Paulsen continued, stating that the way CAC will fund artists is changing, but the fact the agency will continue to fund artists is not. Instead, the program will be brought into alignment with CAC's other programs with the following six elements, for which staff is seeking Board input and guidance:

1. The new program needs to provide flexible funds.

Trustee Minter asked if the past program also included flexible funds. Ms. Paulsen responded yes.

Trustee Avsec asked who will administer this new program. Ms. Paulsen explained in response that since there is currently no other program on the table, staff will have to work with a partner. Trustee Avsec continued, stating that the Board has heard that the past program did not embrace diversity enough, which is something we can improve on for the future program. He asked what else about the past program was not working. Ms. Paulsen explained that over time, CAC staff has tried to align the program with its mission, but there was no interest on the part of the past program administrator to do so.

A member of the audience, Mr. Tom Schorgl (Community Partnership for Arts & Culture) interrupted Ms. Paulsen and asked why the agency funded CPAC if the proposal did not meet CAC's expectations.

Trustee Gibbons explained that CAC Board and staff have tremendous respect for CPAC and its team.

Mr. Schorgl repeated his question. Ms. Gahl-Mills reiterated the respect that all Board, staff and attendees have for Mr. Schorgl and CPAC, and that without their paving the way, public funding for the arts would not have been possible. She continued that it is true that the partnership with CPAC has been difficult over the years, and that the agency has worked hard for a long time to bring CPAC's program into alignment with CAC's new goals. She concluded that the time has now come to go in separate directions.

Trustee Gibbons added that the program was funded out of a desire to support artists and with the hope that the issue between CPAC and CAC could be worked out. He mentioned that some of the work was done right through the past program, but the proposal from National Arts Strategies (NAS) was one that was fully aligned with CAC's mission. He said that CAC aimed at bringing a great program to the residents of the county through NAS, but that program is now off the table. He continued that while the misalignment with CPAC's program was perhaps not communicated as well as it should have, it is now time to reset and reexamine the topic carefully, and set forth elements of a future program. He reiterated that CAC staff and Board take funding for artists seriously, and that he hoped for a positive conversations about the issue at hand.

Mr. Schorgl apologized for interrupting the meeting.

Ms. Paulsen continued with the key elements of a future program:

2. One that has a broad definition of arts and culture, reflecting the definition that is written in the Ohio Revised Code and CAC's own definition, which include makers, scientists, and other non-traditional artists.
3. The new program will strive for equity and support artists of color, as well as emerging artists. All are welcome to apply, but there will be intentional focus for those underrepresented.
4. Any future program will support excellent art that strengthens community. Use of public funds makes the quality of art imperative.
5. The new program will support a cohort model, such that selected artists can collaborate with each other and grow their existing networks.
6. Finally, the program will provide opportunities for learning and tools for artists, since this work is difficult to do alone.

Ms. Paulsen echoed that these conditions are informed by the public. She mentioned that CAC staff will now be charged with building a program that incorporates these essential elements, since no such program exists locally. She explained that CAC will continue to listen to others, and that this work will be hard and will take time if done right. She concluded that CAC staff will have to pivot for a few months to focus on its main grant programs in the first part of 2017, but that it has set aside money in next year's budget for this new program to fund artists.

## **Executive Session**

Ms. Gahl-Mills suggested, in the interest of time, to table the Executive Session to CAC's following Board meeting. Motion by Trustee Gibbons, seconded by Trustee Minter, to table the Executive Session. No discussion. Vote: all ayes. The motion carried.

## **8. PUBLIC COMMENT**

In alphabetical order: Michael Gill (CAN Journal), Laura Paglin (past Creative Workforce Fellow), Jerry Seppelt (Cuyahoga County resident), Sean Watterson (Community Partnership for Arts and Culture), Megan Young (past Creative Workforce Fellow).

Next meeting: The next meeting will be held at 3:30 pm on February 13, 2016 in the Miller Classroom at the Idea Center at Playhouse Square.

## **9. ADJOURNMENT**

Motion by Trustee Avsec, seconded by Trustee Garth, to adjourn the meeting. No discussion. Vote: all ayes. The motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 7:00 pm.

Attest:

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Charna Sherman, Secretary, Board of Trustees

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Joe Gibbons, President, Board of Trustees