

# WASHINGTON STATE ARTS COMMISSION— BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, August 5, 2020 / Virtual On-line Meeting

## Commissioners Present

Robin Avni  
Andre Bouchard  
Representative Carolyn Eslick  
Ginger Ewing  
Dr. Kelvin Frank  
Wesley Jessup  
Linley Logan  
Jasmine Mahmoud  
Diane Martindale, Chair  
Monica Miller  
Catherine Nueva España  
Faaluaina Pritchard  
Justin Raffa, First Vice Chair  
Rebecca Redshaw  
Charlie Robin  
Rosanna Sharpe, Second Vice Chair  
Judy Tuohy  
Senator Lisa Wellman  
Sheree Wen  
Representative Sharon Wylie

## Commissioners Absent

Joan McBride  
Senator Hans Zeiger

## ArtsWA Staff Present

Glenda Carino, Communications Manager  
Judy Cullen, Poetry Out Loud Program Coordinator  
Heide Fernandez-Llamazares, My Public Art Portal Program  
Manager  
Miguel Guillén, Program Manager, Grants to  
Organizations  
Karen Hanan, Executive Director  
Janae Huber, Collections Manager  
Tamar Krames, Program Manager, Arts in Education  
Leslie Pope, Executive Assistant  
Annette Roth, Program Manager, Creative Districts  
Alexis Sarah, Arts in Early Learning Project Manager  
Mike Sweney, Art in Public Places Program Manager

## Guests & Speakers

RaShelle Davis, Senior Policy Advisor, Civil & Human Rights,  
Governor's Office  
Jordan Mattox, 2020 Poetry Out Loud State Champion  
Dan Overton MC, LMHC, MHP, CBIS, Traumatic Brain  
Injury Program Specialist V, WA Department of Veterans  
Affairs  
Aaron Qualls, TVW  
Jessica Sullivan, Arts Consultant

## Call to Order

Martindale, ArtsWA Board Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:32 a.m. She welcomed Aaron Qualls with TVW who is monitoring the livestreaming of this meeting. Linley Logan, ArtsWA Board Commissioner, gave the following land acknowledgement:

*In acknowledging the Land, we acknowledge Mother Earth first  
And in this specific environmental place we acknowledge that Water has contributed to defining life therefore we  
acknowledge the waters from the ocean, to the Salish Sea to the lakes, rivers, creeks and streams including the waters that  
fall from the sky.*

*We acknowledge those things that grow closest to the earth which include the grasses and the medicine plants  
We acknowledge the food plants that sustain us which come from the land.  
We acknowledge the bushes and the trees that provide us with resources like cat tail, Tulee and the cedar tree in this  
natural world environment*

*We acknowledge the life that lives in the waters*

*We acknowledge the life that crawls closest to the earth  
The life with many legs  
The life with four legs, and the life with two legs*

*We acknowledge the Bird Nations that fly in the sky*

*We acknowledge the wild game animals whose lives are supported by the land and who's life support ours*

*We acknowledge thanks to the winds  
The Thunders  
The Sun  
Grandmother Moon  
And the stars*

*Lastly, we acknowledge the original peoples of this land and the original tribes in the South Salish Sea area.*

Martindale stated that the land acknowledgement is an important practice to address the impacts of colonialism on the indigenous peoples since the beginning of time, who have lived in what is now known as Washington State.

Martindale conducted roll call, and verified that a quorum was present.

Martindale asked for a MOTION to approve the agenda; the motion was made by Pritchard, seconded by Jessup, and passed unanimously.

Martindale asked new Commissioners to introduce themselves. Jasmine Mahmoud teaches in the Arts Leadership program at Seattle University. Her expertise is arts education and diversity practices, and is dedicated to working on arts and policy. Dr. Kelvin Frank has been a community development specialist for over 30 years, working with local tribal communities. Art has always been a major part of community development. He is a self-proclaimed arts enthusiast and has many family members involved in the arts. His focus is on resource equity. Catherine Nueva España serves as Executive Director of the Velocity Dance Group, and a King Street adviser for the Seattle Office of Arts and Culture. She is an immigrant from the Philippines and first arrived in New York. She found arts as an avenue to integrate into American culture. Her focus is on arts access.

