

**Minutes
Council Meeting
July 31, 2024
9:00 a.m.
Virtual Meeting
via Microsoft TEAMS**

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS: Chair Cohen, Mr. Alaquiva, Mr. Astorino, Senator Bartolotta, Senator Cappelletti, Representative Ciresi, Mr. Gabel, Ms. Goldberg, Representative Labs, Judge Morgan, Mr. Parks, Mr. Stull, Ms. Vilayphonh, Mr. Warfield

COUNCIL MEMBERS NOT PRESENT: Ms. Gunderson, Ms. Zaborney

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: Karl Blischke, Executive Director; Heather Doughty, Deputy Executive Director; Christopher Duerr, Program Coordinator & Grants Specialist; Jamie Dunlap, Chief of Creative Catalysts & Lifelong Learning; Amy Gabriele, Chief of Finance & Administration; Norah Johnson, Director of Public Awareness & External Affairs; Laura Kline, Executive Assistant; Amanda Lovell, Director of Access to the Creative Sector; Sarah Merritt, Director of Creative Communities; Dana Payne, Director of DEI Initiatives, Diverse Cultures & Heritage; Seth Poppy, Director of Data Systems & Creative Services; and Ian Rosario, Director of Arts Organizations & Arts Programs & Grants Liaison

GUESTS PRESENT: Addie Abelson, Chief Counsel

ITEM 1: CALL TO ORDER: Karl Blischke welcomed those in attendance and informed them that the meeting would be recorded for the administrative purpose of minute taking. Mr. Blischke then turned the meeting over to Chair Cohen.

ROLL CALL:

Karl Blischke, Executive Director

Mr. Blischke called the roll. A quorum was established.

ITEM 2: REQUESTS FOR PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Chair Cohen asked if the PCA received any requests for public comments. There were no requests for public comment.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST: Chair Cohen reminded the Council of the PCA's Conflict of Interest Policy.

ITEM 3 APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Chair Cohen asked for a motion to approve the March 8, 2024, Council meeting minutes.

Ms. Goldberg made a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Stull seconded the motion. Motion carried, none abstained or opposed.

Chair Cohen asked for a motion to approve the April 19, 2024, Special Council meeting minutes.

Judge Morgan made a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Warfield seconded the motion. Motion carried, none abstained or opposed.

ITEM 4: Authorization for the Executive Director or Deputy Executive Director to Submit Applications for which State Arts Agencies are Eligible

Karl Blischke, Executive Director

Chair Cohen asked Council if they have any questions about this authorization. Hearing none, Chair Cohen asked for a motion to approve the recommendations.

Ms. Goldberg made a motion to approve the recommendations. Mr. Stull seconded the motion. Motion carried, none abstained or opposed.

ITEM 5: Authorization for the Executive Director or Deputy Executive Director to Award Contracts and Grants to Implement the Partnerships and Initiatives as Presented in the Budget, as approved by the Council at this Meeting

Karl Blischke, Executive Director

Chair Cohen asked Council if they have any questions about this authorization. Hearing none, Chair Cohen asked for a motion to approve the recommendations.

Mr. Alaquiva made a motion to approve the recommendations. Judge Morgan seconded the motion. Motion carried, none abstained or opposed.

ITEM 6: Authorization for the Executive Director or Deputy Executive Director to Appoint Panelists to Serve on Panels for the 2024-2025 Fiscal Year

Karl Blischke, Executive Director

Chair Cohen asked Council if they have any questions about this authorization. Hearing none, Chair Cohen asked for a motion to approve the recommendations.

Mr. Stull made a motion to approve the recommendations. Mr. Warfield seconded the motion. Motion carried, none abstained or opposed.

ITEM 7: Recommendations for Preserving Diverse Cultures Division

Dana Payne, Director of DEI Initiatives, Diverse Cultures & Heritage

Ms. Payne reported that this action item consists of two items for Council consideration. She stated that the first involves the applications that were submitted and recommendations for funding for Strategies for Success, and the second item is for a Capitalization Pilot Program.

Ms. Payne reported that this year, she received 58 applications to the Strategies for Success program and that this represents an increase of 20 applicants.

Payne indicated that the grid provided in the memo of the Council Book included applications submitted to the Community Based Engagement Project Grant. She explained because this program is on hiatus. All the applications submitted this year were for Strategies for Success.

