

New Hampshire State Council on the Arts
COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES – September 16, 2020
NHSCA's Zoom Meeting Space

Arts Councilors Present

Chair Dr. Roger Brooks, Angela Brown, Sara Germain, R.P. Hale, Margaret Jacobs, José Lezcano, Mary McLaughlin, Tim Sink, William Stelling, Catherine Sununu, Jason Tors, Cecilia Ulibarri, Peter Warburton, and Leah Woods

Arts Councilor Absent - Vivian Beer

Staff Present

Department of Natural and Cultural Resources (DNCR) Commissioner Sarah Stewart; DNCR Arts Division: Ginnie Lupi, Director; Cassandra Mason, Chief Grants Officer (CGO); Kayla Schweitzer, Heritage and Traditional Arts Coordinator (HTA); Lisa Burk-McCoy, Creative Communities & Arts in Health Coordinator (CC/AH); Carey Johnson, Curatorial Specialist (CS); and Emily Killinger, Visual Arts Associate (VAA)

Motions (carried)

- Accept the minutes of July 13, 2020 Council meeting
- Approve Artist Entrepreneurial grant recommendations (\$3,195, for FY21-Round 2)
- Approve Arts for Community Engagement grant recommendations (\$91,138)
- Approve Folklife & Traditional Arts Project grant recommendations (\$46,200)
- Approve Traditional Arts Apprenticeship grant recommendations (\$26,244)
- Approve Poetry Out Loud Fiscal Agent proposal (\$20,000)

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Dr. Roger Brooks called the meeting of the New Hampshire State Council on the Arts to order at 9:02 a.m. on September 16, 2020.

II. MINUTES

Chair Brooks called for a motion to accept the minutes from the July 13, 2020, meeting. Councilor José Lezcano moved to approve, seconded by Councilor Cathy Sununu. The minutes from July 13, 2020, were unanimously approved.

III. INDIGENOUS LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

(HTA) Kayla Schweitzer led the Council in acknowledging the native territories and stewards of the lands we may be zooming in from. All were encouraged to visit <https://native-land.ca/> for an interactive map and to learn more about the indigenous tribes that lived in New Hampshire.

IV. COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

DNCR Commissioner Sarah Stewart reported that she and her immediate office and Division directors are hard at work with the current budget process in close conjunction with the Governor Sununu's Office. She offered kudos to the Department at large for the high level of customer service all employees are giving to the public during these unprecedented times. She reported that open positions in the Divisions of Forest & Lands and Parks & Recreation are being filled and that the State Library is serving the public by appointment. Other successes include the ribbon cutting for a new fully accessible fly-fishing dock at Franconia Notch State Park, and a personal appearance on NH Public Radio.

V. APPROVAL of ARTIST ENTREPRENEURIAL Grants (FY21-Round 2) (\$3,195)

Arts Council staff served as review panel for the eight submitted grant applications on Monday, August 24. The panel ranked them and recommended four applications for funding, for a total of \$3,195 in funding.

Chair Brooks called for a motion to approve the Artist Entrepreneurial recommendations. There was no discussion and the Council unanimously approved.

- Moved: Councilor R.P. Hale
- Second: Councilor Tim Sink
- Nays: None
- Recusals: None

VI. APPROVAL of ARTS FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT (ACE) Grants (\$91,140)

The five-member panel met on Zoom on September 8 to review the 24 applications received in this grant category. This category is a streamlined version of prior years' General Project Grants for Community Engagement and specifically targets projects with public benefit outcomes. The panel ranked them and recommended 17 applications for funding, for a total of \$91,140 in funding.

Chair Brooks called for a motion to approve the Arts for Community Engagement recommendations. There was no discussion and there was one recusal.

- Moved: Councilor Sara Germain
- Second: Councilor Cathy Sununu
- Nays: None
- Recusals: José Lezcano (*abstention*)

VII. APPROVAL of FOLKLIFE & TRADITIONAL ARTS PROJECT Grants (\$46,200)

The three-member panel met via Zoom on September 11 to review the seven submitted applications in this grant category. The panel ranked them and recommended all seven applications for funding, for a total of \$46,200 in funding.

Chair Brooks called for a motion to approve the Folklife & Traditional Arts Project recommendations. There was no discussion and the Council unanimously approved.

- Moved: Councilor Mary McLaughlin
- Second: Councilor Peter Warburton
- Nays: None
- Recusals: None

VIII. APPROVAL of TRADITIONAL ARTS APPRENTICESHIP Grants (\$26,244)

The three-member panel met via Zoom on September 9 to review the seven submitted partnership applications in this grant category. The panel ranked them and recommended all seven applications for funding, for a total of \$26,244 in funding.