## Chair's Report

Martindale said her report can be read in the packet (*packet p. 1*). While the pandemic has been hard on all of us, arts organizations, and artists, ArtsWA has done an amazing job working hard to support the arts in Washington State. While a pandemic is hardly considered good news, perhaps this is a time when our communities will be reminded of how the arts matter in their lives. We hope some good can come from this experience.

New Commissioner Bios (*packet p. 2*) provide more information on the new members of the ArtsWA board. The DRAFT 2021 Board Meeting Dates (*packet p. 3*) show meeting dates for next year. At this time, we do not know whether meetings will all be held online or if there will be an opportunity to meet in person.

## Director's Report

Hanan reviewed her report (*packet pp. 4-8*). Work in the time of COVID-19 is different. ArtsWA staff are working very hard to support the arts in Washington by working virtually until they can safely return to the office. Hanan reviewed accomplishments of ArtsWA staff to rise to the challenge of operating seamlessly while teleworking. Operations supported the move to telework, acquiring laptops, and determining how systems could work virtually. The Grants to Organizations team converted project support grants to operating grants, and managed the CARES grant process to move federal funds to arts organizations. The application was streamlined, and ArtsWA was one of the first state arts agencies to get this federal funding to constituents. The Art in Public Places (AIPP) team shifted to online meetings with public artists and local art selection committees. Arts in Education (AIE) staff are creating online arts programming to provide tools to parents and teachers, to continue access to arts education for students. AIE also moved its Creative Start program online. The communications team developed the COVID-19 resources web page, and has been working with partners across the state to coordinate collective efforts to support the arts community. All of these efforts were completed quickly and efficiently.

Currently, there is no plan to hold a special legislative session in Washington State. For the biennial budget, ArtsWA and all state agencies have been asked to participate in a budget cuts exercise. It is hoped that Congress will allocate some funding for states, which would be helpful. On the Federal level, the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) budget has not been determined. The House has a request for \$7.5 Million extra in its budget. There are 12 budgets that need to be negotiated before the deadline, but it is more likely there will be a continuing resolution until the November election.

ArtsWA has been instrumental in convening museums and performing arts groups to create reopening plans to supplement the Governor's phased reopening plans, specific to the arts sector. These reopening plans allow for some reopening during Phase 2, which would help the industry. The museums and performing arts plans were submitted to the Governor's Office for acceptance, but everything is on pause due to a rise in COVID-19 cases. The Governor's Office has been great to work with on this project.

The Western States Arts Federation (WESTAF) regional arts resilience fund grant opportunity just closed. ArtsWA proposed approximately ten organizations that fit their criteria, and others have proposed organizations in Washington as well. We hope that funds are approved for arts organizations in Washington state.

The Poet Laureate program is under review, with help from past poet laureates, and many other people throughout the state. The new program is laser focused on inclusion and equity so more poets have access to the program. A draft of proposed changes to the program is being reviewed by last year's poet laureate panel before sending it to the Board. The next search for a poet laureate will begin in a few months, using this new approach.

## FY 2020-21 Biennium—4th Quarter Budget Report

This report (*packet pp. 9-18*) is for information only; it does not require a motion. The budget is on track and the narrative provides detail on expenditures by program. The report is divided into the different programs and operations of the agency.

## 2020-21 Final Budget Updates

This report (*packet pp. 19-25*) is for information only; it does not require a motion. Changes include an increase in the NEA State Partnership grant allotment. By November, personnel costs will be updated to

reflect raises and benefits changes. Commission expenditures will change due to moving meetings online for safety and financial reasons.

## Strategic Plan Dashboard Update

Hanan reviewed the Dashboard (*packet pp. 26*). The dashboard measures ArtsWA progress on various metrics chosen to reflect strategic plan goals. She reminded commissioners to inform ArtsWA when they meet with legislators, so that benchmark can be accurately measured.