Ms. Payne reported that out of 58 applications that were received, 50 were recommended for funding. She added that three of the new applicants and five returning program participants were not recommended for funding in 2023.

Payne referred to the grid on page 20 of the Council Book and provided an explanation of the different grant amounts. She explained that grant amounts had to be reduced at all levels this year due to the unanticipated increase in the applications received and recommendations for funding.

Ms. Payne stated that the second item for Council consideration is a Capitalization Pilot Program that would serve as an extension of the Capacity Building Continuum provided by Strategies for Success since 1990. Ms. Payne stated that capitalization within the nonprofit art sector supports the accumulation of financial resources to fulfill mission over time and explained that it is a way of planning that connects organizational strategy to finance. She added that it is a grant making practice that advances stability and supports resiliency during periods of change.

Ms. Payne gave an overview of the reasons for the need of the pilot program and explained that PCA staff has been reviewing best practices and appropriate approaches to capitalization. Payne stated that PCA staff has met with Grantmakers in the Arts as well as Upstart Colab, both of which are sector leaders in investing in the creative economy.

Ms. Payne added that PCA staff is planning on meeting with other grant making entities who have implemented capitalization programs, potential partners and will also identify appropriate consultants. She indicated that PCA staff plans to finalize an outline of this pilot which would include a final structure, a timeline, defined goals, potential partnerships and to present to council in October.

Ms. Payne requested Council approve the following two recommendations for the Preserving Diverse Cultures division:

1. Funding in the amount of \$621,000 to support 50 Strategies for Success applicant organizations; and,
2. Funding in the amount of \$50,000 to support the development and implementation of the capitalization pilot.

Chair Cohen asked if there were any questions. Hearing none she asked for a motion to approve the recommendation.

Mr. Parks made a motion to approve the recommendation. Mr. Warfield seconded the motion. Motion carried, none abstained or opposed.

ITEM 8: Recommendation for Funding Parameters for Art Organizations and Arts Program

Ian Rosario, Director of AOAP and Grants Liaison

Mr. Rosario stated that Arts Organizations, Arts Programs is PCA's general operating support category. Rosario reminded Council that in fiscal year 2020, Council implemented a new funding strategy which addressed the historical inequities among the BIPOC community as well as rural communities. He explained that with this strategy $\frac{3}{4}$ of PCA's organizations saw an increase in their AOAP funding.

Mr. Rosario provided an overview of the previously approved policies to govern Fiscal Year 2024-2025 grants, which include:

- Grants do not require a match.
- Grantees may use funds for capital expenditures directly related to their operations and in furtherance of their artistic mission.
- Grantees must sign the AOAP grant award agreement within 45 days of receipt from the PCA or forfeit their award.

Mr. Rosario stated that PCA staff recommends that Council continue to implement the funding strategy authorizing Fiscal Year 2024-2025 grant amounts of \$26,000 for each of the Rural/BIPOC grantees and \$13,000 for each of the Non-Rural/Non-BIPOC grantees.

Mr. Rosario stated that PCA staff further recommends that Council maintain the previously approved policies to govern Fiscal Year 2024-2025 AOAP grants.

Ms. Goldberg asked Mr. Rosario to provide an explanation of the 72% increase.

Mr. Rosario stated that 72% of organizations within AOAP saw an increase in funding with the new strategy. He explained that it was not as if organizations saw a 72% increase in the amount of their grant. Mr. Rosario added that 3/4 of the organizations in that program saw an increase in that strategy and he reminded Council that this was instituted during the pandemic to infuse some funding towards our organizations when they needed it the most.

Chair Cohen asked Council if there were any questions. Hearing none, Chair Cohen asked for a motion to approve the recommendation.

Ms. Goldberg made a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Stull seconded the motion. Motion carried, none abstained or opposed.

ITEM 9: Recommendations for Entry to AOAP Funding

Ian Rosario, Director of AOAP and Grants Liaison

Chair Cohen stated that she aware of the following conflict: Council Member Gabel for the Gettysburg Community Theater.

Mr. Rosario that the Entry program is for applicants that wish to qualify for AOAP. Rosario then outlined some of the requirements for qualifying for this program.

Mr. Rosario reported that this year, the program has become highly competitive and explained that PCA received several applications coming in on the front end, which included a lot of new organizations.

