



Power of culture

COUNCIL MEETING BOOK

ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY-NINTH MEETING

OF

MASS CULTURAL COUNCIL

WEDNESDAY, MAY 24, 2023

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MASS CULTURAL COUNCIL
WEDNESDAY, MAY 24, 2023

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ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY-NINTH MEETING OF MASS CULTURAL COUNCIL

WEDNESDAY, MAY 24, 2023: 10:00 AM TO NOON

BROADCAST MEETING

MEETING WILL BE LIVESTREAMED ON MASS CULTURAL'S YOUTUBE CHANNEL AT
COUNCIL MEETING - YOUTUBE

MEETING MATERIALS WILL BE POSTED AT
<https://massculturalcouncil.org/about/board/>
UNDER "MAY 24, 2023 COUNCIL MEETING"

AGENDA

VOTE

1. Call to Order, Welcomes and Open Meeting Law Notice
2. Mission Moment
 - Leah Abel, Founder & Executive Director of Circus Up
3. Minutes
 - 158th Council Meeting
4. Chair Report
5. Executive Director's Report
 - Agency Updates
 - FY 24-26 Strategic Plan Implementation
6. Advocacy & Legislative Report
 - FY24 State Budget

X

7. Cultural Equity and Access Report
8. FY23 Financial Update
9. Mass Humanities - Executive Director Brian Boyles
 - Overview of the Organization and Relationship with Mass Cultural Council
 - Update on Use of Pandemic Recovery Funds
10. Adjourn



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MASS CULTURAL COUNCIL

MAY 24, 2023

RESOLUTIONS

Section 3

RESOLVED: To approve the minutes of the One Hundred Fifty-Eighth Meeting of Mass Cultural Council.

OPEN MEETING LAW STATEMENT

Please note that this meeting is an open meeting of a public body subject to the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law. A notice of this meeting together with the agenda was posted on Mass Cultural Council's website 48 or more hours ago (excluding weekends and holidays).

This meeting shall be open and accessible to all members of the public except at such times when this body has voted to go into closed executive session under the Open Meeting Law.

This meeting is a virtual meeting held under the Open Meeting Law as modified under current law to permit online meetings. This meeting is being broadcast to the public on a publicly available YouTube channel as described in the posted meeting notice.

Instructions on how to contact the Council with questions or problems accessing the broadcast are also included in such notice. Only Council members, staff and invited guests will be provided access to the Zoom platform hosting the meeting. As a safety measure, in order to prevent disruption of the meeting or non-public communications among the participants, the Chair, Vice Chair and Executive Committee of Mass Cultural Council has asked staff to implement the following protocols for participants in on-line meetings of Mass Cultural Council or its committees:

- Any "chat" or similar function on the Zoom platform hosting the meeting shall be disabled.
- Other than Council members or participants specifically recognized by the Chair of the meeting, all Zoom platform participants will be muted and have no ability to share media or documents or project or type images or text.
- All participants in the Zoom platform may be required to enter a waiting room and digitally sign-in before being admitted.

- Any attendee in the Zoom platform who nonetheless causes a disruption will be summarily removed from the meeting at the discretion of the Chair.

This meeting is not a public hearing and public testimony will not be taken. Individuals may not address the meeting without permission of the Chair.

Any member of the public may record this meeting provided that they do not interfere with the meeting.

Draft minutes of the open session of this meeting shall be kept and shall be posted on Mass Cultural Council's website no later than 30 days after the meeting provided that such minutes shall not be considered official until they have been approved by this body in open session. Individuals asserting a violation of the Open Meeting Law may file a complaint with this body within 30 days or with the Attorney General's office thereafter.

**TIPS FOR PARTICIPATING IN A VIRTUAL OPEN MEETING USING ZOOM OR OTHER
VIDEOCONFERENCING PLATFORMS WHEN THERE ARE SEVERAL PARTICIPANTS
(adapted from several sources)**

- In order to minimize background noise, please mute microphone when not speaking.
- Please raise hand in order to be recognized by the chair.
- In order for all members to have an opportunity to speak and be heard, please wait to speak until specifically recognized by the chair.
- If there are questions, please direct them to the chair and the chair will then recognize the appropriate person to respond.
- Please limit statements to three minutes.
- The chair will reserve the right to limit discussion in order to allow sufficient time for every member to be heard who wishes to speak.
- Modify Video Settings to “Hide all non-video participants”- this will make it easier to follow who is speaking and participating
- In the event of a service interruption during a Zoom call due to hackers, so-called “zoom bombing” or other technical difficulties, staff will indicate the call is to be terminated. Please exit the call and staff will circulate instructions by email for a new Zoom call to continue the meeting.



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UNOFFICIAL DRAFT SUBJECT TO APPROVAL BY THE COUNCIL AT ITS NEXT MEETING

**MINUTES OF THE ONE HUNDRED-FIFTY EIGHTH MEETING
OF
MASS CULTURAL COUNCIL**

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 22, 2023

ONLINE MEETING

Council Members Present were

Nina Fialkow, Chair
Marc Carroll, Vice Chair
Che Anderson
Barbara Schaffer Bacon
Karen Barry
Cecil Barron Jensen
Jo-Ann Davis
Simone Early
Matthew Keator
Ann Murphy
Allyce Najimy
Mark Snyder

Also Present were Mass Cultural Council Staff Members Michael J. Bobbitt, David Slatery, Catherine Cheng-Anderson, Jen Lawless, Bethann Steiner, Charles Baldwin, Cheyenne Cohn-Postell, Ann Petruccelli Moon, Carmen Plazas, Carolyn Cole, Diane Daily, Lisa Simmons, and Kate McDougall; Meg O'Brien from The Huntington Theatre; MA Poetry Out Loud Champion Jaden Riley; John Bye and Ilse Godfrey, Co-Chairs of the Cummington Cultural District Committee; and Steve Poltorzycki, Chair of the Lexington Council for the Arts.

