



## **Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees** Wednesday, December 15, 2021

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A regular meeting of the Cuyahoga Arts & Culture (CAC) Board of Trustees was called to order at 3:44 p.m. at the Warrensville Heights Public Library 4415 Northfield Rd, Warrensville Heights, OH

The roll call showed that Trustees Isenhart, Mendez, Scott Taylor, and Sherman were present. It was determined that there was a quorum. Trustee McGowan was absent.

Also in attendance were: Jill Paulsen, executive director; Meg Harris; Heather Johnson-Banks; Julia Murphy, Johnnia Stigall, India Pierre-Ingram and Jake Sinatra.

### **1. OATH OF OFFICE**

Trustee Sherman administered the oath of office to Karolyn Isenhart. Ms. Isenhart affirmed that she would honestly, faithfully, and impartially perform her duties while serving as a trustee of Cuyahoga Arts & Culture

### **2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Trustee Sherman requested tabling approving the November Board minutes to the February Board meeting.

At 3:54 pm, there was a motion by Trustee Sherman, seconded by Trustee Scott-Taylor, to adjourn to executive session to consider the compensation of public employees. Discussion: None. Roll Call Vote: Isenhart, aye; Mendez, aye; Scott Taylor, aye; Sherman, aye. The motion carried.

At 6:03 pm executive session adjourned, and the Board resumed the public meeting.

Motion by Trustee Mendez, seconded by Trustee Scott Taylor to approve the personnel provided to the Board of Trustees. Vote: all ayes. The motion carried.

### **3. PUBLIC COMMENT ON MEETING AGENDA ITEMS**

Sean Watterson submitted a public comment to the Board: view his comment [here](#).

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

Ms. Paulsen thanked everyone for joining her and the Board. Ms. Paulsen's remarks can be found [here](#).

In response to Ms. Paulsen's remarks, Trustee Sherman asked what was the different between Interactive Panel and Written Panel. Ms. Paulsen said that the Interactive Panel on where the panelists are together discussing applications via Zoom while Written Panel takes place on the reviewing site only, where panelists review, score, and comment on applications without interacting with other panelists.

## **5. BOARD ACTION - Grantmaking**

### **Resident-led arts and culture projects**

Ms. Johnson-Banks presented background, included in the Board packet, on the recommended grants to ioby (In Our Back Yards) and Neighborhood Connections.

Motion by Trustee Scott Taylor, seconded by Trustee Sherman, to approve a grant to ioby in the amount of \$100,000 and a grant to Neighborhood Connections in the amount of \$50,000 for resident-led grant programs in 2022. Discussion: Trustee Sherman asked the prior amount for the grants. Ms. Johnson-Banks stated that there was an increase to ioby from \$90,000 to \$100,000 and decrease from \$60,000 to \$50,000 compared to the approved grants for 2021. She said the increase to ioby was due to the success of their projects and ability to be flexible during the pandemic. Vote: all ayes. The motion carried.

### **Approval of Grants: Support for Artists**

Ms. Johnson-Banks presented grant recommendations for the 2022 Support for Artists grant program, as detailed in the memo included in the Board meeting materials.

Motion by Trustee Mendez, seconded by Trustee Scott Taylor, to approve grants: Julia de Burgos - \$70,000; Karamu House - \$120,000 and SAPCES - \$70,000 for a total amount of \$260,000 for the 2022 Support for Artist initiative. Discussion: Trustee Sherman asked if the previous amount to Support for Artist initiative was \$300,000 but was now reduced to \$260,000. Ms. Paulsen said that the current grants is for the three organization Karamu House, SPACES, and Julia de Burgos Cultural Arts Center. Trustee Sherman asked if the amount was previously \$400,000 at one point. Ms. Paulsen confirmed that in previous years it was. Vote: All ayes. The motion carried.

## **6. FINANCE REPORT**

Ms. Harris' report can be found [here](#)

## **7. BOARD ACTION – Finance and General Business**

### **Approval of 2022 Operating Budget**

Ms. Paulsen presented the Board the 2022 operating budget, which is available in Budget Memo. Ms. Harris stated that it doesn't vary from much from the previous year's budget or long-term projections. The budget reflects a commitment to keeping General Operating Support and Project Support as steady as possible.

Motion by Trustee Mendez, seconded by Trustee Scott Taylor, to approve the CAC's 2022 operating budget. Discussion: None. Vote: Isenhardt, aye; Mendez, aye; Scott Taylor, aye; Sherman, abstain. The motion carried.