Mr. Rosario also stated that PCA is receiving more AOAP applicants that had either not continued to apply in AOAP or stopped applying for a variety of reasons. Rosario explained that these organization do not get back into AOAP and must re-qualify for AOAP through Entry to AOAP.

Rosario reported that this year, four panel reviews were held and he then reviewed the criteria that was used which was also included in the Council Book.

Mr. Rosario indicated that there were 103 eligible entry applicants and of those, PCA staff is recommending funding for 61 of those for a total amount of \$305,000.

Mr. Rosario stated that of those 61, PCA staff is recommending transitioning 16 to AOAP. Rosario explained that to transition, PCA staff looks for a good panel assessment. Rosario added that staff also make sure that they're in good standing with the PCA.

Mr. Rosario mentioned one correction in the Council Book. The listing the book states that Pittsburgh Playwrights Theatre Company as transition to AOAP which is not correct. This organization will remain in Entry to AOAP.

Chair Cohen asked for questions, and hearing note, she made a motion to approve the recommendation as presented except for the conflict of interest. Chair Cohen asked to let the record show that Council Member Gabel did not make a motion, second a motion, participate in any discussion or vote on the recommendation with which Council Member Gabel has a conflict.

Judge Morgan made a motion to approve the recommendation. Ms. Goldberg seconded the motion. Motion carried, none abstained or opposed.

Chair Cohen then asked for a motion to approve the recommendation for the grant with which the Council member Gabel has a conflict of interest. Chair Cohen asked to let the record show that the Council member Gabel did not make this motion, second this motion, participate in any discussion of this motion or vote on this motion.

Ms. Goldberg made a motion to approve the recommendation. Mr. Warfield seconded the motion. Motion carried, none abstained or opposed.

ITEM 10: Recommendations for Funding Parameters for Pennsylvania Partners in the Arts Partnership and Regranting Programs

Amanda Lovell, Director of Access to the Creative Sector

Ms. Lovell provided a recap on events that happened in the previous fiscal year and shared some of the positive impacts made by PCA's Creative Entrepreneur Accelerator program. Lovell stated that stated to date, PCA has served nearly 1,000 creative entrepreneurs with this program and stated that the program remains relevant and in demand.

Ms. Lovell reported that in fiscal year 2023-2024, PCA launched its new Creative Sector Flex Fund program which helps small organizations with revenues between \$10,000 and \$200,000 gain access to funding. Lovell reported that the funding amount was increased to \$5,000 and added that although the number of applicants fell slightly short on the goal, the program did serve 282 organizations throughout the state. Lovell added that PCA was also able to reach 58 out of Pennsylvania's 67 counties. Ms. Lovell stated that each organization was given a \$5,000 grant award.

Ms. Lovell reported that in the 2023-2024 fiscal year, a provision was made that allowed the agency to hold in reserve both administrative and program funds in relation to the CEA program for partners that had not yet expended all their CEA funds from previous fiscal years. Lovell stated that PCA staff has been continuing to monitor the expenditure of these funds with some of the regions that are struggling; namely Region 2, Elk County Council on the Arts and Region 3.

Ms. Lovell stated that PCA staff is recommending that for this upcoming fiscal year, that the amount allocated for Regions 2 and Region 3 be cut in half and to also have a percentage decrease in relation to the amount of administrative funds. Ms. Lovell explained that PCA staff will continue to work closely with those partnerships on ways that they can continue to improve.

Ciresi stated that PCA should leave the funding as it is and continue to support them as much as possible. Representative Ciresi mentioned that Elk County see hundreds of thousands of people who come to see the Elk and serving those communities is where PCA grows as an organization.

Senator Bartolotta stated that she agrees with Representative Ciresi and said that so much funding has been cut for culture, for tourism, for all sorts of things that benefit Pennsylvania rural areas and so much attention gets paid to Philadelphia and Pittsburgh. Bartolotta stated that she thinks there are possibilities to grow interest and even just small community artists that need to be supported financially and with other interests and urges to try to keep level funding for those rural communities.

Judge Morgan asked what will happen to the money that is currently going to Regions 2 and 2 if it does not go to those regions.

Ms. Gabriele stated that any time there are reductions in particular funding, those funds go into programs like Creative Catalysts, Statewide Services, or CCI mini grants. Ms. Gabriele added that PCA does not waste any funds that are not used in a certain category and explained that this reduction is about capacity and quality of service form the partners themselves.

