



*Power of culture*

**MASS CULTURAL COUNCIL  
ADVOCACY COMMITTEE**

TUESDAY, MARCH 3, 2020: NOON- 1:00 PM

**MASS CULTURAL COUNCIL OFFICE  
10 SAINT JAMES AVENUE-3D FLOOR-BOSTON, MA**

<b>AGENDA</b>	<b>VOTE</b>
1. Call to Order- Open Meeting Law Notice	
2. Minutes of December 18, 2019 Meeting	<b>X</b>
3. Co-Chairs Report	
4. Executive Director Report	
5. FY21 State Budget Strategy Implementation- Discussion among Committee, Staff, Mass Humanities and MASSCreative	

**UNOFFICIAL DRAFT SUBJECT TO APPROVAL BY THE COMMITTEE AT ITS NEXT MEETING**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING  
OF  
MASS CULTURAL COUNCIL  
ADVOCACY COMMITTEE**

**TUESDAY, DECEMBER 18, 2019**

**MASS CULTURAL COUNCIL OFFICE  
10 ST JAMES AVENUE-3D FLOOR  
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS**

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 PM

**Committee Members Present**

Troy Siebels, Co-chair of Advocacy Committee (phone)  
Sherry Dong, Co-chair of Advocacy Committee (phone)  
Nina Fialkow, Chair, Mass Cultural Council  
Marc Carroll, Vice Chair, Mass Cultural Council

**Other Guests Present**

Brian Boyles, Executive Director, MassHumanities  
Emily Ruddock, Executive Director, MASSCreative  
Tracie Konopinski, MASSCreative

**Staff members present** were

Anita Walker, Executive Director  
David Slatery, Deputy Director  
Bethann Steiner, Communications Director  
Jen Lawless, Operations Director

Troy Siebels as co-chair of the Advocacy Committee called the meeting to order and asked David Slatery to read the following:

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.

Please note that this body has invited staff of Mass Cultural Council, and guests from MassHumanities MASS Creative to participate in today's meeting

Mass Cultural Council welcomes members of the public to attend its meetings. Under the Open Meeting Law, however, this is not a public hearing and public testimony will not be taken. Individuals may not address the meeting without permission of the chair.

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.

Troy asked Anita Walker for her report as Executive Director. Anita welcomes the Committee members and thanked them for attending and indicated we had sent out materials in advance of the meeting for background information (copies of which were available) and that these materials did not necessarily represent any particular point on the published agenda. Anita then introduced Communications Director, Bethann Steiner. Bethann described the annual state budget process and spoke of the consensus revenue hearing where slower growth was projected for this year. There being no more business to come before the Council, Nina as Chair adjourned the meeting.

The Committee then discussed the recent passage of the Final Deficiency Budget for Fiscal 2019 which included technical fixes to the

2011 Massachusetts Gaming Law which will allow the Council to access certain casino tax revenues for a Gaming Mitigation Program. Anita emphasized that these funds were completely separate from the Council's regular mission and budget and are dedicated for a very specific purposes different from our core programs and we should be careful to differentiate between these funds and our state budget funds which fund the basic operations of the Council. This is crucial as legislators might assume the Council had received a large boost in funding due to casino revenues which is not the case as the casino tax funds cannot be spent on the Council's traditional and are dedicated to a brand new program relating to effects of casinos on organizations.

Anita then asked Deputy Director David Slatery to summarize a memo he had circulated showing what the Agency's operations might look like under different funding scenarios in FY21. David presented a memo and spreadsheet based on certain spending assumptions showing what operations would look like under flat funding scenario, a \$1 and \$2 million increase and a return to the Council's 1998 high point of funding (\$27.4 million) in FY 1988.

Bethann reported that House Chair of the Joint Tourism, Arts and Cultural Development Committee felt bullish. Members of the legislature appreciate the grants spent in their districts and would like credit for helping making those possible (including Cultural Facilities Fund grants).

The Committee discussed strategies for formulating a FY21 budget ask for Mass Cultural Council.

On behalf of MASSCreative, Emily Ruddock reported the field is interested in a bigger ask instead of a small incremental increase in the arts and culture budget.

On behalf of MassHumanities, Brian Boyles hoped that individual MassHumanities grants could be included in the list of grants shown to the legislature that are funded by the budget appropriation.

As part of a general discussion on presenting the Council's message to the legislature, Bethann indicated we were working on emphasizing the services provided by staff along with the grants. Marc Carroll indicated the framing of the message and ask were crucial. Nina Fialkow suggested we show how the monies have been leveraged.

