

Minutes
Special Council Meeting
April 15, 2020
2 p.m.

Pennsylvania Council on the Arts
Skype Conference Call

Karl Blischke, Executive Director, welcomed those in attendance and turned the meeting over to Chair Parks.

Chair Parks called the meeting to order and went over guidelines regarding the format of the meeting and asked Mr. Blischke to call the roll.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT VIA SKYPE: Chair Parks, Mr. Alaquiva, Mr. Astorino, Ms. Colon (via proxy), Ms. Goldberg, Judge Morgan, Mr. Stull, Mr. Warfield (via proxy), Mr. West, Ms. Zaborney.

COUNCIL MEMBERS NOT PRESENT: Representative Ciresi, Mr. Gabel, Senator Iovino, Mr. Lehr, Representative Pickett, Senator Ward, Ms. Vilayphonh.

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT VIA SKYPE: Karl Blischke, Executive Director; Heather Doughty, Deputy Executive Director; Jamie Dunlap, Chief of Creative Catalysts & Lifelong Learning; Amy Gabriele, Chief of Finance & Administration; Norah Johnson, Director of Public Awareness & External Affairs; Laura Kline, Executive Assistant; Sarah Merritt, Director of Creative Communities; Dana Payne, Director of DEI Initiatives, Diverse Cultures & Heritage; Seth Poppy, Director of Data Systems & Creative Services; Ian Rosario, Grants Liaison; and, Matthew Serio, Director of Creative Opportunities.

GUESTS PRESENT VIA SKYPE: Rodney Akers, Chief Counsel and Meggan Kerber, Berks Arts Council.

CALL TO ORDER:

Jeff Parks, Chair

Chair Parks called the meeting to order at 2:03 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

Karl Blischke, Executive Director

Mr. Blischke called the roll. A quorum was established

WELCOME

Jeff Parks, Chair

Chair Parks thanked the Council for participating in this special meeting.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Jeff Parks, Chair

Chair Parks reminded the Council of the PCA's conflict of interest policy.

ITEM 1 ACTION: Recommendations for 2019-20 Arts in Education Partnership Residency Funds

Jamie Dunlap, Chief of Creative Catalysts & Lifelong Learning

Ms. Dunlap reported that light of the current health epidemic, COVID 19, and the economic and community impact it is having on the creative sector in Pennsylvania, PCA staff have been discussing ways that PCA can be responsive and supportive.

Ms. Dunlap stated that an area that PCA will be able to provide support is through the Arts in Education (AIE) Partnership Residency funding. As a reminder for Council, Ms. Dunlap explained that this is the 10 to 20 days when a teaching artist is spending time with core groups of participant students. Ms. Dunlap reported that those funds have already been allocated in the accounts of all the AIE partners and are allocated for events that occur mainly in the springtime. Ms. Dunlap explained that specifically due to the impact of Covid-19, many of the residencies have been rescheduled or cancelled altogether or changed with respect to the format in which they are being delivered.

Ms. Dunlap explained that because the AIE partners will have difficulty deploying the residency funds under the current PCA guidelines due to Covid-19, PCA recommends that Council authorize the following adjustments for AIE Partners' artist residency activities supported with Fiscal Year 2019-2020 funds:

1. A waiver of the 1:1 match requirement;
2. A waiver of exclusion of expenses related to materials;
3. A waiver of location-based requirements; and
4. A waiver of core group requirements.

Ms. Dunlap reported that partners are required to have at least one residence in each county that they serve, which is the location requirement and PCA staff is recommending that this requirement be waived.

Ms. Dunlap stated that PCA staff also recommends waiving the core group requirement due to Covid-19. She added that PCA is looking to open this up to the partner and their teaching artist to be creative and possibly think of different virtual platforms or online possibilities to provide those arts in education services. Ms. Dunlap explained that these changes will require amendments to the AIE Partners' contracts with the PCA.

Chair Parks asked if the funds are already in the field. And Ms. Dunlap replied that they have already been allocated.

Mr. Stull asked if these funds are intended for school districts or for individual artists providing the programs.

Ms. Dunlap responded that the funds in this case are for the teaching artist who will be providing the creative opportunities through virtual or unique platforms and there also may be some costs such as supply packets for the participants in a virtual program.

Mr. Stull also asked what would happen if the partner or the participating facility would prohibit an activity taking place at that time because of Covid-19.

Ms. Dunlap responded that this would apply to a location-based requirement, which is one of the other things that PCA staff is requesting to be waived. She added that PCA staff wants to open this up and let the artist be creative on how they may provide these services to communities.

Chair Parks asked for a motion. Ms. Goldberg made a motion to approve the recommendations. Mr. West seconded the motion. Motion carried, none abstained or opposed.

ITEM 2 ACTION: Recommendations for 2019-20 PA Partners in the Arts Project Stream Funds

Matthew Serio, Director of Creative Opportunities

Mr. Serio reported that because of the impact of Covid-19 on arts projects planned by Pennsylvania Partners in the Arts (PPA) Project Stream grantees, PCA has had many requests from the field for permission to reallocate project grant funds to general operating support.

Mr. Serio stated that the current contracts between the grantees and the partner organizations allow an extension to December 31, 2020, which is beyond the standard grant cycle of September 1, 2019 – August 31, 2020. Mr. Serio explained that because events, such as summer concert series and school programs, have been cancelled and will not occur this year due to Covid-19, the grantees will be unable to complete their projects by the end of 2020. Mr. Serio added that currently, if grantees are unable complete their projects by that date, they are required to return the funds to the partner organizations to return the funds to the Commonwealth.