Judge Morgan stated that maybe too much was allocated to those regions knowing that there would not be enough organizations to apply and suggested reducing what is allocated to the regions. He added that if there is no need, why have money sitting there, especially if it is going to go to other sources anyway.

Ms. Lovell agreed and stated that at the end of August, Region 3 had \$27,000 that was carried over from previous years. She added that if PCA did not cut funding, they would have received an additional \$16,000.

Ms. Lovell stated that PCA staff is learning what the right formula is and is monitoring the demand in different areas. Lovell said that Region 12, a rural area outside of Pittsburgh and Region 9 in York are both doing well.

Ms. Lovell noted that the Creative Sector Flex Fund in Region 2 and Region 3 does extremely well and serves many small organizations in those areas. Lovell explained that through the Creative Entrepreneur Accelerator program, PCA can serve individual artists who want to start their own businesses or who already have started a business and just want to accelerate it.

Ms. Lovell stated that these grants for Regions 2 and 3 can always be augmented later in the year if they finally use the balances that they currently have with funds that are available in balances from other programs.

Mr. Blischke proposed that if PCA Staff sees that the demand is picking up and that PCA can reach more entrepreneurs, that the staff will come back to Council and ask for the grant to be augmented to meet and reflect that actual demand.

Representatives Ciresi asked if the \$27,000 that Region 3 did not use could be redistributed in that region for something else that promotes the arts. He stated that he did not want to see it go back into the fund but would like it to stay in these regions.

Mr. Blischke said this is doable. He stated that the point of having programs regionalized is to make sure state funding reaches all counties. Blischke stated that a way that PCA could accomplish this is to provide a grant with rolling deadlines into that area with another program.

Ms. Lovell stated that the second page of the Council memo contains a list of the funding amounts.

Representative Ciresi stated that from a longer-term perspective that Council may have to look at PCA's formula or look at the way that this program is being delivered to best serve the residents of those counties.

Ms. Dunlap stated that PCA put through a Creative Catalyst grant that funded a significant financial part of the launch of the PA Wild Center's Artisan Collaborative and that just rolled out.

Senator Bartolotta stated that Ms. Lovell Amanda explained it very well and thanked Mr. Blischke. She added that to Representative Ciresi's point, PCA should try in some way to encourage artists in that area to take advantage of the program.

Chair Cohen asked Council if there were any questions. Hearing none, Chair Cohen asked for a motion to approve the recommendation.

Judge Morgan made a motion to approve the minutes. Ms. Goldberg seconded the motion. Motion carried, none abstained or opposed.

ITEM 11 ACTION: Recommendations for Creative Communities Initiative
Sarah Merritt, Director of Pennsylvania Creative Communities

Ms. Merritt gave brief overview of the Creative Communities Initiative program which was rolled out in 2019. Ms. Merritt also outlined program requirements and provided an update on the four pilot communities and their projects.

Merritt stated that PCA will be holding an in person gathering with all the creative communities in October. Merritt stated that this convening will provide the opportunity for the communities to share about what they are doing and allow for the participants, who are content experts in certain areas, to share their knowledge and experience.

Ms. Merritt reminded Council about PCA's engagement with Metris Arts Consulting. Merritt explained that Metris worked with the four pilot communities and helped them create evaluation tools to analyze their work moving forward. Merritt stated that Metris' report is in the finalization process, and she is hoping to share it during the December Council meeting.

Ms. Merritt stated that the first action item is for Council to approve continued funding for the communities that are currently in the Creative Communities initiative.

Ms. Merritt then reminded Council about the six projects and stated that these were during the March meeting. Merritt stated that an overview of each project was provided at the March meeting and that the projects were approved pending budget approval.

Merritt stated that the six projects are the National Road Heritage Corridor in Uniontown in Fayette County; Bottle Works Ethnics Arts Center in Johnstown, Cambria County; Greater Easton Development Partnership in Easton, Northampton County; River Life in Pittsburgh and Allegheny Counties; the Chamber of Commerce of Kane, PA in McKean County; and Potter County Commissioners in Potter County.

Judge Morgan asked Ms. Merritt if panels are used in making these decisions.

Ms. Merritt replied that she utilizes a panel of knowledgeable experts that do this work. Merritt added that these panelists love this program and are very invested in it and the success of the project.