Chair Nina Fialkow called the meeting to order at 10:00am and asked Deputy Director David Slatery to read the Open Meeting Law statement:

Please note that this meeting is an open meeting of a public body subject to the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law. A notice of this meeting together with the agenda was posted on Mass Cultural Council's website 48 or more hours ago (excluding weekends and holidays).

Prepared on 4/26/23

This meeting shall be open and accessible to all members of the public except at such times when this body has voted to go into closed executive session under the Open Meeting Law.

This meeting is a virtual meeting held under the Open Meeting Law as modified under current law to permit online open meetings. This meeting is being broadcast to the public on a publicly available YouTube or other channel as described in the publicly posted meeting notice. Only Council members, staff and invited participants and guests will be provided access to the Zoom or other videoconferencing platform hosting the meeting. As a safety measure, to prevent disruption of the meeting or non-public communications among the participants, the Chair, Vice Chair and Executive Committee of Mass Cultural Council has asked staff to implement the following protocols for participants in on-line meetings of Mass Cultural Council or its committees:

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- Any attendee in the Zoom platform who nonetheless causes a disruption will be summarily removed from the meeting at the discretion of the Chair.

This meeting is not a public hearing and public testimony will not be taken. Individuals may not address the meeting without permission of the Chair.

Any member of the public may record this meeting provided they do not interfere with the meeting. The Chair will then inform the members of the meeting that they are being recorded.

Draft minutes of the open session of this meeting shall be kept and shall be posted on Mass Cultural Council's website no later than 30 days after the meeting provided that such minutes shall not be considered official until they have been approved by this body in open session. Individuals asserting a violation of the Open Meeting Law may file a complaint with this body within 30 days or with the Attorney General's office thereafter.

Executive Director Michael Bobbitt then introduced the meeting's Mission Moment, today focused on Poetry Out Loud. The Agency's partner in Poetry Out Loud is the Huntington Theatre; Meg O'Brien from the Huntington gave a brief overview of the program, and then 2023 MA Poetry Out Loud Champion Jaden Riley recited two poems: *The Negro Speaks of Rivers* by Langston Hughes and *April Midnight* by Arthur Symons. Jaden attends the John D. O'Bryant School of Mathematics and Science in Roxbury. Program Manager Diane Daily made a few brief remarks about the program and let Council Members know that she would be retiring in April after more than 20 years with the Agency.

Nina thanked Diane for her many years with Mass Cultural Council. She then asked Council Members if they had had a chance to review the Minutes from their last meeting on January 26, 2023 and, if so, she would look for a motion to

approve them. Barbara Schaffer Bacon moved to approve the minutes, and Che Anderson seconded the motion. By roll call vote and noting that Ann Murphy and Mark Snyder abstained from the vote (but were still present for quorum purposes) as they had not attended the January Meeting and Simone Early was temporarily away for the vote and noting that Troy Siebels, Kathleen Castro, Barbara Krauthamer, and Sherry Dong were absent it was

RESOLVED: To approve the minutes of the One Hundred Fifty-Seventh Meeting of Mass Cultural Council.

Nina took a moment to welcome and introduce Mark Snyder, the newest member of the Council, she then asked Michael for his Executive Director's report.

Michael let the Council know the last two months have been busy, primarily with the release of pandemic monies – notifications, contracting, working with the Comptroller's Office. The fiscal team is working hard, and the rest of the staff is pitching in to help; the Agency is also hosting grant celebrations across the state. Staff is deeply embedded in strategic planning work which will inform planning for next fiscal year. Budget advocacy for FY24 is beginning, Bethann Steiner will share more on that topic.

Nina thanked Michael for his report and noted that attendance at pandemic grant celebrations has been impressive. Vice Chair Marc Carroll attended a celebration in Beverly earlier that week and said it was wonderful. Nina then asked Program Officer Carolyn Cole for her presentation on the two proposed Cultural Districts seeking approval from the Council today.

Carolyn first introduced John Bye and Ilse Godfrey, Co-Chairs of the Cummington Cultural District Committee who joined the meeting, then shared her screen and gave a presentation on the proposed District which, if approved, would become arguably the most rural of all Massachusetts cultural districts. A copy of the presentation is available upon request. Once the presentation was completed, John Bye thanked the Council for their consideration and explained that the town had worked on its proposal for three years. The designation would help the town celebrate its rich history and provide the community with an opportunity to bring residents together, attract visitors, and spur economic growth.

Nina thanked Carolyn and John and stated that if there were no questions, she would look for a motion to approve the proposed designation. Barbara Schaffer moved to approve the designation and Jo-Ann Davis seconded the motion. By roll call vote all Council Members present were in favor and noting Troy Siebels, Kathleen Castro, Barbara Krauthamer, and Sherry Dong were absent it was

RESOLVED: To approve the designation of a cultural district in Cummington, Massachusetts in accordance with the memoranda presented to the Council Meeting.

Nina congratulated the Cummington representatives, then asked Carolyn for her presentation on the proposed Lexington Cultural District; noting briefly that Lexington is her hometown.