The Committee discussed different levels of requests from \$1 to 5 million. Emily asked if there were data that could show what could be done with larger amounts. Jen Lawless indicated we had data and we would run some scenarios

Troy asked that the Committee schedule another meeting in March to follow up on this meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned

## **DRAFT** FY21 State Budget Advocacy Plan Prepared for the Mass Cultural Council Advocacy Committee Meeting – March 3, 2020

### Key Dates in the FY21 Budget Timeline:

**January 22, 2020** - Governor Releases FY21 Budget Recommendation – H2 reduces Mass Cultural Council line item (0640-0300) by 9.5%, to \$16.3M. Mass Cultural Council releases an advocacy blog post/social media update to engage the field: <https://massculturalcouncil.org/blog/governors-budget-cuts-funding-for-the-arts-humanities-sciences/>

**February 13, 2020** – Mass Cultural Council releases its Case Statement for increased public investment in Arts & Culture, requesting a \$20M appropriation from the House and Senate. This figure represents a \$2M increase from the current fiscal year (FY20) and a \$4M increase from the Gov's H2 FY21 recommendation. <https://massculturalcouncil.org/blog/our-case-statement-for-increased-public-investment-in-arts-culture-2020/>

**February 24, 2020** – Anita Walker, Bethann Steiner, and 2 cultural organizations (Zoo New England and Artists for Humanity) testify before the Joint Committee on Ways & Means FY21 budget hearing at Roxbury Community College.

**February – April 2020** – Anita Walker and Bethann Steiner meet with key state legislators, sharing the budget request, case statement, and report of current investments being made in their Districts. The ask is twofold: to make Mass Cultural Council's line item a priority when they meet with Ways and Means and to be ready to co-sponsor a budget amendment for our line item, should one be necessary, when their Chamber debates the budget. TACD Chairs Rep. McMurtry and Sen. Kennedy are confirmed to be our lead budget amendment sponsors.

### **In the House we have met or are scheduled to meet with:**

HWM Chair Aaron Michlewitz; TACD Chair Paul McMurtry; Rep. Sarah Peake (D- Provincetown); Rep. Mary Keefe, Cultural Caucus chair; Rep. Smitty Pignatelli (D- Lenox); Rep. Mindy Domb (D- Amherst); Rep. Natalie Blais (D- Sunderland); Rep. Ann-Margaret Ferrante (D- Gloucester); Rep. Andy Vargas (D- Haverhill); Rep. Sean Garballey (D- Arlington); Rep.

Denise Garlick (D- Needham); and Rep. Liz Malia. We are actively working to schedule time with Speaker DeLeo and Rep. Todd Smola (R-Palmer). Each of these Representatives were chosen because of their past support for arts and culture, their Committee assignments, or their Leadership roles in the House.

**In the Senate we have met or are scheduled to meet with:**

SWM Chair Mike Rodrigues; TACD Chair Ed Kennedy; Sen. Eric Lesser (D-Longmeadow); Sen. Adam Hinds (D- Pittsfield); Sen. Jason Lewis (D-Winchester); Sen. Jo Comerford (D- Amherst); Sen. Joan Lovely (D-Beverly); Sen. Harriette Chandler (D- Worcester); Sen. Bruce Tarr (R-Gloucester); Sen. Cindy Friedman (D- Arlington); Sen. Michael Brady (D-Brockton); Sen. Anne Gobi (D- Spencer); Sen. John Keenan (D- Quincy); Sen. Brendan Crighton (D- Lynn); Sen. Pat Jehlen (D- Somerville); Sen. Walter Timilty (D- Milton); Sen. Jamie Eldridge (D- Acton), Sen. Joe Boncore (D- Winthrop) and Sen. Sal DiDomenico (D- Everett). We are actively working to confirm meeting times with Senate President Spilka, Sen. Will Brownsberger (D- Belmont); Sen. Julian Cyr (D- Truro) and Sen. Mike Moore (D- Worcester). Each of these Senators were chosen because of their past support for arts and culture, their Committee assignments, or their Leadership roles in the Senate.

**Week of April 13<sup>th</sup>** - House Ways & Means expected to file their FY21 budget. Mass Cultural Council will be ready to publicly respond to the spending recommendation for our line item. Will draft an amendment for Rep. McMurtry to file and will work with advocacy partners to build support and collect co-sponsors.

**Week of April 27<sup>th</sup>** – This is expected to be House budget debate week. At the conclusion of the House budget debate Mass Cultural Council will publicly respond to the funding amount the House provided to our line item.

**Early May** - Senate Ways & Means expected to file their FY21 budget. Mass Cultural Council will be ready to publicly respond to the spending recommendation for our line item. Will draft an amendment for Sen. Kennedy to file and will work with advocacy partners to build support and collect co-sponsors.

**Week of May 18<sup>th</sup>** - This is expected to be Senate budget debate week. At the conclusion of the House budget debate Mass Cultural Council will publicly respond to the funding amount the Senate provided to our line item.

**Early June** – It is expected that the Speaker and Senate President will quickly appoint members of the FY21 budget conference committee, who will be responsible for creating a final budget report. If the final House and Senate budget differ on the Mass Cultural Council line item, we will be a “conferencable” item. Mass Cultural Council will work with our advocacy partners to engage the field and have them reach out to their state legislators, the conference committee members, and the Speaker and Senate President to urge them to retain the higher appropriation. Further, we will be ready to react to any legislative language that is included in either Chamber’s budget.