Judge Morgan commented that two of the creative communities are from McKean County and Potter County and that these counties are in Region 2 and Region 3. Ms. Merritt also mentioned that two other Creative Communities, Corry and Meadville are also in that area.

Ms. Merritt stated that these organizations are doing important work in these rural communities and that a huge point of discussion during her panels is thinking about this work and how the panel can equitably distribute it around the state.

Ms. Merritt also reported that the creative communities project in Meadville received the Pennsylvania Chapter of American Planning Association's Great Places and award last year.

Ms. Vilayphonh asked for some clarity about what is constituted as the community's local government.

Ms. Merritt that with their letter of interest that is submitted with the project proposal, the organization will typically have a government official, such as a mayor, council chair, county chair of the county commissioners provide a letter of support. Merritt added that once the organization starts moving through the program, if they are selected for a site visit, they will have to indicate that the local government is invested in the initiative and that entity must pass a resolution supporting the creative communities work that's taking place in the community and pledging the 10% support.

Merritt explained that she has not experienced any local government having an issue with providing support, and in fact, a lot of local government entities are the grantees for the program.

Mr. Parks stated that he spent seven days from Erie to the Grand Canyon of Pennsylvania in Wellsboro.

Parks encouraged Council to spend time in the northwestern counties and stated that things are very active in terms of the arts. Parks stated that part of his trip included a visit to Corry which is a creative community, and a part of their plan is using the arts for creative placemaking. Parks said that it would be beneficial for Council to understand how PCA ties

in with overall community and economic development through this specific program and some of the others.

Chair Cohen asked Council if there were any questions. Hearing none, Chair Cohen asked for a motion to approve the recommendation.

Mr. Parks made a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Alaquiva seconded the motion. Motion carried, none abstained or opposed.

ITEM 12: Recommendations for Folk and Traditional Arts Program

Dana Payne, Director of DEI Initiatives, Diverse Cultures & Heritage

Ms. Payne reported that there are two items for recommendation to for Council consideration. Payne stated that the first recommendation is for the Folk Art Partnership and explained that PCA has the state divided into 14 regions and the Folk-Art Partnership has coverage in 10 of the regions.

Ms. Payne stated that each year she publishes guidelines to try to attract organizations to serve as partners in uncovered regions and those are regions 2, 3, 5, and 9. Payne directed Council to the partnership map on page 52 of the Council Book.

Ms. Payne reported that she received one letter of interest from Pocono Arts Council to serve Region 5. She stated that the letter of interest was approved to submit a full application for consideration and then the organization withdrew their application.

Ms. Payne reported that Regions 2, 3, 5 and 9 are still open. Ms. Payne explained that the 10 current partnership organizations serve 49 out of the 67 counties and they retain full status for a five-year period unless they fail to comply with guidelines and terms and conditions or if there are changes to the PCA budget. She stated that partner organizations and their assigned counties can be found on page 55 of the Council Book.

Ms. Payne stated that the next item for Council recommendation is the Apprenticeships and Traditional Arts grant. Payne reported that she received a total of 31 apprenticeship applications this year, which is an increase over the previous year.

Ms. Payne reported that three of the applications were ineligible. The first due to the requirement of the apprentice being under the age 18 and one application was submitted but incomplete.

Ms. Payne stated that a six-member advisory panel convened on June 11th and 12th to collectively reach a consensus on the criterion base scores and make funding recommendations. She stated that information about the applications and the criteria for the panel recommendations are included in the Council memo.

Ms. Payne reported on a collaboration with Commonwealth Library Services and the PCA's Folk Arts Partner organizations to fund up to \$50,000 per partner to support projects and collaborations with libraries in the partnership service regions. Payne stated that 9 out of the 10 partner organizations participated in this collaboration.

Ms. Payne said that she has an updated list of the projects that each partner is doing in their region, and she will share this list with Council.

Ms. Payne stated that the first recommendation is funding in the amount of \$246,365.00 that represents \$160,000 to support the 10 current Folk Art Partnership organizations and \$86,365 in support of the 23 apprenticeship projects recommended for funding.

Ms. Payne stated that the second recommendation is spending in the amount of \$12,000 paid to Community Partnerships RC&D for the administration of the Apprenticeship Grant awards.

Chair Cohen asked Council if there were any questions. Hearing none, Chair Cohen asked for a motion to approve the recommendation.