Carolyn introduced Steve Poltorzycki, Chair of the Lexington Council for the Arts who joined the meeting for today's vote, then shared her screen and gave a presentation on the proposed District in Lexington, known for its rich colonial past. A copy of the presentation is attached to these minutes. At the conclusion of the presentation Steve Poltorzycki thanked the Council for their consideration of the proposed District noting that the town benefits from a mix of historical assets, landmarks, museums and hopes to attract new cultural organizations and businesses if the designation is approved.

Nina thanked Steve and Carolyn and called for a motion to approve the new Cultural District in Lexington. Karen Barry moved to approve the designation and Allyce Najimy seconded the motion. By roll call vote, all present Council members were in favor and noting Troy Siebels, Kathleen Castro, Barbara Krauthamer, and Sherry Dong were absent it was

RESOLVED: To approve the designation of a cultural district in Lexington, Massachusetts in accordance with the memoranda presented to the Council Meeting.

Nina then asked Public Affairs Director Bethann Steiner for her report on legislative advocacy.

Bethann let Council Members know there is a lot of good news to share. She and Michael are continuing to focus on building partnerships on Beacon Hill, including a strong relationship with the new Healey Driscoll administration; Bethann has heard repeatedly that the Governor and Lieutenant Governor feel strongly about making the arts a priority. When the Governor released her budget on March 1st, she included \$25 million for Mass Cultural Council; this represents an 11% increase for the Agency. Staff reacted with a message of thanks in response and will again share that message on March 31st when testimony is delivered at the House Ways & Means hearing in Gloucester by Deputy Director David Slatery. The Governor also filed a supplemental budget that included \$10 million for the Cultural Facilities Fund. Both bills have a long way to go, staff is letting leadership know the Agency is ready to invest the money equitably across the state. Bethann concluded by thanking Council Members who had attended the Agency's recent pandemic recovery grant celebrations.

Nina thanked Bethann, then asked People & Culture Director Catherine Cheng-Anderson for her Cultural Equity & Access (CEA) update. Catherine let Nina know that Program Officers Cheyenne Cohn-Postell and Charles Baldwin would present today on behalf of the department.

Cheyenne let Council Members know the CEA team has done a good deal of learning, documenting, and operationalizing; and has completed a lion's share of the work included in the Racial Equity Plan. Staff is using this time to reinforce the things they have learned, operationalize the processes that have been created. The team will now expand its focus and create a Native American and Indigenous plan and a Deaf and Disabled plan.

Charles added that the Agency will contract with Art Reach, a Philadelphia non-profit organization devoted to increasing cultural participation among traditionally underrepresented audiences in the disability and low-income sectors, to create its new Deaf and Disabled plan. The Agency will also partner with Open Door Arts (formerly VSA Massachusetts) on a one-year work plan to push a level of accountability for its access practices.

Cheyenne concluded by letting Council Members know that there is a new post on the Agency's Power of Culture blog detailing the processes staff has been operationalizing.

The Chair recognized Karen Barry who stated that she was looking forward to reading the blog post and thanked staff for their efforts; she sincerely appreciates the work of the CEA team.

Nina then asked David for his financial report. David let Council Members know that eight months into the fiscal year the Agency is on track with spending. The fiscal department is remarkably busy processing thousands of contracts and learning a lot. David referred Council Members to the budget spreadsheet in their meeting materials and highlighted that when the Council approved the FY23 spending plan last August, staff anticipated funding 550 projects and festivals; the Agency received 790 applications for Festivals and Projects grants. With that in mind, staff will allocate another \$250-\$260K in available funds so that additional grants can be made. David also let Council Members know that on March 1st the Council submitted its annual report to the legislature on gaming funds and he is happy to circulate the full report to any Council Members who are interested. David noted that the Agency has received \$16.25M in gaming funds since January 2020. Finally, David shared that the Executive Committee met earlier this month and approved out-of-state travel for three members of the leadership team to attend the Grantmakers for Effective Organizations conference in May. There were no questions for David.

Nina then let Council Members know there would be a 10-minute break.

The Council reconvened at 11:05am and turned its attention to the final agenda item: the discussion and approval of the FY24-26 Strategic Plan. Nina explained that work began last June with Strategy Matters, and she thanked Council Members and staff for their help throughout the process. She then asked Vice Chair Marc Carroll to share a brief recap of the March 1st retreat.

Marc explained that Council Members and staff met at the Edward M. Kennedy Institute for the United States Senate in Boston for a retreat to discuss the final portion of the strategic plan – goal planning. The retreat was held in a hybrid format with most participants attending in person and some participating virtually, via Zoom. The retreat began with brainstorming and eventually broke into small groups to discuss the topics that will guide the Agency in the coming years. It was a very productive session led by the team from Strategy Matters and Marc is excited to see the Plan presented to the Council for a vote today.

Nina thanked Marc for his summary, and asked Michael to share his report on the process.

Michael explained that the new Strategic Plan sets forth planning for the next three years which will begin tomorrow with a senior staff retreat. Michael proposed two guiding questions at the beginning of the planning process: what is the value of the Agency to people and organizations who do not get funding and what is the Agency uniquely positioned to do as a state arts agency. The Task Force looked at Mass Cultural Council's enabling act and considered how the Agency defines support. Since we only fund a portion of the sector, we need to reflect deeply on those two questions. Council Members will see in the plan the goal of making the Commonwealth a preeminent place for creativity to thrive, a place where the creative sector is valued as essential, animating a thriving cultural ecosystem. These are not just beliefs but intense, deep work aiming for shifts in mindset and systems change that will benefit everyone in the sector. The work might include this sort of systems change, advancing policy with our partners at MassCreative, educating decision-makers, building and deepening relationships with other state agencies, and convening the sector.