**July 1, 2020** – First day of FY21. The formal legislative session ends at midnight, July 31, 2020. The Legislature will need to enact the conference committee and get it to the Governor before the end of July, or they will not be able to consider any vetoes that he could make. Should our line item be vetoed, we would again need to engage our sector to have legislators reach out to the Speaker, Senate President, and chairs of Ways & Means to urge them to schedule the veto up for override.

**A note:** Typically, House and Senate members use the budget process to file amendments to secure funding for priority local projects or advance policy. Mass Cultural Council will be looking for any such amendments that may affect the sector and/or earmark our line item.

### **Request of Advocacy Committee Chairs**

Being a gubernatorially-appointed member of the Mass Cultural Council is a state leadership position. Council members can connect with their state legislators and legislative leadership during the budget process, engage them, and help advocate for the Council’s appropriation.

Would the Advocacy Committee chairs be comfortable with making the following asks of their Council colleagues? Email text can be drafted by Bethann at each step, and contact information can be provided for every Council member’s legislators.

1. **Council members should email their State Rep and State Senator now** to share the Mass Cultural Council FY21 budget request and case statement and ask them to make it a priority. It would be helpful to let them know that you are gubernatorially-appointed members of the Mass Cultural Council's governing Board. They should be aware that their constituent serves in this statewide leadership role. Bethann can identify your state legislators and provide email contacts.

**Budget request:**

[https://massculturalcouncil.org/documents/Mass\\_Cultural\\_Council\\_FY21\\_Budget\\_Request.pdf?x90852](https://massculturalcouncil.org/documents/Mass_Cultural_Council_FY21_Budget_Request.pdf?x90852)

**Case Statement:**

<https://massculturalcouncil.org/blog/our-case-statement-for-increased-public-investment-in-arts-culture-2020/>

2. **Council members should be ready to email their State Rep. in April** to ask them to co-sponsor the House budget amendment if one is necessary.
3. **Council members should be ready to email their State Senator in May** to ask them to co-sponsor the Senate budget amendment if one is necessary.
4. **Council members should be ready to email their State Rep, State Senator, and members of the Budget Conference Committee in early June** if the House and Senate final budgets differ regarding the Council's line item. We will want to urge them to adopt the higher appropriation and there could be legislative language in the line item that we may wish to address as well.
5. **Council members should be ready to engage with the State Rep, State Senator, Speaker, Senate President and Ways & Means chairs in July** to urge them to overturn any gubernatorial vetoes that affect Mass Cultural Council's line item.

**Request of our Advocacy Partners, MASS Creative and Mass Humanities**

As the budget process continues, will you use your platforms to engage your members and urge them to advocate for the Mass Cultural Council budget line item?

In any meetings with legislators between now and July will the Mass Cultural Council line item budget appropriation be a talking point?

As Anita and Bethann meet with legislators this spring, we are curating a list of House and Senate members who are affirming their support and committing to co-sponsoring budget amendments for the Council. This list will be shared with our lead sponsors, Rep. McMurtry and Sen. Kennedy, as well as with our advocacy partners so members in those Districts can make sure to thank their legislators for being an Arts Champion. These lists will hopefully help us target key legislative offices and ensure we have a robust list of co-sponsors during both the House and Senate debates.

**Sample Email Council Members can send to their state legislators now:**

Dear Senator XX and Representative xx:

My name is XX. I live in your District and serve as the gubernatorially-appointed member of the Mass Cultural Council's governing board for XXX County. I have served in this position since XXXX. I am reaching out to highlight my service on the Council and to make you aware of my deep interest in the vitality of the Commonwealth's arts and culture sector.

Mass Cultural Council is the state's arts agency. We promote excellence, inclusion, education, and diversity in the arts, humanities, and sciences, foster a rich cultural life for all Massachusetts residents, and contribute to the vitality of our communities and economy. The Council pursues this mission through a wide range of grants, initiatives, and advocacy for artists, communities, organizations, and schools.

The Council is making key investments in our community, right now. In fact, you can review a current list of FY20 grants in your District online:

<https://massculturalcouncil.org/about/funding-lists/>

As you prepare for the FY21 budget debate, I wish to be on record with your office as a staunch supporter of the Council. It is my hope that you will be an

Arts Champion and will support the Council's FY21 funding request, which is a \$2M increase over the FY20 appropriation.

Mass Cultural Council is seeking \$20M in FY21. You can learn more about the Council's FY21 budget request here:

[https://massculturalcouncil.org/documents/Mass\\_Cultural\\_Council\\_FY21\\_Budget\\_Request.pdf?x90852](https://massculturalcouncil.org/documents/Mass_Cultural_Council_FY21_Budget_Request.pdf?x90852)

And you can see our Case Statement on why robust funding for arts and culture in Massachusetts is important: <https://massculturalcouncil.org/blog/our-case-statement-for-increased-public-investment-in-arts-culture-2020/>

Thank you for your consideration. I would be happy to meet or speak with you to further discuss the Council at any time.

Sincerely,

XXX

Mass Cultural Council

Insert Home Address

Insert Phone Number

Insert Email