



Council Meeting

MEETING MINUTES

March 13, 2025
10:00am – 2:00pm
Kent Cultural Alliance
101 Spring Ave., Chestertown, Maryland 21620

In attendance:

Councilors: Ruby Lopez Harper, Joel Snyder, Gregory Tucker, Chris Sloan, Albita Rivera, Marva Jo Camp, Monique Walker, Kathy Beachler, Yolanda Acree, Delegate Cheryl Pasteur, Shelley Morhaim

Staff: Steven Skerritt-Davis, Ryan Patterson, Ryan Koons, Kirk Amaral Snow, Abby Neyenhouse, Emily Sollenberger, Laura Weiss, Brad Bittner, Derrick Quevedo, Chad Buterbaugh, Elizabeth Morales, Alysha Suryah, Tammy Oppel, Nora Howell, Elli Hernandez, Leslie Gillard

Welcome

John Schratwieser gave an update on the Kent Cultural Alliance, and upcoming events in Chestertown, MD.

Call to Order

Ruby Lopez Harper called the meeting to order at approximately 10:19 a.m. and reviewed the guiding documents.

Creative Assignment

Nora instructed participants to engage in an interactive group drawing assignment.

Chair Remarks

Ruby discussed our commitment to funding, along with support from the Governor. She encouraged Councilors to remain supportive of our peers and community, and provide stability by going out in the community and introducing themselves. As well as suggested for Councilors to stay updated with Council newsletters.



Approval of Council Meeting Minutes

Greg moved to approve the December 5, 2024 minutes. Yolanda seconded the motion. All in favor, the motion passed.

Executive Director's Report (Skerritt-Davis)

- Steven thanked John and Hester for hosting the meeting, and gave a brief description of the formation of the building that houses the Kent Cultural Alliance.
- Department of Commerce updates:
 - We welcomed a new Secretary, who has been invited to the June Council meeting and Maryland Arts Summit.
 - The department released its Strategic Plan/DECADE ACT that focuses on economic development, strategic industries, and messaging related to continued investment in other areas including the arts.
- MSAC Updates:
 - Abby Neyenhouse and elli maria hernandez have joined the agency.
 - All positions on the organizational chart have been filled, and some vacant positions have been added.
 - Some contractual positions have moved to full-time positions.
- Arts Incubator Working Group:
 - The preliminary report was submitted in January, and the link will be sent to the Councilors after the meeting.
 - Phase Two is underway.
 - Five issue areas for recommendations for how arts organizations can better support independent artists will be submitted to the Governor.
- Steven gave an update on grants awarded by category.
- There will be a new structure for staff updates, beginning at the June 5 meeting, and will connect the updates to the Strategic Plan.
- Steven thanked the Councilors who signed up to observe the Panel meetings.
- Steven gave an update on the Poetry Out Loud winner and runner ups.
- National Endowment for the Arts:
 - The staff is currently responding to a procedural audit on FY20 - FY23 grants. The finding should be available later in the summer.



- Steven gave an update on effects of Executive Orders at the federal level, discussed the updated compliance language.
 - There are no updates on Grants for Arts Projects partnership.
- Budget:
 - Steven gave an update on the Governor's recommendations for MSAC's budget.
 - Maryland Citizens for the Arts continues focus on advocacy of the mandate.

Staff Reports

Art Installations Update

- Ryan P. provided updates on the Maryland Public Art Commission's recent installations:
 - An installation at St. Mary's College of Maryland
 - An installation at Towson University
 - An installation at Catonsville Courthouse

AiE Year in Review

- Lizzie provided updates on Arts in Education:
 - The number and amounts of grants awarded, and the growth rate between FY22 - FY25.
 - The number of teaching artists added.
 - Poetry Out Loud number of participants.
 - Lizzie provided current observations, current challenges, and plans for the future.

Executive Committee Report

- Ruby provided an update on the February committee meeting:
 - The committee discussed NEA funding and budget.
 - The Councilors discussed the MSAC statement drafted by Steven, previously discussed in the Executive Committee meeting.
 - The committee received an update on the GFO revision update process.

Governance Committee Report

- Ruby provided an update on the January and March committee meetings:
 - The committee reviewed and completed the By-Laws revisions update, which is being reviewed by the Department of Commerce.
 - The committee updated the Equity and Justice statement, and is in the process of being reviewed by the Department of Commerce.



- Steven provided a copy and discussed the updates.
- Councilors discussed the meaning of certain language in the statement.
- The committee will discuss Councilor engagement at the June meeting.

Fiscal Report/Finance Committee Report

- Joel and Brad provided an update on the budget, to include General, Special, Federal, and Capital Funds.

Program Policy and Evaluation Committee Report

- Albita provided an update on the February committee meeting:
 - The committee discussed line items, and the staff was asked to develop a full proposal for the committee to review at the May committee meeting.

Nominating Committee Election

- Steven provided the process of nominating officers through the Nominating Committee:
 - Three Councilors were nominated for the Nominating Committee, and accepted. Kathy Beachler, Shelley Morhaim, Greg Tucker

Joel moved to adopt the slate for the Nominating Committee. Albita seconded. All in favor and the motion passed.

NASAA Presentation/GFO Revision Process Update

- Ryan Stubbs provided a national perspective on what is happening in other states that corresponds to what Maryland is doing.
- Emily and Laura provided steps taken since the December Council meeting, and what's next.

Discussion

- Steven thanked Emily and Laura for their work on the process.
 - Steven discussed his focus on the connection to MSAC's Strategic Plan; specifically the connection between panelists and applicants.

Maryland 250 Update

- Michele Johnson provided an update on the work the Commission is doing.
 - The Councilors invited Michele to attend a County Arts Agencies of Maryland meeting.
 - Steven will connect Michele with Councilors in various districts.



Discussion

- The Councilors discussed the NEA 250 program, and future connections.

Art Pharmacy

- Chris Appleton provided an update on the intersection of arts and health.

Discussion

- Councilors discussed how Art Pharmacy gets arts cultural organizations to participate in their program.
 - Arts councils, arts services organizations, grass roots activities.
- Steven requested for more information on how arts providers are paid with the service.
 - Art Pharmacy pays the arts organizations directly.
- Councilors discussed establishing relationships with healthcare providers in the State of Maryland, via Steven.

New Business

- Councilors requested more information on how we're engaging with arts communities across the state via communication efforts.
 - Alysha will share her approach, plans, and more specific numbers at the June meeting.
 - Steven added we're receiving engagement around professional development offerings.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 1:37 p.m.