Mr. Gabel made a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Warfield seconded the motion. Motion carried, none abstained or opposed.

ITEM 13: Recommendations for the Arts in Education (AIE) Division Funding for Fiscal Year 2024-2025

Jamie Dunlap, Chief of Creative Catalysts & Lifelong Learning

Chair Cohen stated that she is aware of the following conflict: Council Member Parks for Arts Quest.

Ms. Dunlap reported that for fiscal year 2024-2025, PCA staff is requesting the approval of \$1,533,576 for the Arts and Education Partnership.

Dunlap stated that like PCA's other partnerships, The AIE program has a decentralized model that has 14 partners that cover all 67 counties across the state. Dunlap reported that through that partnership in fiscal year 2022-2023, the partners supported 344 Arts and Education residencies. Dunlap added that this is 55 more residencies than they were able to conduct in fiscal year 2021-2022.

Ms. Dunlap reported that PCA staff recommends using its standard Arts and Education funding formula, which is outlined in the Council memo.

Ms. Dunlap also added that partners are required to match the residency portion of their grant from the PCA. She explained that the partners often exceed the residency match requirement.

Ms. Dunlap reported that in addition to funding for the residencies and AIE Partnership administration, PCA provides each partner \$1,500 to manage its Poetry Out Loud national competition that is hosted by the Poetry Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts in Pennsylvania. Dunlap explained that competitions are held regionally followed by a statewide championship.

Chair Cohen asked for any additional questions. Hearing none, Chair Cohen asked for a motion to approve the recommendations as presented except for conflict of interest?

Chair Cohen asked to let the record show that Council member Parks did not make a motion, second a motion, participate in any discussion or vote on the recommendation for which the Council member had a conflict.

Ms. Goldberg made a motion to approve the minutes. Morgan seconded the motion. Motion carried, none abstained or opposed.

Chair Cohen asked for a motion to approve the recommendation for the grants with the Council member Parks has a conflict of interest. Chair Cohen asked to let the record show that Council member Park did not make the motion, second the motion, participate in any discussion of this motion or vote on this motion.

Mr. Warfield made a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Morgan seconded the motion. Motion carried, none abstained or opposed.

ITEM 14: Recommendations for Creative Catalyst Grants

Jamie Dunlap, Chief of Creative Catalysts & Lifelong Learning

Ms. Dunlap reported that the following Creative Catalyst Grants are for the beginning of fiscal year 2024-2025. Dunlap stated that these recommendations are being made contingent upon approval from the Budget Secretary for the use of previous state fiscal year funds or waiver funds. Dunlap explained that these are returned, unused funds from our grantees.

Ms. Dunlap stated that they had three recommendations for Council approval.

Applicant: Hill Dance Academy Theatre **Proposal:** The 2025 International Association of Black Dance Conference

Ms. Dunlap reported that The Hill Dance Academy Theater came to the PCA with a request to support the 2025 International Association of Black Dance Conference which they are co-hosting. Dunlap stated that this is the 35th year for the conference and festival and it will be in January of 2025 in Pittsburgh, which is where Hill Dance Academy is located.

Dunlap explained that the conference is an international gathering of black dance professionals and that the attendees will include agents, artistic directors, artists, choreographers, company managers, executive directors. Ms. Dunlap stated that the Hill Dance Academy Theatre is estimating that there will be at least 1,500 in attendance at this conference and festival.

Ms. Dunlap noted that the Hill Dance Academy Theatre is working very closely with Visit Pittsburgh to help to promote this conference and to also promote all the things that will be happening in association with the convening.

Ms. Dunlap stated that the organization has requested \$10,000 and that PCA's recommendation is for \$10,000.

Applicant: Drexel University **Proposal:** Writers Room – Philadelphia Museum of Art Intergenerational Program

Ms. Dunlap reported that Writers Room, a university-community literary arts program located in West Philadelphia, will be collaborating with the Philadelphia Museum of Art (PMA) on a series of intergenerational writing workshops surrounding The Time is Always Now, an exhibition showcasing the work of contemporary artists from the African diaspora.

Dunlap explained that Writers Room the Philadelphia Museum of Art will work together to design a series of intergenerational writing workshops that will be surrounded in this pilot.