Michael continued to explain that to do this work, the Agency has some major tasks to accomplish first. Grant programs must be consolidated as the Agency is over-programmed. Internal processes must be simplified for the benefit of staff and grantees, barriers to entry must be addressed, and we must continue to focus on outreach. The Agency's operations must be aligned with the strategic plan; the operational model is currently complicated. Staff learned a good deal administering the pandemic recovery grant programs, engaging in cross-Agency work, and simplifying grant applications. Sector-wide convenings will be key and internal competencies in research and data collection must be refined. Lastly, the Agency needs to determine what work it will no longer do: duplicative work, work that does not have a significant sector-wide impact, and professional development. There are an incredible number of professional

development opportunities already available, and the Agency should not and cannot effectively compete with them. The focus needs to be on sector-wide convenings, guiding systems change work, consolidating, and realigning. This work will take a couple of years; systems change work will not begin until the latter half of the strategic plan. The plan the Council will see today outlines strategies, but not tactics. Tactics will come later. Strategy Matters will help craft a work plan, and the Council will have the opportunity to weigh in on it; mostly during the annual planning process. Michael then asked if the team from Strategy Matters could share their presentation so Council Members could look at some of the language together. The full presentation is available upon request.

Michael walked Council Members through the proposed new values, vision, and mission statements; Michael is particularly pleased with the revised vision. He then shared key points relating to the Agency's strategy discussing the new guiding principles: investments that advance equity, education and advocacy resulting in transformational change, and elevating and celebrating the sector. Michael also shared what the Agency will no longer do: convenings by grant program, marketing tickets and events, and professional development. The Agency's goals include stewardship, partnerships, and ensuring that internal structures advance the needs of the sector. The Agency plans to increase its use of data and research in support of storytelling.

Michael paused to see if Council Members had questions or feedback. Mark Snyder shared that social media is something that can be enormously useful in increasing the Agency's brand recognition and asked how staff might use social media moving forward. Michael explained that increasing brand awareness is included in the plan, and eventually that goal would be broken down into tasks. Bethann added that the Agency has a vibrant digital and social media practice and that it will continue.

There were no further questions, and Nina asked Katie Stewart Dorfman and Amanda Santos Jewell from Strategy Matters to give an overview of their work steering the strategic planning process for the Agency.

Katie briefly introduced herself and her team and gave a brief overview of the process. Strategy Matters began the process with the goal of creating a plan that would advance the sector to the public with an eye towards equity and the resulting plan sets the Agency on a path to doing just that. Strategy Matters appreciates the efforts of Council Members and staff who participated in the process. The final step in the process will be to look at key indicators and articulate what success will look like for each goal and the overall mission.

That concluded the presentation on the new strategic plan and Nina opened the meeting to discussion and questions from the Council.

Simone Early was part of the Task Force and let her fellow Council Members know that she was impressed with the process and the gathering of information; it was impressive, thorough, and helped the Task Force understand how all elements of the plan would fit together.

Ann Murphy also enjoyed the process and learned a lot. Strategy Matters helped the Task Force identify areas where the Agency needs improvement. She asked when the plan would be shared publicly and what the plan is to do so.

Michael explained that the exact plan is still being defined, but that staff would share the new plan as part of sector-wide convenings in the fall. As an initial step, staff will share a blog post later today if the Council votes to adopt the plan.

Nina added that the Agency is required by the National Endowment for the Arts to conduct a strategic planning process every five years. There were no further questions or discussion, so Nina asked for a motion to adopt the FY24-FY26 strategic plan. Mark Snyder moved to adopt the plan; Allyce Najimy seconded the motion. By roll call vote and noting Troy Siebels, Kathleen Castro, Barbara Krauthamer, and Sherry Dong were absent it was unanimously

RESOLVED: To approve and accept the FY2024-2026 Strategic Plan for the Mass Cultural Council in the form presented to the Council on March 22, 2023

Nina thanked Council Members for their efforts toward creating the new strategic plan, she is excited to bring it forth to the field. There was no further business and Nina, as Chair, adjourned the meeting at 11:39am.



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To: Mass Cultural Council
Fr: Staff
Dt: May 24, 2023
Re: Agency Updates

EXECUTIVE

Executive Committee. The Executive Committee met on May 3 to approve out of state travel as discussed in the Finance Update contained in Section 9 of the meeting materials and to approve the agenda for today's Council meeting.

Strategic Plan Implementation/Executive Office. As will be discussed in further detail during the Executive Director's report at the May Council Meeting, agency management has changed this month to better align the organization of staff with the goals and objectives of the newly-adopted FY24-26 Strategic Plan. As part of such change, a new Executive Office consisting of the Executive Director (Michael Bobbitt), Deputy Director (Dave Slatery) and Manager of Executive Affairs (Ann Petruccelli Moon) which will oversee three departments comprising the rest of the agency- Program Operations, Public Affairs and Business Operations.