### **Contracts**

Ms. Paulsen provided an overview of the two contracts included in the board packet for Board approval.

Motion by Trustee Scott Taylor, seconded by Trustee Isenhardt, to approve a contract with DataArts in the amount of \$20,000 for January 1 – December 31, 2022. Discussion: Trustee Sherman asked what is DataArts. Ms. Paulsen said that DataArts is a data collection platform created by Pew Charitable that CAC uses as part of its grant applications process, its reports are used during panel review and for sector wide

advocacy. Additionally, organizations can utilize the data to for large number of reports to help them manage their organizations. Vote: All ayes. The motion carried.

Motion by Trustee Scott Taylor, seconded by Trustee Mendez, to approve a twelve-month contract for \$25,000 with Compelling Communications for work in the areas of communications and media relations. Discussion: None. Vote: All ayes. The motion carried.

## **Policies**

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### **Remote Work Policy**

Ms. Harris presented three new HR policies to the Board:

1. Remote Work Policy
2. COVID-19 Vaccination Policy
3. COVID Illness Leave Policy

Motion by Trustee Scott Taylor, seconded by Trustee Isenhardt, to approve the Remote Work, COVID-19 Vaccination, and COVID Illness Leave Policies as presented to the Board and included in the Board materials. Discussion: Trustee Scott Taylor asked if the requirement of COVID-19 Vaccination will be a deterrent to hiring or retention of staff. Ms. Harris said that CAC does not believe it will impact potential future hiring. She added that currently there are no open positions at CAC. Trustee Scott Taylor asked if there is a process if a staff member no longer wants to get boosters or vaccinations. Ms. Harris said that she would speak with the legal team to develop a process. Trustee Scott Taylor asked if the budget includes the COVID-19 Illness Leave Policy's 40-hour sick leave. Ms. Harris said that it is considered paid time off, so it is accounted for in regular staff pay. Vote: all ayes. The motion carried.

## **8. CONNECT WITH CULTURE**

Ms. Pierre-Ingram introduced Robin Robinson, Executive Director of Sankofa Fine Art Plus. Ms. Robinson shared the work of the organization, and the impact CAC grants have had on Sankofa's project success and outcomes.

## **9. ASSEMBLY FOR THE ARTS**

Jeremy Johnson updated the CAC Board on Assembly for the Arts' work to increase access to funding for the arts and culture sector. Mr. Johnson said that Assembly knows that arts and culture is essential to creating jobs and economic development and that they are in advocacy mode, to ensure that elected officials are aware of the importance of the arts economy to Cleveland and Cuyahoga County.

Mr. Johnson said that Assembly and CAC have been working together with R Strategy Group to build relationships with City and Council elected officials. He stated that the current focus is on securing American Rescue Plan funds. CAC and Assembly have a joint ask into the City of Cleveland for 2% of ARPA funding. Jeff Rusnak from R Strategy provided additional detail on the current advocacy efforts.

Trustee Scott Taylor asked what other activities will be accomplished as the Bibb administration and new City Council begin the year. Mr. Johnson said that Assembly is launching an artist advocacy campaign. Trustee Scott Taylor asked if there is anything the Board can do. Mr. Johnson shared that if members have access to council members please work with Assembly on coordinated outreach. He noted that Assembly and CAC have joint messaging to support board member advocacy.

Mr. Johnson noted that Mayor-Elect Justin Bibb and his transition team met with Assembly, CAC and other members of the arts and culture sector. Trustee Sherman shared that there are Board members on the Mayor-Elect's transition team.


Trustee Isenhart asked if there are data or if there is a map of where artists and organizations are located. Mr. Johnson said that Cuyahoga Arts & Culture creates maps where CAC-funded nonprofits are serving residents in all County Districts and each City ward. They are used in advocacy work.

## **10. ADJOURNMENT**

Trustee Sherman thanked the CAC staff for their great work over the year and thanked her fellow Board members for their commitment and hard work.

Motion by Trustee Scott Taylor, seconded by Trustee Mendez, to adjourn the meeting. Discussion: None. Vote: all ayes. The motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 6:53 pm.

The next meeting will be held at 5:00 pm on Wednesday, February 09, 2022.

Attest:   
Michele Scott Taylor (Apr 4, 2022 12:47 EDT)  
Michele Scott Taylor  
Secretary, Board of Trustees