

New Hampshire State Council on the Arts
COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES – January 8, 2024
Via Zoom

Arts Councilors Present

Chair Dr. Roger Brooks, Juliana Bergeron, Mary McLaughlin, José Lezcano, Cecilia Ulibarri, Tim Sink, Amanda Whitworth, and Vivian Beer

Arts Councilors Absent

Jason Tors, Bill Stelling, R.P. Hale, Catherine Sununu, and Angela Brown

Staff Present

Department of Natural and Cultural Resources (DNCR): Jennifer Widmark, State Curator; Arts Division: Adele Bauman, Director; Cassandra Mason, Chief Grants Officer (CGO); Kayla Schweitzer, Heritage and Traditional Arts Coordinator (HTA); Lisa Burk-McCoy, Creative Communities Coordinator (CC); Carey Johnson, Curatorial Specialist (CS); Emily Killinger, Arts in Health Coordinator (AH); Christina Hoppe, Grant Programs Associate

Staff Absent

Department of Natural and Cultural Resources Commissioner Sarah Stewart, and Allison Hawkins, Arts Education Coordinator (AE)

Motions (carried)

- Accept the minutes of November 13, 2023 Council meeting

I. INTRODUCTION OF JENNIFER WIDMARK, STATE CURATOR

II. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Dr. Roger Brooks called the meeting of the New Hampshire State Council on the Arts to order at 10:12 AM.

III. INDIGENOUS LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

(HTA) Kayla Schweitzer led the Council in a Land Acknowledgement. All are encouraged to visit <https://native-land.ca/> for an interactive map and to learn more about the indigenous peoples that lived/live in New Hampshire.

IV. COUNCIL MEMBER INTRODUCTIONS

Councilors briefly introduced themselves to DNCR State Curator, Jennifer Widmark.

V. MINUTES

Chair Brooks called for a motion to accept the minutes from the November 13, 2023 meeting; Councilor Mary McLaughlin moved, and Councilor Juliana Bergeron seconded. The minutes from November 13, 2023 were unanimously approved.

VI. STAFF REPORT

Director Bauman reported that the Governor's Art Awards committee will be meeting at 1 pm today to wrap up the 2023 discussion and begin looking to 2025.

A press release went out today regarding the new Cultural Facilities grant. Hopefully Councilors will be able to take time to participate in the upcoming grant panel discussions.

The NHSCA Strategic plan is in its final stages and will be available soon.

Christina Hoppe is now full-time as Grant Programs Associate, which means the department is fully-staffed.

At the end of the month is "Healing, Bridging, Thriving," a summit on arts and cultures in our communities, which Director Bauman will be attending in Washington, DC. She also attended NASAA's Executive Forum with CGO Cassie Mason last month in Santa Fe, NM.

Forty-two schools are registered for Poetry Out Loud—the highest since the 2019 season. The program has received a grant from The Putnam Foundation for \$5,000 and events are still being finalized. If any Councilors would like to support the event as judges, please contact AE Allison Hawkins or Director Bauman. Semi-final competition dates are as follows: February 13th at Rochester Opera House (snow date 2/14), February 15th at Plymouth State University (snow date 2/16), February 20th at Tupelo Music Hall in Derry (snow date 2/21), and February 22nd at New England College (snow date 2/23). The State Finals will be held on Friday, March, 15th at the State House.

CGO Cassie Mason elaborated on the launch of the new Cultural Facilities grant program: currently halfway through the fiscal year, the NHSCA has awarded approximately 1.2 million dollars in grant funds—the most since 2008. There is one more round of Artist Entrepreneurial grants, the deadline for which is early February.

Thanks to the generous increase in the agency's grants line, \$300,000 worth of funds were still available, so the facilities grant—retired in 2013--was resurrected. The purpose of the grant is to help the nonprofit arts and cultural organizations who have equipment and/or building needs. Each grant will fund up to \$25,000 (with no match required) for maintenance, renovation, or purchase of major equipment, with ADA compliance being a priority. Anticipated turnaround time will be quick, in order to allocate funds before the end of the fiscal year. The deadline is February 9th. The goal is to have these grants ready for approval during the March Council meeting. If Councilors have panelist suggestions, please let CGO Cassie Mason know.

CGO Cassie Mason continued, noting that the FY25 grant guidelines are being worked on. The ceiling for Project grants will be increased from \$6,000 to \$8,000, and Artist Entrepreneurial grants will see an increase of \$1,500 (from \$1,000 to \$2,500). The "no match required" policy will be maintained through FY25 as well. Additionally, the agency is developing an organizational capacity grant program and considering moving out project dates due to grantees' payments becoming delayed by administration. FY25 panelist outreach will begin in April.

Chair Brooks asked if the Mooseplate grants would have been how facilities could access funds for the same purposes, prior to the resurrection of the Cultural Facilities grants. CGO Cassie Mason explained that in order to qualify for Mooseplate grants, a facility's buildings must be publicly owned: none of the cultural facilities/non-profits (501c3 corporations) are eligible.

Councilor Tim Sink then asked what the time commitment for serving on a grant panel is, and CGO Cassie Mason explained that it is typically about four hours. Chair Brooks urged Councilors to participate in panels.

X. COUNCILOR ROUND ROBIN

Chair Brooks asked each Councilor to tell the Council how they've been faring and to provide updates on what they've been doing. Councilors reported on a wide range of arts activities.

XI. ADJOURN

Chair Brooks adjourned the meeting at 10:48 AM. Councilor Tim Sink moved to approve, while Councilor José Lezcano seconded.

Next Council Meeting:

March 18, 2024