

# WASHINGTON STATE ARTS COMMISSION— BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, June 23, 2020 / Virtual On-line Meeting

## Commissioners Present

Robin Avni  
Francene Blythe  
Andre Bouchard  
Representative Carolyn Eslick  
Ginger Ewing  
Wesley Jessup  
Linley Logan  
Mariella Luz  
Diane Martindale, Chair  
Monica Miller  
Faaluaina Pritchard  
Justin Raffa, First Vice Chair  
Rebecca Redshaw  
Charlie Robin  
Rosanna Sharpe, Second Vice Chair  
Senator Lisa Wellman  
Sheree Wen  
Representative Sharon Wylie

## Commissioners Absent

Jolyn GC  
Joan McBride  
Judy Tuohy  
Senator Hans Zeiger

## ArtsWA Staff Present

Glenda Carino, Communications Manager  
Karen Hanan, Executive Director  
Miguel Guillén, Program Manager, Grants to  
Organizations  
Alexis Sarah, Arts in Early Learning Program Manager  
Leslie Pope, Executive Assistant  
Tamar Krames, Program Manager, Arts in Education  
Annette Roth, Program Manager, Creative Districts

## Guests & Speakers

Nicole Hume, Tacoma Arts Live  
Andrew McMasters, Burien Creative Districts, independent  
artist

## Call to Order

Martindale, ArtsWA Board Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. She conducted roll call, and verified that a quorum was present.

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

Martindale thanked Redshaw for drafting the Board's statement on "Black Lives Matter." Redshaw thanked everyone who provided edits and input.

## ArtsWA Update

Karen Hanan, Executive Director explained that a week ago, David Schumacher, Director of the Office of Financial Management (OFM) said that this is the worst global pandemic in the last century, which has had a huge impact on state revenues and increased unemployment. Federal stimulus money, and a substantial state reserve fund, will help. However, a multi-billion dollar shortfall is predicted for

the 2021-23 biennium budget. State agencies are being asked to identify reductions equal to 15% of state general funds. It will be a difficult legislative session in 2021.

ArtsWA will submit a decision package for the Creative District program. Part of the request will be made to the capital budget and part to the operating budget. The overall aim is to increase funds available to support this rapidly expanding program, and the districts themselves. There are currently 8 certified creative districts, with more in the pipeline.

Folk and Traditional Arts program funding is now considered 'maintenance funding'. This is good. It means it has assigned funding for the 2021-23 biennium, and likely beyond. It also means that ArtsWA will not need to submit a decision package for this program. This program is very important to the state and the constituents they are serving.

No special session has been scheduled to date, but the possibility remains for the future, perhaps in August or September. There are some proposals that have been created, or are being considered by legislators to raise state revenues to address the current crisis. Former Speaker Frank Chopp has a proposal around capital gains and payroll taxes to raise \$2 Billion. There are most likely plans for opposition to legislation with tax revenue in the title as well.

Cultural Access WA: The Cultural Access legislation allows a city or county to apply a sales or property tax in support of arts and culture. A councilmanic option is being considered as an amendment to the already enacted CAWA legislation. A councilmanic option would give communities the option to approve the legislation at the City or County level by a vote of the City or Council alone. The "vote of the people" option would remain but would not be the only way forward if the amendment were adopted.

ArtsWA Furloughs: Commissioners were sent the dates that office staff will be furloughed July through November. This is one of the hardest things that Hanan has had to do, to tell her amazing team that their salaries will be cut and they will have to work less. In reality, they will probably be working more and harder.

The Governor's Arts and Heritage Awards event is cancelled. It was a difficult decision, but COVID-19 and the current budget situation made it imperative. We love being able to honor our artists, and creative and heritage organizations around the state. The planning committee will consider options for next year.

The Creative Borrowing webinar was successful in presenting creative ways for arts organizations to raise funds through borrowing during these difficult times. The free webinar was well attended, received high praise from those who listened in, and is available for viewing from either [www.arts.wa.gov](http://www.arts.wa.gov) or at TVW.

The ArtsWA office is expanding into an adjacent suite, per the decision package approved by the Legislature in early 2020. This will provide much needed space for staff, plus artwork storage and repair, and eventually additional staff in the Art in Public Places program, and Collections.