Dunlap stated that the workshops will be conceived and designed and run by artist Andrea Walls, who is the founder of the Museum of Black Joy and among the first cohort of artists to be designated of Philadelphia Cultural Treasure by the Pew. Dunlap reported that the project is meant to promote engagement with a multi-generational audience experiencing art or some type of exhibit that will be more engaging and intergenerational in nature.

Ms. Dunlap reported that Writers Room at Drexel has requested a Creative Catalyst grant to support the implementation of this pilot, but also to develop the curricular materials and the guide so it can be a replicable model. Dunlap added that their hope is to disseminate this new model is to do it through the museum's network, their museum network, as well as Drexel's network.

Ms. Dunlap stated that the organization has requested \$15,000 and that PCA's recommendation is for \$15,000.

Applicant: Cedar Crest College

Proposal: The Body Keeps the Score: Dancing with Trauma & Recovery

Dunlap reported that this show, The Body Keeps the Score: Dancing with Trauma & Recovery, was created in 2019 by Cedar Crest College Associate Professor of Dance, Sarah Carlson, with her dance company DanceLink in partnership with composer Vernon J. Mobley. Dunlap explained that the 45-minute-long work is inspired by Dr. Bessel Van der Kolk's book The Body Keeps the Score: Brain, Mind and Body in the Healing of Trauma. Dunlap stated that this explores how trauma gets lodged in the body and prevents individual and communal well-being.

Ms. Dunlap stated that as part of the project, Carlson will have a section of the work be performed by current Cedar Crest College dance students and as well as dancers from Dance Link. Dunlap stated that they will then take this on the road to the schools that are listed in the Council memo.

Ms. Dunlap stated that their idea is to take this dance program and put it in front of high school students that are also considering a career in dance and to have an opportunity for the college students as well as the professional dancers to engage with the high school students and talk about what that means and the different possibilities for continuing their education in that space.

Ms. Dunlap stated that the organization has requested \$10,000 and that PCA's recommendation is for \$10,000.

Chair Cohen asked if it is likely that that the budget secretary will approve PCA using this unused money from grants and if we have ever had an issue with this before.

Ms. Gabriele stated that it has been approved every year. She stated that last year, the new administration wanted more information on how the waiver money was going to be spent in PCA's grants and administration budgets, and that answers to their questions were provided and it was approved. Gabriele added that this week, PCA staff provided answers their questions for this year and that PCA staff is hopeful that they'll approve it again this year.

Ms. Goldberg had a question about the Cedar Crest College Association project. Goldberg asked if the professor involved in the pilot program will be able to receive funding once the pilot program has completed.

Ms. Dunlap stated that their hope is to continue the program once the pilot program is complete but that it is not a requirement of this grant.

Chair Cohen asked Council if there were any questions. Hearing none, Chair Cohen asked for a motion to approve the recommendation.

Judge Morgan made a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Stull seconded the motion. Motion carried, none abstained or opposed.

ITEM 15: Recommendations for Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Grants Budget

Amy Gabriele, Chief of Finance & Administration

Ms. Gabriele stated that the Recommendations for the Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Grants Budget were listed on page 67 of the Council Book.

Gabriele stated that many of the budget line items relate to programs and recommendations presented and enacted on and other sections of this Council Book. She added that the 2023-2024 budget is shown for reference.

Ms. Gabriele noted that the statewide Creative Catalyst and Statewide Services line items are specific grants acted on today and at future council meetings as applications are submitted and funds become available through as waiver funds if approved by the Budget Office. Gabriele said the funds for these grants may also include canceled grants due to non-compliance of PCA requirements. Gabriele added that PCA staff expects to hear about the approval of the requested waiver to use balances from 2022 and 2023. She stated that this decision should be received by the end of August and added that any of the use of these funds will be presented during future Council meetings.

Chair Cohen asked Council if there were any questions. Hearing none, Chair Cohen asked for a motion to approve the recommendation.

Mr. Gabel made a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Warfield seconded the motion. Motion carried, none abstained or opposed.

ITEM 16: Chair's Report

Susan Cohen, Chair

Chair Cohen reported that PCA has engaged with Gannett Fleming to facilitate the Council strategic planning process. She stated that as part of the planning process, Gannett Fleming will facilitate 10 regional meetings across the state and these meetings will take place August and September.

Chair Cohen stated that PCA is planning its Strategic Planning Retreat in Lancaster in early October and that more information on this will follow.