Mr. Serio reported that these funds were awarded to the partner from the 2018-2019 budget and therefore can no longer be reallocated by the PCA to other arts organizations. He explained that if the funds are returned to the Commonwealth, they will be returned to the general budget and cannot be used for arts programming.

Mr. Serio explained that in order to address the challenges presented by Covid-19, PCA recommends that Council authorize the recommendations outlined below specifically for Project Stream activities planned for Fiscal Year 2019-2020:

1. If a project stream grantee cannot perform the project as proposed in their contract with their partner organization by December 31st, 2020, they may use the grant funds for other arts related activities, including general operating support.
2. If the project stream grantee is not an arts organization and does not have other arts programming taking place before the extended deadline, the funds must be returned to the partner organization as PPA administrative funds for the partner organization.
3. All changes to contracts must be reflected in final reports to the partner organizations and the PCA.

Ms. Goldberg asked Mr. Serio to clarify partner organizations or grantees.

Mr. Serio explained that these funds were from the 2018/19 budget and were awarded to PPA Partner organizations and the contracts are with the grantees. Mr. Serio added that currently, if the grantee is unable to complete the project then the money would go to the PPA Partner organization.

Chair Parks asked for a motion. Judge Morgan made a motion to approve the recommendations. Ms. Goldberg seconded the motion. Motion carried, none abstained or opposed.

ITEM 3 ACTION: Authorization for Executive Committee Action on any Remaining Fiscal Year 2019-2020 Budget Matter

Karl Blischke, Executive Director

Mr. Blischke reported that although PCA staff do not anticipate the need for additional budget action relating to Fiscal Year 2019-2020, out of an abundance of caution, PCA staff recommend that Council authorize the Executive Committee to act on any Fiscal Year 2019-2020 budget matter that may arise through June 30, 2020.

Mr. Blischke stated that this authorization would give the Executive Committee authority to act, if necessary. He added that the Executive Committee would then report back to council on any action taken.

Chair Parks asked for a motion. Mr. Stull made a motion to approve the authorization. Judge Morgan seconded the motion. Motion carried, none abstained or opposed.

ITEM 4 INFORMATION: Update on National Endowment for the Arts Funds

Heather Doughty, Deputy Executive Director

Ms. Doughty provided an update on the NEA FUNDING CARES ACT (Coronus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security) ACT, which is a \$75 million emergency federal appropriation to the National Endowment for the Arts by the recent Federal CARES Act.

Ms. Doughty explained that this act was part of the original enabling legislation for the Arts Endowment where 40% of the appropriated federal funds would go to the states. Ms. Doughty stated that as a result, \$30 million has been apportioned to 56 states/jurisdictions, and 6 Regional Arts Organizations.

Ms. Doughty stated that PCA has been informed and will receive \$527,000 as funds to distribute through its funding programs. She explained that organizations that have received NEA grants in the past four years are eligible to apply for a direct grant.

Ms. Doughty stated that Pennsylvania has less than 200 organizations, out of 3,700 nationally, eligible to apply for direct grants of \$50,000. She explained that approved sub-granting agencies can apply for \$100,000 or \$250,000. (None in PA). (So, with \$45 million that is fewer than 900 grants nationally).

Ms. Doughty reported that Mid Atlantic will be making grants of \$30,000 to organizations not receiving direct funds from the NEA.

Ms. Doughty stated that applications are due April 22 and grants will be announced by June 30th. Ms. Doughty explained that funds can be used for staff salary support, fees for artists or contractual personnel, and facilities costs and they do not require a match. She added that the applications will be reviewed by panels and judged on artistic excellence and merit, which includes the potential to have an immediate impact on the arts workforce; and the ability to carry out an award.

Ms. Doughty reported that the PCA has already received numerous inquiries about the federal CARES funding coming to Pennsylvania. She explained that expectations are high but \$525,000 is a very small figure for an arts rich state. Ms. Doughty stated that PCA has been informed that its current grant has been amended and that the PCA will still need spending authority, which is in the works.

Ms. Doughty explained that Federal funds come with additional reporting requirements and require organizations have a DUNS number (Data Universal Numbering System).

Ms. Doughty reported that PCA staff have been discussing the best way to distribute these funds. She explained that PCA's capacity to make grants has limitations, not the least of which being that PCA is still processing the current year grants. Doughty added that many states are augmenting their current grants.

Ms. Doughty explained that NEA is looking for: subgrant amounts, salaries & wages and fringe benefit amounts, operating cost amounts, and anticipated number of subgrants.

Mr. Blischke explained that PCA is working on a way to provide meaningful support to organizations. He added that impact is immense to organizations of all sizes across the state.

Mr. Blischke stated that he will be participating on a call with NEA and state art directors. He explained that the purpose of the call is to discuss ways that state arts agencies can distribute funds. Mr. Blischke added that he is planning on seeking Council input and approval on how to proceed.

Chair Parks stated that funds will be deployed in Pennsylvania and explained that there are 1,600 PCA grantees across the state and if PCA allocates the same amount to each agency, it will amount for approximately \$300 per agency.

Judge Morgan asked if priority is given to organizations that were already accepted as grantees.

Mr. Blischke replied that there will be a range of things that Council will consider. Mr. Blischke also added this grant is in specific response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Ms. Doughty reported that the Small Business Administration has implemented additional initiatives that have benefitted arts organizations, such as a payment relief package that helps organizations retain employees as well as small business loan programs.

Chair Parks stated that Council will be updated.

Meeting was adjourned.