The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) Office of Inspector General has selected ArtsWA for a performance desk audit. Desk audits are performed annually on a rotating basis for all recipients of the State Partnership grant, and this year it is our turn. This is now underway and expected to last approximately four months. This will create much extra work, including completing a questionnaire and

sending many documents to the auditor for review to see how NEA funds have been spent by ArtsWA, and by our grantees. This is to ensure everyone is following federal rules.

## Grants to Organizations

Alexis Sarah, Arts in Early Learning Project Manager, and Miguel Guillén, Grants to Organizations Program Manager provided an overview of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act Grants (*packet pp. 1-11*). She thanked Karen Hanan, the agency director for her leadership as well as the ArtsWA staff on the CARES Team, which included Hannah Dahlke, Audrey Molloy, Tamar Krames, and Judy Cullen.

The purpose of the CARES Act grant is for ArtsWA to provide funding to non-profit and fiscally sponsored arts groups and organizations that are facing financial hardship due to economic impacts related to the COVID-19 pandemic. This funding, in the form of grants, is provided by the CARES Act via the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA). Every arts organization has suffered tremendous impact from the pandemic, and the scary reality is that some of these organizations or arts jobs may not survive.

Sarah reviewed eligibility requirements. Grant amounts could be requested up to \$5,000 maximum for general operating support with no funding match required by the recipient organization.

Applications were reviewed by a series of panels comprised of ArtsWA staff and Board Commissioners. Scores were based on demonstrated need. Notifications to organizations were made within 10 business days of receipt of their application, in regard to whether they were eligible for consideration or denied due to various reasons that made them ineligible. A simplified application took about 30 minutes to complete.

The total funds available to distribute were \$430,600; requested funds for the 325 applications received totaled \$1,574,554. Applications were from 29 of Washington's 39 total counties.

Most applications were received by King County, which also received most of the funding. There were many funded recipients in Pierce, Thurston, Kitsap and Whatcom Counties as well. Some qualified applicants were withdrawn after it was clear they had received notification of funding from Humanities WA or other sources. Applications not recommended for funding either scored low or, for the vast majority, did not necessarily score in the top tier but would have been funded if we had had enough money. There were simply a LOT more applications than funds available.

Miller asked about the number of applicants for this grant versus other grants being distributed this year. Guillén said that many of the organizations that normally participate in ArtsWA grant programs did not apply, but many new organizations outside of King County did apply. He will keep track of these organizations for the future. The number of applications received for the CARES grant equaled roughly the number received during the entire year's grant processes.

Robin said it was the easiest grant application he had ever done. He is impressed that 29 out of 39 counties were represented. Are the remaining 10 counties ones that usually do not apply. Guillen said he believes there are either very few arts organizations in those counties, or more likely, they have not yet been supported in a way that gives them confidence to apply for support. Robin would like to receive the list of counties that did not apply.

A MOTION to ratify the decision of the Executive Director to approve the panel recommendations for FY 2021 CARES Act grants totaling \$430,600 and the list of non-funded applications, as outlined in the packet, was made by Ewing, seconded by Logan.

Martindale read the list of Board members in attendance so they could declare conflict of interest and state their affiliation. There were 8 recusals due to conflict of interest:

- Andre Bouchard - Indigenous Performance Productions
- Ginger Ewing – Terrain
- Wesley Jessup: Northwest Museum of Arts & Culture
- Diane Martindale: San Juan Islands Museum of Art
- Monica Miller: Gallery One
- Lua Pritchard: Asia Pacific Cultural Center
- Justin Raffa: Mid-Columbia Mastersingers
- Charlie Robin: Capitol Theatre

A recusal changes the approval from a simple majority to a majority of a quorum. The approval requirement becomes a simple majority of the remaining commissioners. Ten Board Commissioners were eligible to vote.

The MOTION passed with all eligible Commissioners approving, 8 recusals and no abstentions.

## Announcements

Martindale reminded the Board that the next Board Meeting will be August 5, 2020 from 9:30 am to 12 noon. This will be our quarterly meeting with important agenda items such as advocacy strategy, a strategic planning discussion, and action items that will require a quorum. It will be conducted online as a result of the COVID situation. It will also be streamed live by TVW. We would have been in Spokane this August, hosted by Wes and Ginger. I know we are all disappointed at the change, but we look forward to meeting there in person someday, hopefully in the not too distant future. While there are no anticipated meetings between now and August, we appreciate the Board being on standby as these are unusual times.

Hanan thanked all the Board and staff for their hard work on the CARES Act Grant process.

Martindale adjourned the meeting at 10:47 a.m.