

New Hampshire State Council on the Arts
COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES – March 18, 2024
Via Zoom and at DNCR Headquarters

Arts Councilors Present

Chair Dr. Roger Brooks, Catherine Sununu, Juliana Bergeron, Mary McLaughlin (zoom), José Lezcano (zoom), Cecilia Ulibarri (zoom), Angela Brown (zoom), and Bill Stelling (zoom)

Arts Councilors Absent

Jason Tors, R.P. Hale, Tim Sink, Amanda Whitworth, and Vivian Beer

Staff Present

Department of Natural and Cultural Resources (DNCR): Sarah Stewart, Commissioner; Arts Division: Adele Bauman, Director; Cassandra Mason, Chief Grants Officer (CGO); Kayla Schweitzer, Heritage and Traditional Arts Coordinator (HTA); Lisa Burk-McCoy, Creative Community Development Coordinator (CCD); Carey Johnson, Curatorial Specialist (CS); Allison Hawkins, Arts Education Coordinator (AE); Emily Killinger, Arts in Health Coordinator (AH); and Christina Hoppe, Grant Programs Associate

Motions (carried)

- Accept the minutes of January 8, 2024 Council meeting
- Approve Artist Entrepreneurial Grants: Round 4 (\$5,455)
- Approve Cultural Facilities Grants (\$361,006)

I. 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.

II. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Dr. Roger Brooks called the meeting of the New Hampshire State Council on the Arts to order at 10:04 AM.

III. MINUTES

Chair Brooks called for a motion to accept the minutes from the January 8, 2024 meeting. Councilor José Lezcano moved, and Councilor Bill Stelling seconded. The minutes from January 8, 2024 were unanimously approved, less one abstention (Councilor Angela Brown).

IV. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Director Bauman reported that a new Poet Laureate, Jennifer Militello, has been approved and will be announced soon.

She went on to note that from the NEFA Art Summit to NASAA, there have been three consistent themes recently: arts in health and wellness; rural communities and partnerships; and civic infrastructure and community cohesion. Thankfully the agency now has a dedicated Arts in Health program coordinator (Emily Killinger), along with a Creative Community Development coordinator (Lisa Burk-McCoy) to help facilitate these programs.

Director Bauman attended the Creative Center at University Settlement last weekend, where the discussion centered around arts' effect on hospital residents.

At the end of February Director Bauman and Commissioner Stewart visited the Concord State Prison to learn about the Open Sky program, which brings theatre to prison inmates as a rehabilitative tool. Several other Commissioners were in attendance, and Director Bauman noted that they recommend the film, *Sing Sing*, which is about rehabilitation through the arts. The current Open Sky production will have a date sometime in May for the general public to attend, which Director Bauman will pass on to the Council. Councilor Cathy Sununu asked if it was just at the men's prison, or available to both men and women. Director Bauman answered it is currently only at the men's prison, due to less success historically with the women inmates. Chair Brooks noted that California has been doing something similar for a long time, and there's a lot we can learn from their work.

Director Bauman will be speaking at the Lakes Region Art Conference on April 13th at Lakes Region Community College if anyone would like to attend.

AE Allison Hawkins provided a brief update on the Poetry Out Loud program, which held the State Championship Finals on March 17th at the State House. Hawkins thanked the team for their support and shared that the State Champion is Morgan Cole from Portsmouth High School, and the alternate is George Fortin from Holderness School. All four Semi-Final events went smoothly, with a remarkably high caliber of participating students from 30 schools. Director Bauman added that the Governor and his wife invited all the semi-finalists to Bridges House to celebrate their accomplishments.

AIH Emily Killinger announced that partner organization, Magnify Voices, has an open call for art submissions from students in grades 5-12 now through April 21st. Submissions should be related to their experiences with mental health, and the art will be presented and displayed on May 22nd at New England College in Henniker. Director Bauman is excited to be a judge this year.

Director Bauman announced the agency's RFP for a new logo, which is timely as the 60th anniversary is next year. She also noted that she will be attending the upcoming Travel & Tourism Summit hosted by Discover New England at the Mount Washington Resort in a couple of weeks.

V.GOVERNOR'S ARTS AWARDS UPDATE

Councilor Juliana Bergeron gave an update on the Governor's Arts Awards committee, noting that they are working on a letter for donors to receive before they do their budgets. The letter should be complete by the next meeting. She also said the committee is looking for new members, and everyone is encouraged to contact her with any suggestions.

VI.ANNOUNCEMENT FROM CHAIR BROOKS

Chair Brooks announced in a heartfelt speech that after 18 years, he will be stepping down as Chair of the Council as of June 30th. He went on to say that the Council is in need of four new members, as Councilor Tim Sink has decided not to seek re-nomination. He encouraged everyone to contact Director Bauman or himself with any suggestions or ideas.

VII.COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

Commissioner Sarah Stewart congratulated AE Allison Hawkins on a job well-done with Poetry Out Loud. Commissioner Stewart also told the Council about her recent work with new Manchester Mayor, Jay Ruais, on establishing the first Artist Laureate position for the city, as well as refreshing the Manchester Arts Commission.

She updated the Council on the progress of the State Library project. The contracted architecture firm recommended a separate climate-controlled facility where items would be tagged, which would free up space in the library, allowing it to be more open to the community. The Commissioner presented the project to the Senate, but it was stalled in Finance by one vote. Commissioner Stewart said she thought it may be able to be resurrected with something along the lines of an Op-Ed in support of the project, or an evening event at the library. She encouraged everyone to contact her with ideas.

VIII.NHSCA STRATEGIC PLAN REVIEW

Director Bauman presented and reviewed the Strategic Plan with the Council. If Councilors would like copies, or a .pdf, please let her know.

Director Bauman also announced that CS Carey Johnson recently marked 20 years of service with the state of New Hampshire.

IX.GRANTS: ARTIST ENTREPRENEURIAL & CULTURAL FACILITIES APPROVALS

Director Bauman reminded the Council that the FY25 grants are open, and she encouraged Councilors to spread the word.

CGO Cassie Mason explained that for Artist Entrepreneurial grants, this is the fourth round. Seven applications were received with six recommended for funding; the application not recommended was because it was difficult to understand what they were asking for. Councilor Juliana Bergeron moved and Councilor Cathy Sununu seconded. The grants were unanimously approved.

CGO Cassie Mason noted that for the Cultural Facilities grant applications, the overwhelming response meant that many were unfunded simply because there wasn't enough money. Councilor Cathy Sununu moved and Councilor Juliana Bergeron seconded. The grants were unanimously approved.

CGO Cassie Mason updated the Council on the current FY25 grants: Project grants have been raised to \$8,000, Artist Entrepreneurial Grants have been raised to \$2,500, and an Organizational Capacity Building Grant has been added. During the strategic planning focus groups and surveys, the agency received a lot of feedback that organizations need funding to do work within their own organization, which is what the Capacity Building Grant will hopefully supply.

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 11:06 AM. Councilor Juliana Bergeron moved to approve, while Councilor Cathy Sununu seconded.

Upcoming Council Meetings:

May 20, 2024

July 8, 2024