## Consent Agenda

The Consent Agenda included:

- Board Meeting Minutes of May 5, 2020 (*packet pp. 27-38*)
- Board Meeting Minutes of June 2, 2020 (*packet pp. 39-43*)
- Board Meeting Minutes of June 23, 2020 (*packet pp. 44-47*)

A MOTION to accept the Consent Agenda was made by Tuohy and seconded by Pritchard. It passed unanimously with no changes to the meeting minutes and no conflicts of interest, abstentions or recusals.

## Grants to Organizations

Guillén, Grants to Organizations Program Manager, reviewed the General Operating Support (GOS) Grants—FY 2021 (*packet pp. 48-52*). Raffa served as Board commissioner on the GOS panel.

GOS grants support organizations whose primary programming is to present, perform, preserve, teach (in a community setting outside of K-12 or other educational facility), cultivate proficiency, and/or facilitate knowledge sharing in the arts. Grants help cover an organization's regular operating expenses so that they may dedicate more time to services and programming that benefit the public.

Eligibility includes non-profit and fiscally sponsored arts organizations with year-round arts programming and Local Arts Agencies officially designated by local governments but have independent budgets and independent oversight. Requests can be for up to \$5,000. Review criteria is outlined in the packet. Over 100 applications were received, spreading widely across the entire state.

A MOTION to ratify the decision of the Executive Director to approve the panel recommendations for FY 2021 General Operating Support grants totaling \$198,150, and the list of non-funded applications, as provided in the packet, was made by Rep. Eslick, seconded by Pritchard. The motion passed with one conflict of interest: Tuohy, Shack Art Center.

Guillén presented the revised Art Project Support Grants-FY 2021 (*packet pp. 53-59*). Funding was found for four additional grants in this category, from NEA funds remaining from a previous grant process. In the initial round, the panel reviewed grants, giving each application a score. The grants are ranked from highest score to lowest score, and the highest ranking grants are funded down to a cut-off point determined by the amount of funds available in the original grant cycle. If additional funds are found, the money is applied to the next grants in the ranked list until those additional funds are expended. The Board is asked to ratify the four additional grants being funded.

Martindale called for conflicts of interest. A conflict of interest is defined by having a financial or family interest in the organization. In which case, a commissioner must recuse him or herself. Nueva España recused herself.

A MOTION to ratify the decision of the Executive Director to approve the panel recommendations for the revised FY 2021 Art Project Support grants totaling \$118,888 (amended to \$128,638) and the list of non-funded applications, as provided in the packet, was made by Tuohy, seconded by Rep. Eslick. The motion passed with one recusal due to conflict of interest.

## 2021 Advocacy Strategy Discussion

Miller and Raffa, Advocacy Co-Chairs, led this portion of the meeting.

### Review Local Advocacy Action Plan

Miller (packet p. 60) said the goal of board members is to reach out to our representatives, in addition to leaders in our communities, that benefit from the arts and specifically ArtsWA funding and activities. This practice creates opportunities for commissioners to gain experience in advocacy. Miller asked each of the new commissioners to share the status of their relationships with representatives, and their experience with advocacy.

Nueva España said she has engaged in letter writing to legislators, to show appreciation for grants and explain how funding has helped their work. She is focused on the economic impact of the pandemic on artists and teaching artists. She plans to inform legislators how current funding for grants supports keeping artists and teaching artists employed during the pandemic. Additional financial security through funding for their arts work would help many of these constituents because they are so hard hit on so many levels. Funding will help the state retain arts expertise.

Mahmoud teaches a public policy and advocacy in the arts class at Seattle University. Last year, her students compiled information for the non-partisan Seattle Arts Voter Guide, with information from candidates on their arts platform to inform voters. A decade ago, Mahmoud worked for ArtsCorp / AmeriCorp documenting a modeling program for arts in education for the federal government. She is exploring how to speak more robustly about the arts to policy makers, not just of its economic value, but intrinsic values like belonging, community values, and togetherness.

Dr. Frank said his advocacy focus is within his tribal communities, where access to the arts needs to be expanded. The problem is resource equity. He has worked with many tribal governments and organizations, so he knows it is a struggle. He wants to make sure urban environments, and native Alaskan and Indian communities, have resource equity and access to the arts.

