



Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees

Wednesday, December 18, 2024

A regular meeting of the Cuyahoga Arts & Culture (CAC) Board of Trustees was called to order at 3:42 p.m. at Cleveland Public Library, Main Branch, Louis Stokes Wing, 2nd Floor.

The roll call showed that Trustees Isenhart, Scott Taylor, and Vernaci were present. It was determined that there was a quorum. Trustee DiCosimo arrived at 3:55 p.m.

Also in attendance were Executive Director Jill Paulsen and CAC staff.

Trustee Isenhart welcomed guests to the last CAC Board meeting of the year. She noted that 2024 was an exciting year, including the passage of levy that ensures CAC can make grants to nonprofits through 2035. Trustee Isenhart reminded the Board that CAC made grants to organizations for 2025 at its November 2024 meeting and indicated that this December meeting would continue CAC's planning for next year.

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Action: To approve the minutes of the November 20, 2024 Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees.

Motion by – Trustee Scott Taylor

Seconded by – Trustee Vernaci

Vote to approve the minutes from the November 20, 2024 meeting.

Ayes: all ayes

The motion carried.

2. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Action: At 3:46 p.m., to adjourn to executive session to consider the compensation and performance of public employees.

Motion by – Trustee Vernaci

Seconded by – Trustee Scott Taylor

Roll Call Vote: Isenhart, aye; Scott Taylor, aye; Vernaci, aye.

The motion carried.

At 4:40 p.m. executive session adjourned, and the Board resumed the public meeting.

(Trustee DiCosimo arrived at 3:55 p.m. and joined executive session.)

Approval of Personnel Report

Action: To approve the Personnel Report dated December 18, 2024.

Motion by – Trustee Scott Taylor

Seconded by – Trustee Vernaci

Vote to approve the Personnel Report dated December 18, 2024.

Ayes: all ayes

The motion carried.

3. CONNECT WITH CULTURE

Sarah Sisser, executive director of Creative Ohio, provided an overview of the mission of Creative Ohio and an update on their statewide arts advocacy work in 2024.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT ON MEETING AGENDA ITEMS

No public comment.

5. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms. Paulsen thanked everyone for joining her and the Board. Ms. Paulsen's remarks can be found in the meeting materials.

6. GRANTMAKING

Resident-Led Grant to Neighborhood Connections

Action: To approve a grant to Neighborhood Connections to provide responsive, resident-led grantmaking and to hold Arts & Culture Network Nights in 2025 in the amount of \$60,500.

Motion by – Trustee Scott Taylor

Seconded by – Trustee DiCosimo

Vote: To approve a grant to Neighborhood Connections to provide responsive, resident-led grantmaking and to hold Arts & Culture Network Nights in 2025 in the amount of \$60,500.

Ayes: all ayes

The motion carried.

Support for Artists Grant

Action: To approve a one-year grant in the amount of \$500,000 to Assembly for the Arts to design and manage a program that provides support for Cuyahoga County artists throughout 2025.

Motion by – Trustee Scott Taylor

Seconded by – Trustee Vernaci

Vote to approve a one-year grant in the amount of \$500,000 to Assembly for the Arts to design and manage a program that provides support for Cuyahoga County artists throughout 2025.

Discussion: It was confirmed that Assembly relayed to CAC that it has informed all current program nonprofit partners that they will no longer receive funds for this work from Assembly in 2025. Mr. Sinatra, CAC's director of grantmaking strategy and communications, stated that Assembly designed its 2025 program to manage all of artist support program activities, thereby reducing overhead expenses and ensuring that more money will be dedicated to the Assembly's artist programming.

Ayes: all ayes

The motion carried.

Update – Grantee Connect Series + 2026 Planning.

Ms. Paulsen and Mr. Sinatra provided an update on planning as well as plans for Q1 and Q2 of 2025.

- Grantee Meetups to share progress on CAC research and planning in January
- Series of listening sessions for grant recipients to share feedback on grant programs in February
- Public feedback period on guidelines in March

The Board asked if CAC plans to seek feedback from the broader community to hear from people who are not affiliated with organizations but attendees of arts and cultural programs. Ms. Paulsen said that in the past CAC has done that from time to time, but that CAC works directly with nonprofits and currently has a lesser capacity to engage residents directly.

7. FINANCE REPORT

Ms. Harris provided a financial update through November 2024, included in the meeting materials.

Revenue. Tax revenue through November 30 was \$8,047,150. This is \$319,777 (3.8%) below budget year-to-date and \$1,119,163 (12.2%) below revenue for the same period in 2023. Interest revenue through November was \$427,839 which is \$5,339 (1.2%) above forecast.

Expenditure. Non-grant expenditures through November were \$888,882 and are tracking under budget by \$73,854 due to timing of payments.

2024 Year End Outlook

Revenue is expected to be approximately \$350,000 lower than forecast at year end, pending tax receipts for December. Expenses for 2024 will be approximately \$350,000 below budget primarily due to reductions/cancelled grant payments and modest lower-than-budgeted expenses. In addition to monthly tax and interest revenue, CAC has used \$2.8 million from its general fund to issue grant payments and for operational expenditures which is in alignment with the budget.

2025 Budget

Action: To approve Cuyahoga Arts & Culture's 2025 budget in the amount of \$12,417,684.

Motion by – Trustee DiCosimo
Seconded by – Trustee Scott Taylor

Discussion: The Board posed several questions regarding changes in budget year-over-year and how invested funds are managed. Staff responded to the questions.

Vote to approve Cuyahoga Arts & Culture's 2025 budget in the amount of \$12,417,684.

Ayes: all ayes

The motion carried.

8. APPROVAL OF CONTRACTS

FIT Technologies

Action: To approve a one-year contract with FIT Technologies for IT support for \$21,120.

Motion by – Trustee Scott Taylor
Seconded by – Trustee Vernaci

Discussion: None

Vote: To approve a contract with FIT Technologies for IT support for \$21,120.

Ayes: all ayes

The motion carried.

9. PUBLIC COMMENT ON CAC BUSINESS

No public comment.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Trustee Scott Taylor, seconded by Trustee DiCosimo, to adjourn the meeting.

Vote: all ayes

The motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 5:43 p.m.

The next meeting will be held at 4:00 p.m. on Tuesday, February 25, 2025.

Attest: _____
Leonard DiCosimo
Secretary, Board of Trustees