



CT Arts Council

**Connecticut Arts Council Meeting
Monday, November 7, 2022
1:00 pm
450 Columbus Plaza North Hearing Room J**

MINUTES

Present: Floyd Green, Calida Jones, Sofia Lewitt, and Jack Rosenberg
Present Via Conference Call: Judy McElhone and Adriane Jefferson
Nominee Present via Conference Call: Jacob Padron
Absent: Mary Ellen Kingsland-Eckels, Fritz Jellinghaus, *emeritus*, Ted Yudain
Staff: Mel Díaz, Tamara Dimitri, Kolton Harris, Tekowa Omara-Otunnu, and Elizabeth Shapiro
Absent: Rhonda Olisky and Lu Rivera
Guest Present: Yolanda Spade

Call to Order

Chairman Jack Rosenberg called the meeting to order at 1:08 pm. He welcomed everyone to the first in-person meeting in over two years.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Chairman Rosenberg asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the meeting on October 3rd.

Motion to approve the minutes of the October meeting.

Motion: S. Lewitt | Second: F. Green | Discussion: No additional discussion.

In favor: 6, Opposed: 0, Abstentions: 0

October meeting minutes approved.

Office of the Arts Action Item: Supporting Arts Grant Program

Director Elizabeth Shapiro reported on behalf of Rhonda Olisky. She explained that the Support Arts Grant Program is a non-competitive grant line for general operating support. For FY 23, a little over one million dollars was allocated to the grant line, and the funding calculations shifted to be more equitable. Organizations were grouped by their budgetary expenses, and funds were allocated based on the percentage each group composed of all grantees. Grant amounts range from \$1,000 to \$10,000.

When asked what constitutes an art organization, Director Shapiro responded that the Connecticut Office of the Arts (COA) follows the National Endowment of the Arts guidelines — an organization must spend 51% or more on arts programming.

Motion to approve the Support Arts Grant Program Action Item.

Motion: C. Jones | Second: F. Green | Discussion: No additional discussion.

In favor: 6, Opposed: 0, Abstentions: 0

Supporting Arts Grant Program grantees approved.

Committee Report: Governor's Arts and Arts Patrons Awards 2023

Council members Sofia Lewitt and Calida Jones reported that a few items need to be determined. Still, the Committee will get nominations through an open call. The Committee has developed an outline they would like to run by Director Shapiro to avoid redundancies with the work staff is already doing. Another update will be given at the Council's January meeting.

Chairman's Report

ARTS COUNCIL

Chairman Rosenberg reported that two appointments had expired. He and Director Shapiro continue to work to fill Council vacancies. Director Shapiro mentioned that all legislative officers that appoint positions would receive reminders after the elections.

ENDORISING EVENTS

Chairman Rosenberg asked for a motion to officially start endorsing events and have each Council member propose an event at upcoming meetings. Supporting events would help make the Council more visible. A committee would need to take leadership and make it happen.

Council members asked if the Council should first build relationships and trust with the community. Once those relationships are made, the Council would need to decide how the endorsement works and what it looks like while rooting the process in equity.

Staff suggested starting with acknowledging the grantees that were just approved. Sending an email on behalf of the Arts Council and congratulating them is an excellent way to make introductions. Additional ideas included advocating for the arts with the legislature and attending events like the Arts Hero Awards. The Council could amplify and support the work COA is doing.

ARTS COUNCIL FOUNDATION

Chairman Rosenberg reported that the Arts Council Foundation met last week. Six members have been appointed, and those members are working on filling the other nine with a cross-section that represents all of CT. The Foundation had previously been tied to the Council but went through the process of separating the two legislatively. However, the Foundation still needs to report to the Council.

The Foundation's goal is to raise \$100 MM in an endowment, and they already have commitments for \$10 MM. The funds would support creatives with a livable wage for one to three years. The Foundation meets every two weeks and hopes to have all members appointed by the Spring to start working on the process for application and selection.

There was a brief discussion on defining diversity for the Council and Foundation while understanding that both groups are appointed.

Director's Report

Director Shapiro reported that in FY 19, COA managed \$6 MM through 300 to 350 grants. In FY 22, those numbers increased to 838 grants totaling \$66 MM with no additional staff. While most of the funds went to art and cultural organizations, some were not, and the increase was due to the American Rescue Plan Act grants legislatively designated to DECD to administer. She also reported that staff has been working on a new website and integrating the Creative Ground directory. COA had partnered with organizations like the CT Art Alliance on a Tourism Road Map to establish meaningful, reliable, and equitable state funding.

Director Shapiro shared upcoming events with the Council. October 27-29th was the first SHIFT workshop with Air Collaborative in West Haven. The City of West Haven decided to create a passport system for downtown businesses. The Art Hero Award celebration will be on January 18th at the Infinity Hall. The state finals for Poetry Out Loud featuring the eight regional finalists will take place on March 11th at The Bushnell.

Other Business

There was no other business to discuss.

Adjournment

Chairman Rosenberg reminded Council members that the next meeting would be on Monday, December 6th.

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 2:46 pm.

Motion: C. Jones | Second: F. Green | Discussion: No additional discussion.

In favor: 6, Opposed: 0, Abstentions: 0

Meeting adjourned at 2:46 pm.