Pandemic Recovery Funds Report. Under the 2021 legislation providing Mass Cultural Council with \$60 Million in funding to address pandemic recovery needs for the Cultural Sector, the agency is required to provide a report to the state each June 1 detailing the grants made from these funds in prior twelve months. Last year the report described the contribution of \$5.56 Million of Pandemic Recovery Funds to the Cultural Facilities Fund in 2022 and this year's report will detail the 5200+ Cultural Sector Recovery Grants for Organizations and Individuals approved at the Council in January as well as the \$2.5 Million allocation to Mass Humanities made as part of the FY23 Spending Plan. Staff is currently compiling all the required data and anticipates filing such report on or around the date of the May 24 Council Meeting and a copy will be provided to all Council Members.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Advocacy/State Budget

- The House of Representatives completed their FY24 Budget Debate in April and Mass Cultural Council received a total of \$25,895,000 in the final [House Budget](#). This appropriation reflects an 11% increase to the current Agency operating budget and funding for 16 House earmarks, local projects and organizations of priority for various Members. We appreciate this funding and are thankful for the support and partnership we see from the House not only for Mass Cultural Council, but also the creative and cultural sector.
- The Massachusetts Senate Committee on Ways & Means released their FY24 spending proposal on May 9. In anticipation Mass Cultural Council has met with the Senate President, the Senate Committee on Ways and Means (SWM), the Senate Chair of Tourism, Arts & Cultural Development (TACD) and had conversations with other Senate members about our \$25 Million funding request for FY 24. We are very excited to report that the SWM budget includes the Agency's \$25 Million funding request! We are working with TACD Committee Chair Paul Mark on an amendment that changes the language of our line-item to reference our new Strategic Plan goals, as the Final House Budget did. If we do not file an amendment, or if we do but it is not adopted, the new language would still be subject to conference as it is included in the Final House Budget. The Senate budget debate is scheduled to take place the week of May 22.

Communications

- One directive we have from the new Strategic Plan is to embrace and try new tools, technologies, and modes of external communication. To this end Public Affairs worked with the Festivals & Projects team to pilot recording the FY24 Program Guidelines and FAQs as audio files. These are available on the Agency website, allowing those who prefer to listen to information another opportunity to learn about this program. In this cycle, Festivals & Projects applicants can READ the program guidelines and FAQs, WATCH a virtual information session, LISTEN to the audio guidelines and FAQs, STREAM an IG Live Q&A Session, and ATTEND virtual office hours with the staff. We hope this pilot will be helpful to our stakeholders and increase both access to and understanding of this program.

CULTURAL INVESTMENT PORTFOLIO (CIP)

The Cultural Investment Portfolio (CIP) team has been working on a redesign of the Portfolio/Organization Support Grant program, in addition to supporting grantees of the Cultural Sector Recovery Grant program and managing year-end reporting requirements for current grantees.

Although the CIP team has not been conducting site visits, we continue to consult with CIP organizations and potential applicants through online platforms.

Card to Culture. In April 2023, Card to Culture announced the program's one millionth administered discount – an amazing success story of partnering with other state agencies and cultural organizations to extend access to the Commonwealth's arts, humanities, and interpretive science organizations.

CIP Program Officer Greg Torrales has been meeting with close to a hundred organizations (mostly performing arts) to discuss how they implement the program, including staff training, patron engagement, and outreach. Findings from the 2022 Card to Culture Annual Report were summarized and published in a blog post in March. As of May 1, 362 organizations or sites are participating in this access program.

Festivals & Projects. CIP Program Officer Kalyn King worked with Communities Program Officer Timothea Pham to finalize the grant process for over 700 Festivals & Projects grants for FY23, and then quickly turned the process around to launch the Festivals & Projects grants for FY24. This moves the program to a time of year that is better aligned with grantees' needs. The two Program Officers have conducted online information sessions and office hours to assist grant applicants. There is more information on the program elsewhere in the Council materials.

Gaming Mitigation. CIP Program Officer Lillian Lee continued to provide contract support to the grantee organizations in the FY23 Gaming Mitigation Program. She has also conducted a survey of the applicant organizations and is working to simplify and streamline application materials for next fiscal year.

COMMUNITY INITIATIVE

The Communities Team has successfully completed the FY23 LCC grant application cycle (September 1-October 17, 2022) and all municipalities have received their allocations. Staff has also completed the Cultural Districts Grant Program, and Timothea Pham worked with CIP Program Officer Kalyn King to finalize the grant process for over 700 Festivals & Projects grants for FY23, and then quickly turned the process around to launch the Festivals & Projects grants for FY24.

The Communities Initiative team is currently in the process of hiring a new Program Officer who will be the contact for the South Central and Franklin County regions.

Local Cultural Council (LCC) Program. LCC Program Officers are currently visiting councils who are holding grantee receptions and working on guideline revisions for the FY24 grant cycle in addition to training new members. In addition, the team hosted a Community Check In that focused on bringing youth members on to Local Cultural Councils. The program was moderated by Program Officers Jay Wong and Guelmi Espinal and a recording of the program can be found [here](#). The Communities team is also looking at new ways to present trainings and content in the next fiscal year using video and training modules to support the program.

In addition, we are working to incorporate recommendations from a survey to send to LCC members regarding the past year's grant cycle into changes to the GMS system and exploring expanding the LCC program to include Tribal Governments.

Cultural Districts. 53 districts received this year's round of CDI grants of \$15,000, totaling \$795,000.

The designation of two new Cultural Districts received approval at our March Council meeting: the Town of Cummington – Cummington Cultural District, and the Town of Lexington - Lexington Cultural District. Staff recently attended events in Harwich, alongside local and state representatives, to celebrate the opening of Harwich's two newly designated districts. A celebration is planned in Lexington later this month and will be well-represented by the agency.

Staff continues to field inquiries from, and/or has met with stakeholders in, Holyoke, East Somerville, Brookline, Middleborough, Adams, Melrose, Ipswich, Danvers, Dennis, Oak Bluffs, Watertown, Brockton, Amesbury, Groton, Lawrence, Methuen, and Norwood. Staff will hold meetings, both virtual and in-person, throughout the coming months, to assess and support these prospective municipalities.

Staff continues to provide ongoing opportunities for Cultural District teams to connect and collaborate, share resources, information and best practices, and to learn from subject matter experts on topics they've identified as their primary areas of focus such as Equity & Access, Regional & Collaborative Programming, and Inclusive & Participatory Cultural Planning.