### Strategies and Action Items for Commissioners Between Now and the November Board Meeting

Monica said the overarching objective of arts advocacy is equity, and she invited the new commissioners to participate in the Advocacy Committee.

Justin described the role of the Advocacy Committee. There is increased urgency right now to advocate for the arts industry and remind elected officials at all levels of government that there is intrinsic value to the industry, and that the arts industry has struggled because of the pandemic and the inability to gather together. There are opportunities for the arts industry to build community, provide connection for people, and find emotional outlets during pandemic isolation. Funding sources are not as readily available for the arts sector as it is for other sectors during the pandemic. The proposed HEALS Act does not include funding for the National Endowment for the Arts or for the National Endowment for the Humanities. This is a time when the Advocacy Committee needs to continue to speak about the value of the arts and the need for funding, before the arts sector loses valuable organizations. Justin is concerned about the 15% budget cut exercise, which would significantly impact the ArtsWA budget,

which is already very tight. He asked commissioners to send emails to their elected officials and state and federal legislators to continue to request arts sector funding. If there is an opportunity to speak by phone, or schedule an online virtual meeting, remind them of what is happening regarding the arts in their district, and at the state level. Be vocal, be present, reach out to them, speak with them, make your case, and be a passionate advocate for what you believe in and what is important to you as their constituent, and as an ArtsWA board member.

Hanan reminded commissioners that ArtsWA can provide statistics and data on their specific communities before meeting with legislators. Hanan is available to attend legislative meetings with commissioners; contact her if you would like her to join you for a meeting. Preserving the arts sector is critical for all the reasons mentioned during this meeting.

Jessup asked for a timeline for reaching out to legislators. Hanan said it is best to reach out now and later. Rep. Eslick said it is important to reach out to legislators to build a relationship before the Legislative session. It takes at least two meetings to begin building a relationship. This is a great time to connect with legislators. Many are holding local, socially distanced coffee meetings. Mention what arts events and impacts are happening in their district, research legislators to understand what value they hold for the arts, whether they or family members engage in arts activities, and make the connection personal through mutual arts appreciation and engagement. Remember to check on the results of the primary and general elections, to ensure your legislator is going to remain active, before contacting.

Wen supported the idea that now is the best time to contact legislators. Write letters, send emails, make phone calls, and invite them to participate in any virtual meetings or virtual arts activities in their districts. This is part of building a relationship with legislators.

Miller and Raffa passed the torch of Advocacy Chair to Logan, who will chair the committee this coming fiscal year. Martindale thanked Miller and Raffa for their hard work and dedicated efforts as co-chairs of the Advocacy Committee in the last year; they led commissioners in a successful effort to make headway with legislators and elected officials, with measurable impacts, before the pandemic.

## Nominating Committee Report

Chair Diane Martindale and Justin Raffa, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Chair (*handout emailed August 4, 2020*) presented the Nominating Committee Report. Martindale thanked committee members Robin Avni, Charlie Robin, and Rosanna Sharpe (2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chair) for their hard work on this process. It takes time to reach commissioners, it takes effort to capture the comments commissioners make, and not everyone connects with the committee to provide their input. The process will be reviewed to see whether there are other ways to conduct this survey that would be beneficial to the process.

## Report on Survey of Commissioners

There was 87% participation among current commissioners, and overall, they were positive about the work of ArtsWA staff under Hanan, and how staff have made adjustments due to COVID-19. Most commissioners have enjoyed their experiences as a board member, the training opportunities, and the general effectiveness of the commissioners. There were concerns made by more than one person, and those concerns will be conveyed to the Executive Committee, to be reviewed. This might result in clarification of roles, or balancing state support with the need to advocate for individual organizations and communities. Commissioners want more social time to get to know each other. Everyone on the board has fascinating backgrounds, engages in exciting work, and while there is time to become more acquainted when the board meets in person, it is hard to do in a virtual setting.