Chair Brooks called for a motion to approve the Traditional Arts Apprenticeship recommendations. There was no discussion and the Council unanimously approved.

- Moved: Councilor Peter Warburton
- Second: Councilor Tim Sink
- Nays: None
- Recusals: None

IX. APPROVAL of FY21 POETRY OUT LOUD PARTNERSHIP Grant (\$20,000)

The NH Poetry Out Loud (POL) Program is part of a national network of Poetry Out Loud programs sponsored by the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) in partnership with the Poetry Foundation. Since its inception, the NH POL program has worked with a nonprofit fiscal agent contracted through a partnership grant. Pursuant to State of New Hampshire requirements for an open bid process and under the direction of the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources (DNCR) Business Office, a Request for Proposals for a partnership/fiscal agent for Poetry Out Loud renewable for up to 2 years was issued on July 2, 2020. Two proposals were received and the New Hampshire Learning Initiative was chosen as the fiscal agent.

Chair Brooks called for a motion to approve the FY21 Poetry Out Loud Partnership recommendation. There was no discussion and the Council unanimously approved.

- Moved: Councilor R.P. Hale
- Second: Councilor Bill Stelling
- Nays: None
- Recusals: None

X. STAFF REPORTS

Director Lupi reported that due to the state's freeze on General Fund expenditures beyond operating costs, all Council-approved grants (with the exception of Artist Entrepreneurial Grants, which are funded with federal funds), cannot be released. She praised the staff, whose workloads have dramatically increased as a result of the pandemic. She reported an increase in conversations with for-profit creative businesses and expressed concern that some individual artists and creative workers have been denied unemployment benefits due to sporadic gigs, sales or work. Director Lupi emphasized the importance of advocacy at this time and announced an upcoming series of online roundtable discussions featuring nonprofit and for-profit arts organizations that are reopening in some way during the pandemic.

(CC/AH) Lisa Burk-McCoy reported that besides working with FY21 grant applicants the staff has been doing a considerable amount of follow-up with FY20 grantees regarding their projects. To date, only seven General Project Grants and three Arts in Health projects have been fully completed/executed. This is requiring many 1:1 conversations with grantees. She reported that some grant projects are going online, some are tentatively delaying until they can present to an in-person audience, and some are making other unique and creative adaptations to their projects.

(HTA) Kayla Schweitzer echoed the sentiment of the work of the grants team as they carry on important conversations with FY20 grantees while reading, reviewing and making recommendations for drafts of FY21 applications.

(CGO) Cassie Mason reported that she has assumed responsibility for Arts Education work due to the vacant position being held in the State's hiring freeze. The Poetry Out Loud program is moving forward with feedback and guidance from the field, attempting to plan for the uncertainties. Mason gave a brief update on the numerous Percent for Art projects currently in process. She also reminded the Council that the staff's workload and paperwork load has nearly tripled as a result of CARES Act and NEFA funds, with which NHSCA made grants for direct relief to artists and arts organizations.

(VAA) Emily Killinger reported on the staff's self-directed book study of *White Fragility* by Robin DiAngelo, which prompted a short conversation on Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI), which has been an important topic for state

arts agencies for several years.

XI. GOVERNOR'S ARTS AWARDS DISCUSSION

Chair Brooks reminded the Council that it's time to begin work on the next Governor's Arts Awards (GAA), currently slated for the fall of 2021. Councilor Bill Stelling agreed to chair the committee and requested that Mary McLaughlin join him as co-chair. McLaughlin agreed and asked that Councilor Cathy Sununu join the committee, as she was a vital part of 2019 GAA planning efforts. Other Councilors joining the committee are Margaret Jacobs and Roger Brooks. Councilor R.P. Hale committed to again serve as calligrapher. The committee will begin with a feasibility review. Director Lupi will report to the committee on the project's account balance at the Park Street Foundation.

XII. COUNCILOR ROUND ROBIN

Councilors reported on a wide variety of recent and upcoming arts activities.

XIII. ADJOURN

- Motion to adjourn from the business meeting: Councilor R.P. Hale
- Second: Councilor Tim Sink
- Nays: None
- Recusals: None

Chair Brooks adjourned the meeting at 10:25 AM

Remaining 2020 Council Meeting Dates (start time will be 9:30 AM, unless otherwise indicated):

Monday, November 16 – Zoom