In line with new procedural protocol for districts working through their fifth year of designation, Program Officers continue to meet with district leaders and

partners to assess their successes, challenges and needs to ensure they are being properly supported as they progress to their ten-year milestone.

ARTISTS

Cultural Sector Recovery Grants for Individuals: The team continues to support grantees through the contracting process – still many questions and issues!

Work Without Limits: Related – the Agency is partnering with Work Without Limits, out of UMass Chan Medical School, to offer specialized counseling to grantees who receive public benefits; the counselors are offering vital guidance on how to minimize any negative impact to public benefits from the grant's income

Funding for Individual Creatives in FY24: Artists Team is working with Sr. Staff to develop plans for a redesigned funding program for artists/culture bearers/creative individuals with an emphasis on more inclusion and increased reach. More to come in June.

Folk Arts & Heritage Program: Maggie visited with three apprenticeship teams, Chinese papercutting, Irish sign painting/Celtic knotwork, and Uyghur calligraphy. The latter is an endangered art due to the Chinese Genocide of Uyghurs in East Turkestan. Radio Free Asia featured their apprenticeship last December which was encouraging to those in Uyghur diasporic communities around the globe.

Lowell Folk Festival: Maggie is hard at work curating folk craft area artisans for Lowell Folk Festival, July 28-July 30, 2023.

In the Field: Maggie delivered the Dorson Lecture at Indiana University last month, "So Many Traditions, So Little Time: Reflections of a State Folklorist." Dan joined Michael Bobbitt and Carolyn Cole, in April, for an all-day visit/tour/celebration of Cultural Sector Recovery grantees in Springfield - there were 138 grantees in the city of Springfield, alone!

EDUCATION & CREATIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT (CYD)

META/CYD Programs Conclude. The META Fellowship hosted its final session on May 6th, after seven years of operation. The META Fellowship Showcase was hosted by Zumix and was an all-day celebration for the teaching artist community in Massachusetts. The session was attended by Representative Adrian Madaro and Boston City Councilor Gabriella Coletta. With more than 50 guests and youth performers from Zumix and Berkshire Pulse, the program included workshops presented by META and CYD Fellows and celebrated the

more than 120 teaching artists and educators who took part in the program over the past seven years.

STARS Residencies. Poetry Out Loud. Creative Minds.

- STARS - Celebrated Diane Daily's 20+ years at Mass Cultural Council. We are working to transition STARS and introducing ourselves to the 63% of grantees who are organizations who are receiving their first STARS grant (150).
- [Poetry Out Loud](#) held their state championships and on March 12, the MA state champion Jaden Riley was selected to travel to Washington, D.C. and participate in the national finals during the 2023 Poetry Out Loud National Finals on May 9, 10th (read more here [Poetry Out Loud Takes Students from the Page to the Stage](#))
- We concluded the [Creative Minds Out of School Program](#)

CYD/YouthReach

- The [Youth Arts Impact Network](#). (YAIN) continued to foster the needed networking and trainings that the CYD sector, STARS, and Teaching Artists. Julia Gittleman has provided one-on-one consultations with 28 organizations or programs for a total of more than 80 individual consulting sessions, representing considerable geographic diversity.
- On March 26, 2023, we hosted our most recent Virtual convening for the Creative Youth Development field, on **Data as Power** featuring Tim Lord from DreamYard (Bronx , NY) speaking about YAIN's 3C Data Alliance, and Lina Maria Giraldo on Data Visualization and Data-Driven Storytelling (Emerson College).

CultureRx

- Our Strategic Consultant in Social Prescription, [Amy Bantham](#), completed Phase 1 and 2 of her consultancy and moved to Phase 3 where she created [a report](#) of recommendations for the transfer of CultureRx: Social Prescription. There she noted that [Art Pharmacy](#) is best positioned to serve as a host entity (no other organization is in a position to implement arts/culture prescription in the near-term). In April, we developed a job description for the host and received a potential proposal for FY24.
- On March 31, we met with the Social Prescription cohort pilot organizations for both a hybrid Zoom meeting and an in-person meeting at The Clark. We were joined by Dr. Amy Bantham and Dr. Tasha Golden who [presented](#) the next steps for the Field Guide and about the process of finding the new potential entity, Art Pharmacy.
- Art Pharmacy met with and presented to cultural orgs., providers, and other small calls with stakeholders.
- On April 28 we convened a Think Tank to both raise awareness among Massachusetts stakeholders for Foundations, payers, healthcare systems,

nonprofit organizations, and for-profit entities about the value of art/culture/nature prescription as well as to narrow in on logistics for potential partnerships. Art Pharmacy presented and 13 cross-sector partners participated.

CULTURAL FACILITIES FUND (CFF)

In early March, Mass Cultural Council convened seven panels to review 179 CFF applications. Twenty-five panelists were selected who had expertise in a variety of fields including: non-profit business planning, real estate development, capital fundraising, community development, finance, architecture, and historic preservation. The materials were sent to the panelists four weeks in advance of the Zoom meetings. In addition, the panelists were introduced to the concept of unintended bias to improve the review process.

As part of Mass Cultural Council's Racial Equity Goals staff worked with the Council's Black Indigenous People of Color Outreach Coordinators and the result was 50% of the panelists were people of color.

The panelists numerically score each section of the application. Cultural Facilities Fund Program Director, Jay Paget and CFF Program Officer Miranda Cook facilitated each panel discussion to ensure that all applications received a thorough review based on the criteria in the published guidelines.