## Election of Officers: Proposed Slate

Raffa (*bandout emailed August 4, 2020*) said it takes time to assemble feedback and put it into a context that is easy for commissioners to consume. All comments will be reviewed by the Executive Committee and Hanan. It can be tedious to set up a one-on-one phone call, so there is a recommendation to consider alternative methods to capture feedback. The phone call method does allow for time to get to know each other better.

Raffa presented the proposed slate:

Chairperson: Diane Martindale, San Juan County

First Vice Chair: Justin Raffa, Benton County

Second Vice Chair: Rosanna Sharpe, Grant County

Monica Miller (Kittitas County) and Sheree Wen (King County) were proposed as Executive Committee members at-large, and there is opportunity for additional members to be appointed at the Chair's discretion. Linley Logan is proposed as the Advocacy Committee chair.

A MOTION to accept the proposed slate of officers for FY 2021 was made by Raffa, seconded by Pritchard, and passed with no abstentions or recusals.

## What are the ArtsWA Committees and What Do They Do?

Raffa (*packet p. 62*) said there were many comments from commissioners seeking clarification of the roles and structure of committees. He reviewed the packet item outlining committee roles and focus. The Executive Committee meets once per month and is comprised of board officers and one or more members selected by the Board Chair. The Advocacy Committee has 30-minute monthly meetings until the Legislative Session, when the meetings occur weekly. The Nominating Committee helps to contact board members, survey members, and collect information and proposals for the slate of officers. It is formed around May and works on surveying the Board through early August. Raffa suggested to Martindale that a separate chair be appointed for this committee, to manage the process and make recommendations for improvements.

The Chair may establish other committees and appoint members if there are issues that would be suitable for a separate committee. Board members are encouraged to reach out to Martindale as Board Chair, Hanan, or any of the Executive Committee leadership, if they wish to participate in any committees, have suggestions about or have questions or comments about the Board process.

## Recognition for Outgoing Board Members

Martindale thanked two Board commissioners that are moving on to other adventures. Anna-Maria Shannon has worked for 20 years in the visual arts. Francene Blythe has worked with cultural foundations to champion equity, cultural diversity and leadership. They were great commissioners and we wish we could say goodbye in person. We honor them for their service and participation. Hanan said Blythe has already moved to Nebraska to be with family, and is working with the Nebraska Arts Council.

## Strategic Planning 2021-2026

Hanan explained ArtsWA's current strategic plan spans 2016-21, and is a five-year strategic plan. Ideally, planning for the 2021-26 plan would have begun in May of this year, and concluded within a year. State level strategic planning is comprehensive and inclusive. The planning process involves input from commissioners, staff, and constituents to gain support for the plan and ensure it serves our constituency. The pandemic has altered the process of developing a new plan. Hanan has worked with managers and staff to determine how to move forward. She believes the current strategic plan is still valid and covers key areas. She believes there is no need for the agency to reposition itself in a fundamental or substantial way, that

would propel the need for strategic planning right now. Although this would be the time to develop a strategic plan for the next five years (2022-2027), resources are strained. Staff workloads are heavier now due to extra work during the pandemic, and a strategic plan revision would add additional work. Our constituents are also overwhelmed and overloaded, as are board members. Financial resources for a facilitator are nonexistent. There is a state contracting moratorium that would prohibit hiring the consultant selected to guide the agency through development of plan that would be even more focused on equity and inclusion. Hanan asked the Board to consider moving strategic plan development until at least May 2021, when circumstances and resources might support a deep planning process.

Senator Wellman said Hanan's wise leadership is appreciated, and delaying the strategic planning process is reasonable given budget constraints, changes taking place in the state landscape, and the ability to meet in person. She supports delaying the strategic planning process as proposed.

Robin agreed a delay is wise because there is no way at this time of being confident about how to move forward. Miller said her organization is using this time for reflection and outreach to prepare for future strategic plan development. She supports waiting until ArtsWA has more bandwidth for this process. Hanan agreed that current agency work is informing future planning needs.