Chair Cohen reported that in late September, prior to the October retreat, Mr. Blischke will be brief virtual roundtable meetings for Council members. Cohen explained that during these meetings, the staff will share creative industry trends and a landscape analysis to set the stage for the planning retreat in October.

Chair Cohen reported that Governor Shapiro held an event in Philadelphia honoring Questlove and The Roots at The Roots' annual event in Philadelphia. She added that PCA staff members, Vice Chair Alaquiva and Council Member Goldberg participated in this event.

Vice Chair Alaquiva stated that it was an amazing event that underscored the great work that PCA is doing for the state and that it also marks a great intersection on what PCA needs to continue to forge in the future surrounding the arts.

Vice Chair Alaquiva stated that The Roots were honored by the opportunity and reminded Council to remember the equity that PCA has and that even though some of these artists seem larger than life, they look up to PCA.

Ms. Goldberg stated that this event was also a great opportunity for Governor Shapiro and as well as for the City of Philadelphia. She said he was very impressed by the participation that she saw from people that came to be part of this event.

Vice Chair Alaquiva mentioned that people are already talking about the Creative Industries event for next year and that it was an incredibly successful. He added that PCA is making some great noise in the Philadelphia area.

Chair Cohen stated that she, Mr. Blischke and Ms. Merritt attended a conference at the Touchstone Center in Uniontown for Rural Creative Economies, and it was wonderful. Cohen said that the event demonstrated how respected PCA Council is because everyone was turning to them for information, and it really was an eye opener and a fabulous conference.

Chair Cohen stated that PCA sent out a mailing to all the legislators that included a list of all the statewide grants and where possible, highlighting the grants in a particular area for a particular member. Cohen said that this was done to make PCA better known in the legislature so that they understand what this agency is doing, how it is being done and highlighting the successes.

Chair Cohen reported that she and Mr. Blischke visited legislators including Senator Costa, Senator Stefano, and Representative Kahn.

Chair Cohen reported that she attended the ArtSparks event at the Harrisburg Turnpike's Middletown Service Center and got to see the three mosaics that are on display there. Cohen stated that this event also included a performance by the Steelton Highspire High School drumline and added that the Turnpike Commission was also in attendance.

ITEM 17: Executive Director's Report

Karl Blischke, Executive Director

Mr. Blischke provided Council members with a strategic plan update. He reported that 10 regional planning meetings have been scheduled and stated that he would provide those dates to Council members should they want to attend. Blischke indicated that invitees include not just the arts community but will also include representatives from multiple sectors who will offer a sense of what's important for their community.

Mr. Blischke explained that areas of focus will include things like the visibility of PCA and the creative sector. He added that PCA will continue to explore new ways of supporting community development, education and skills and expanding the way to do that.

Blischke stated that PCA staff is having discussions with outside corporate partners and looking at ways to do industry development with co-investors. He said that this will be a big part of the strategy in developing policy recommendations for the state regarding the creative sector.

Mr. Blischke acknowledged Jamie Dunlap for her work with career ready regions and Labor and Industry. Blischke stated that Ms. Dunlap has had conversations with the directors of apprenticeship programs for the state and has invited them out to see what's happening in the creative sector workforce at places like Rock Litz. Blischke stated that based on this work, Labor and Industry is now looking at developing an arts sector plan for the state and PCA is going to be very much a part of that by helping to identify subject matter experts to help inform Pennsylvania's arts workforce plan.

Mr. Blischke stated that other conversations have been held with partners at Ben Franklin Technology, DCED and Carnegie Mellon University about ways that PCA can support Pennsylvania's creative sector being seen nationally and internationally. Blischke reported that recently, PCA staff had a conversation with David Brial, who oversees international business development with DCED, about ways that creative sector can be part of the state's work in promoting Pennsylvania businesses, both for location and for reaching new markets.

He added that PCA staff is also in conversations about how we can bring Pennsylvania delegations to national or international conferences.

Mr. Blischke reported that a last year, PCA learned about an opportunity to fund work around advancing access to the arts for individuals with disabilities and put out that RFP. Blischke stated that this initiative was led by Dana Payne and that it turned out to be very competitive.

Mr. Blischke acknowledge PCA staff member Laura Kline for reaching her five-year mark of service with the state.

ITEM 18: Adjournment

Meeting Adjourned at 11:02 am