The total dollar request to the Fund was \$20.2 million and the combined total development costs of all projects was \$242 million.

On April 26, staff recommended 95 grants to the CFF Advisory Committee. The grant recommendations for this round include Capital Grants; Feasibility and Technical Assistance Grants; and Systems Replacement Plan Grants. The recommendations in these categories were as follows:

- 60 Capital Grants: \$6,981,000
- 25 Feasibility and Technical Assistance Grants: \$668,000
- 10 Systems Replacement Plan Grants: \$99,000
- 95 Grants Total: \$7,748,000

MassDevelopment voted to approve 94 grant recommendations for \$7,661,000 on May 11. (One capital grant for \$87,000 was unfortunately put off due to quorum/conflict issues and should be approved later when a quorum is available)



Power of culture

To: Mass Cultural Council
Fr: Cathy Cheng-Anderson, Charles Baldwin, Cheyenne Cohn-Postell
RE: Cultural Equity & Access Progress Report
DT: May 24, 2023

Cultural Equity & Access Progress Report

April 2023 – May 2023

INTERNAL

Strategic Plan (2024-2026)

- UP Designated organizations: As we enter year 2 of the new 5-year Innovation Fund, our focus will be on integrating the UP Designation into agency-wide granting priorities and Equity Points.
- Staff Working Group: actively focusing on agency-wide priority and equity points to ensure alignment with our strategic objectives.

Disability Equity Plan

- The UP Innovation Learning Network will continue to be paused in FY24, while Open Door Arts works to build up the program and we search for its new host and agency partner.
- Our Disability Equity consultants, Art-Reach and Open Door Arts, are in the process of collecting data and drafting action steps. The Agency timeline for public announcement is planned for January 2025.

Racial Equity Plan

- BIPOC-Centered Organization Self-Identification: We have made significant progress with over 300 organizations self-identifying as BIPOC-centered, and we expect this number to grow with rolling submissions.
- Staff Learning Sessions – [View the Unconscious Bias presentation.](#)

Prepared on 5/16/23

EXTERNAL

Community Connections

- Access consultations: Cape Ann Plein Air, Museum of Russian Icons, Umbrella Arts Center, The Jar, Boston Symphony Orchestra, SpeakEasy Stage, Historic New England, Peabody Essex Museum, and Art of Mass Gatherings for the Boston Area Music and Soul Festival (BAMS).
- Bi-monthly Check-ins: check-ins with ADA coordinators from New England State Art Agencies in collaboration with the New England Foundation for the Arts.
- UP Office Hours: We held informative sessions in April and May, covering topics of American Sign Language in cultural settings, d/Deaf distinction, and Innovation Fund requirements, opportunities, and reporting.
- Berklee Institute for Accessible Arts Education Advisory Board Annual Meeting.
- Festivals & Projects Office Hour: Focused on the BIPOC-Centered Organization Self-Identification.

WHAT'S NEXT?

- Disability Consultants: We have engaged Disability Consultants to map disability data (Census Bureau 2022) and cultural funding (Mass Cultural Council). This information will help us better understand the landscape and identify areas for improvement.
- Research: We are currently researching options that will enable artists with disabilities living in poverty to accept award funds without impacting their benefits and assistance status. This initiative aims to provide equitable support to all artists, regardless of their circumstances.
- Leadership Exchange in Arts and Disability (LEAD) Conference: The conference will take place in Boston from August 27-31. The agency's participation will involve joining the Host Committee, conducting workshops, leading a think tank, hosting a peer learning session, and offering partial scholarships to Massachusetts cultural workers.



Power of culture

To: Mass Cultural Council
Fr: Dave Slatery and Cathy Cheng-Anderson
Date: May 24, 2023
Re: FY23 March Financial Update

We are pleased to inform you that our spending is progressing and on target, and as expected, it is catching up in these final months of the year. Please find the attached budget spreadsheet for your review. In the event that any funds go unspent in this fiscal year they will applied to the annual allocation we pay as prepayments on FY24 obligations such as to Mass Humanities (per our Memorandum of Agreement).

While most changes this quarter are modest unanticipated costs and savings realized during the fiscal year, two notable changes to report include:

1. Additional Festivals and Projects grants: We have reallocated funds to support 92 additional Festivals and Projects grants, amounting to \$217,500.
2. Increase in contractor staffing: To efficiently disburse the unprecedented number of recovery grant payments, we have extended the contracts of three temporary staff members. This augmentation will also increase the bandwidth of our staff enabling them to focus on non-recovery grants payments, and fiscal year-end duties.

Staffing: As was described in the summary of the Agency's implementation of its new FY24-26 Strategic Plan, we are pleased to announce that as Dave will be moving to the Executive Office and assuming a greater executive role as the Deputy Executive Director. Cathy Cheng-Anderson will transition into the role of Senior Director of Business Operations. This move aligns with our strategic plan and priorities, and we are confident that Cathy's skills, experience, and dedication will continue to greatly contribute to our continued success. In this new role, Cathy will be leading the agency's business operations including finance, procurement, human resources, information technology, office operations and cultural equity and access initiatives. Dave and Cathy have been working closely to ensure a seamless transition of responsibilities.

Travel Approval: The Executive Committee on May 3 unanimously approved under our financial policies, out of state travel for Carolyn Cole, Cultural Districts Initiative Program Officer, Communities team to attend the "Global Cultural Districts Network Annual

Convening- the values of Cultural Districts" from May 23 to May 25th in Montreal, Canada. This convening builds upon an understanding of the multi-layered and far-reaching value of cultural districts to explore their potential as civic sites dedicated to arts, culture, and creativity for transformational change. Participation in this opportunity will support the agency's desire to deepen the impact of the Cultural Districts Initiative program, learning and applying international best practices while strengthening our existing program attributes. The cost is approximately \$1800, and is within the Council's professional development budget. Please refer to the March 3, 2023 Executive Committee meeting materials on the [Council Page](#) of our website for more information.

