

MSAC Council Meeting

MEETING MINUTES

March 25, 2020

2:04 Called to Order

The executive director shared immediate actions that have recently taken place in response to COVID-19. Staff has moved to remote work locations, established telework reporting and procedures; established multiple check-ins per week and maintained Wednesday full staff meetings (virtual).

All MSAC marketing strategies were engaged and populated with guiding information for constituents. Four Listening Sessions were publicized; one County Arts Council Executive Director-specific and three public: attended by more than 250 constituents and hosted by MSAC and Maryland Citizens for the Arts (MCA). Participants were encouraged to engage with Commerce information for entrepreneurs and small businesses.

Actions were identified and assigned to; MCA, Maryland State Department of Education, Arts Education in Maryland Schools, MICA (Baltimore Creative Action Network), County Arts Agencies of Maryland, Maryland Philanthropy Network, Maryland Nonprofits and Maryland Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts. Folklorist Chad Buterbaugh also worked with MICA to create an overview of the Small Business Administration application process that marketing manager Amelia Evans has shared statewide. The staff has also identified any possible funds that could be moved to the Special Request Grant program.

Immediate actions recommended included approval for a Special Request Grant Emergency Application and reduce/remove restrictions on spending. The council reviewed the special request grant emergency application and rubric. John Schratweiser motioned to approve the rubric as presented, Shelley Morhaim seconded the motion. All in favor, none opposed.

Discussion held to open funding to independent artists. Schratweiser and other council members suggested language including independent artists.

The ED agreed to create a separate Emergency Grant program application for Independent Artists and send it to the council for a digital vote.

Schratweister approved the motion to suspend non-emergency special request grants until further notice. Anne Winter West seconded the motion. All in favor, none opposed.

Shelly Morhaim moved to approve the motion to require proof of ineligibility or application for state or federal grant/loan prior to submitting an application to MSAC. Julia Spangler-Madden seconded the motion. None opposed. Sumita Kim abstained.

Jack Rasmussen moved to approve the motion to edit the 90-day submission requirement to 90-day disbursement language. Zoe Charlton seconded the motion. All in favor, none opposed.

Council reviewed the following immediate recommendations to reduce/remove restrictions on spending: Approve the removal of restrictions on spending to fund unanticipated expenses due to the crisis. Approve the removal of matching requirements so that artists and organizations can use the funding as needed. All Final Reports must be submitted.

John Schratweiser motioned to approve the spending restrictions and funding requirements as presented. Shelley Morhaim seconded the motion. John wanted to acknowledge the possible removing the match may let private funders off the hook. Language should be clear that this is temporary, not permanent. All in favor, none opposed.

Additional remaining funds for FY20 were discussed and all outstanding Arts in Education grant agreements for residency and visiting performer teaching artists will be paid in full.

Other immediate recommendations include:

Schedule ongoing webinars - Creative Conversations - by discipline and topic. Professional Development Series: Season Planning Post COVID-19, Commerce/Small Business Administration Loan Guidance, Increasing an Online Presence: How to monetize online services/products, Self-Care, Coordinating Funding Resources: Maryland State Arts Council and Maryland Philanthropy Network.

Marketing Assistance:

Increase promotion of Maryland Artist Registry to bolster artist's ability to sell work. Create an online portal for artists to offer services for hire, promote local sources over national sources and also develop language for fundraising tasks; independent artists with personal connections, organizations for end-of-year giving and donating federal relief to the arts.

The ED left the council with future recommendations to consider which include: Paying FY21 grants at 100% instead of 75/25 which will require internal research, change the GFO funding formula so that lower FY 21 organization budgets are not determining funding as well as create a fund to commission new work.

Everyone thanked each other for their efforts, advocacy and forward thinking.

3:06 Adjourn