## Creative Forces Partner Update

Hanan provided an overview of the Creative Forces program, that ArtsWA supports as much as resources allow. ArtsWA works with the Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs and other partners to provide access to arts therapies that support the healing of active military affected by traumatic brain injury (TBI) and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

Hanan introduced Dan Overton, MC, LMHC, MHP, CBIS, Traumatic Brain Injury Program Specialist V, Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs, who reviewed the Max Impact program (*packet p. 63*). The Max Impact program was developed with the traumatic brain injury council to role out systematic tools that anyone can use. If active military and veterans were provided the tools, they could use it in their own way. It was important to make sure the app was anonymous and accessible in rural areas. The app also connects users to their benefit. One of the most used tools in the app is the Provider Finder (now known as Get Help/Search for Help Near You, to make the language more user friendly.) This tool lists regional resources including local behavioral health providers, and complimentary therapies in arts, music and dance. The provider list contains specialists that have been vetted for cultural competency with military/veterans and experience with the needs of those impacted by traumatic brain injury. Creating a searchable, inclusive database for Washington State was a priority for this app. It is difficult to locate all the resources that exist. There are activities that are intrinsically therapeutic. Salmon for Soldiers provides fishing experiences that are therapeutic, but may not have specific behavioral health professionals working within the program. A central source for music, arts, and dance therapists did not exist until work began to collect these resources to list in the app. Now, military and veterans can access this information in one location with Max Impact. The app allows for "push notifications" to notify users about arts events and activities within their specific areas through their cell phones.

The database is kept updated approximately quarterly. Because the app is available to anyone who downloads it, statistics show that approximately 46% of users are military/veterans and 54% are civilian, which could be families of military. The majority of users hear about the app from service providers.



Overton asked commissioners to share this information with their constituents, and to contact him with information on providers to add to the app. He would like help from commissioners to keep the section “Complimentary Therapy,” which relates to arts activities and events, updated with active providers. The app allows for search within any specific region of Washington.

## ArtsWA Website Orientation and Tour

Martindale explained the Executive Committee discussed the benefits and information on the newly rebuilt ArtsWA website, as well as information useful for advocacy. They asked that ArtsWA provide the Board with an update on the new website features.

Carino provided an overview of the updated website, which was made more user friendly, clear language and easier access to information. ArtsWA received \$14,000 during the last legislative session to refresh the website. While this amount is not substantial, we are a feisty small agency with creative staff. Roth coordinated this effort, with input from staff and board members. Roth reviewed website features including information on covid-19 and available support, program information, and local/regional as well as state wide arts support.

Fernandez-Llamazares, My Public Art Portal Manager, previewed the online version of the State Art Collection. All artworks in the Collection are included on the Portal and now focus is placed on promoting the Portal to the public to encourage greater use. She previewed the main page, featured web exhibitions, and links to education resources and lesson plans.

## Poetry Out Loud with Special Guest-2020 Poetry Out Loud State Champion

Krames said everyone is feeling the profound challenges facing teachers and students during the pandemic. She introduced Jordan Mattox (*packet p. 64*), who goes to Mead High School in Spokane who just announced that their classes will go completely online. Arts in Education focuses on student empowerment in its programs. For many students, arts provide a sense of belonging that supports successful education.

Cullen, Poetry Out Loud Coordinator, provided an overview of the program, which is sponsored by the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and the Poetry Foundation, and operated in the state of Washington by ArtsWA. POL is open to high school students, grades 9-12, as a way to develop and practice public speaking skills, build self-confidence, and connect with literature and words in new ways. It works like a spelling bee, beginning with classroom competition, moving to their school districts, regional competitions, and ending in a statewide competition of the top 10 finalists.

Krames introduced Mattox, who won the state POL finals this year. She is an athlete, poet, and visual artist. She was not able to go to Washington, DC, because the national competition was cancelled due to COVID-19. Mattox recited *It Couldn't Be Done* by Edgar Albert Guest. Mattox said her experience with POL was wonderful. There is a difference between reading and absorbing poetry personally, and performance and recitation out loud. She found a deeper appreciation for poetry and recitation through the POL process.

## Announcements

Martindale reminded the Board that a quorum is needed at the next Board Meeting on November 10, 2020 online from 9 a.m. to 12 noon. Martindale adjourned the meeting at 12:03 p.m.