Please don't hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.

**5/24/23 Projected
Expense
FY 23
BUDGET
PLAN**

**MASSACHUSETTS CULTURAL COUNCIL
FY 23 BUDGET & SPENDING PLAN
May 24, 2023 COUNCIL MEETING**

SALARIES, SPACE, AND ADMINISTRATION

1	AA: Salaries	\$ 3,672,238
3	BB: Employee Related Expenses	20,294
4	CC: Interns and Contracted Employees	228,818
5	DD: Pension and Insurance Related Expenditures (State Chargebacks)	72,160
2	DD and EE: Fringe & Indirect (Salaries & Contracts Paid Thru Fed. or Trust Accounts)	310,023
6	EE and FF: Administrative Expenses (NPS)	178,081
7	GG: Space Rental and Utilities	354,010
8	HH: Consultant Service Contracts	171,987
9	JJ: Operational Services	37,978
10	KK: Equipment Purchases	-
11	LL: Equipment Leases and Maintenance (Non-IT)	10,320
12	UU: Information Technology Expenses	284,643
13	SUB-TOTAL ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES	5,340,552

EXPENSES ATTRIBUTABLE TO PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

15	BB +EE: Administrative Program Expenses	49,990
16	HH&JJ: Consultants & Panelists	514,438
17	KK&LL&UU: P&S Tech and Equipment	39,400
18	SUB-TOTAL P&S EXPENSES	603,828

GRANTS AND STIPENDS (PP)

20	Cultural Districts	810,000
21	Artist Fellowships PAUSED	-
22	Cultural Investment Portfolio	6,990,300
23	Media Transition	100,000
24	Projects/Festival	1,842,500
25	Local Cultural Council Program	5,500,000
26	Poetry Out Loud	20,000
27	Traditional Arts Apprenticeships	180,024
28	Big Yellow School Bus PAUSED	-
29	STARS	1,408,800
30	CYD -YouthReach/SerHacer (Incl NEA CARES)	1,870,000
31	CYD: META/CYD Fellows	147,000
32	CYD: META (KFF - Funded)	-

33	UP Program Stipends/Innovation Grants	475,000
34	Other Grants (list on Sheet 2))	485,419
35	GAMING MITIGATION GRANTS (100% Gaming Funds)	3,737,400
36	PANDEMIC RECOVERY GRANTS	51,046,800
37	<i>SUB-TOTAL GRANT EXPENSES</i>	<i>74,613,243</i>

38	PARTNERSHIPS, RE-GRANT AND PROJECT FUNDING PROGRAMS	
39	Massachusetts Foundation for the Humanities (MFH)	849,247
	Pandemic Recovery Fund Grant to MFH	2,500,000
40	NEFA Project	70,000
41	Pass Through Earmarks	877,000
42	<i>SUB-TOTAL PARTNERSHIPS/ RE-GRANT PROGRAMS</i>	<i>4,296,247</i>

45	OTHER	
46	Prepaid Expenses and Carryforward	255,729
	Carryforward-Pandemic Recovery Fund Grant	349,922
47	<i>SUB-TOTAL, OTHER</i>	<i>605,651</i>

48	<i>SUB-TOTAL, ALL PROGRAMS</i>	<i>80,118,969</i>
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49	TOTAL EXPENSES	<i>85,459,521</i>
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50	FY 23 REVENUES	
51	State: Basic Appropriation (0640-0300) less Earmarks	22,500,000
52	State: Earmarks- Pass-Through Funds	877,000
53	MassDevelopment: For MCC Expenses Associated with Cultural Facilities Fund	325,000
54	Prepaid Expenses (Funding from Prior Years' Budgets)	630,236
55	National Endowment for the Arts: Basic State Plan	707,900
56	National Endowment for the Arts: Arts in Education	63,400
57	National Endowment for the Arts: Arts in Underserved Communities	241,300
58	National Endowment for the Arts: Folk Arts Infrastructure Grant	30,000
59	National Endowment for the Arts: "Poetry Out Loud"	20,000
	National Endowment for the Arts: ARP	-
60	KFF/LINDE Foundation (General Trust)	150,000
61	Pandemic Recovery Funds (Ch 102 of 2021)	54,571,500
62	Gaming Mitigation Funds-FY 22 Expected Collections ESTIMATE	1,760,533
63	Gaming Org. Support Funds- FY 22 Expected Collections	950,082
64	Gaming Expense Funds	-
65	TOTAL FY23 REVENUES	<i>82,826,951</i>

66	CARRYOVER/OTHER FUNDS AVAILABLE AS OF 7/1/22	
67	MassDevelopment: For MCC Expenses Associated with Cultural Facilities Fund	101,253

68	Gaming Expense Funds- Available	337,614
69	Gaming Mitigation Funds- Available	1,976,912
70	Gaming Org. Support Funds-Available	149,918
71	Remaining NEA 2020 CARES ACT Funds	-
72	Remaining COERG Funds	-
73	Harry Rice Trust Account	66,867
74	Comm Awards Trust Account	6
75	Remaining Klarman META Grant	-
76	TOTAL OTHER FUNDS	2,632,570

77	TOTAL REVENUE + OTHER FUNDS	85,459,521
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Positive (Negative)