



**Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees**  
Thursday, February 15, 2024

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A regular meeting of the Cuyahoga Arts & Culture (CAC) Board of Trustees was called to order at 4:03 p.m. at The Children’s Museum of Cleveland, 3813 Euclid Avenue, Cleveland, OH 44115.

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

Also in attendance were: Jill Paulsen, Executive Director, and CAC staff. Museum Director Maria Campanelli made welcome remarks.

**1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Action: Motion to approve minutes of the December 13, 2023 Board of Trustees meeting.

Motion by – Trustee Isenhart

Second by – Trustee Scott Taylor

Discussion: Trustee Sherman stated she did not agree with how the minutes were prepared.

Vote to approve the minutes of the December 13, 2023 Board of Trustees meeting.

Ayes: Blakemore, Isenhart, Mendez, Scott Taylor.

Nays: Sherman.

The motion carried.

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

Sean Watterson, Owner of Happy Dog

Amber Rogers, Executive Director, Local 4 Music Fund

**3. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT**

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

**4. REPORTS – Finance and General Business**

Ms. Meg Harris, director of administration, provided the financial update. The finance report can be found in the Board materials [here](#).

## **5. REPORTS – GRANTMAKING**

Mr. Jake Sinatra, director of grantmaking strategy and communications, presented an overview of the Project Support 2025 grant program. Highlights included the following:

- The program will continue to be open to new applicants.
- There are no anticipated policy changes to the guidelines.
- As always, CAC will aim to streamline and simplify the process.
- The option to bypass the full application and panel processes and receive 2025 funding will again be available to some current grantees.
- 2025 grant recommendations will be presented to the Board at its November 2024 meeting.
- CAC collects data on an ongoing basis and uses it to inform revisions to the grant program.
- A public feedback period on the draft guidelines will be open for several weeks in March 2024.

## **6. OTHER BUSINESS**

Mr. Jeremy Johnson, President & CEO of Assembly for the Arts, and Jeff Rusnak, President & CEO of R Strategy Group, provided an update on the current advocacy efforts for additional public funding for the arts nonprofits. Highlights of the report are:

- The campaign is moving forward.
- Targeting November 2024 election but no decision has been made yet; this is a recommendation.
- The amount of the tax needs to be determined.
- The ballot language is prescribed in the Ohio Revised Code; it dictates how the money can be used.
- Community engagement, outreach and research will be done.
- A case will need to be made in support of the levy.
- Action by the CAC Board and by Cuyahoga County Council will need to take place in Q2 this year.
- CAC will play a role in educating the public regarding the benefits of public funding for the arts.

## **7. PUBLIC COMMENT**

None.

## **8. ADJOURNMENT**

Trustee Mendez recognized and thanked Trustee Sherman for her three terms on the CAC Board.

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting.

Motion by – Trustee Isenhart

Second by – Trustee Scott Taylor

Vote: Ayes: Blakemore, Isenhart, Mendez, Scott Taylor, Sherman.

The motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 pm.

The next meeting will be held at 4:00 pm on Wednesday, April 17, 2024 at the Cleveland Public Library Downtown Branch - Louis Stokes Wing, 325 Superior Avenue, Cleveland, OH 44114.