

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

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

MONDAY, APRIL 27, 2020

ON-LINE MEETING

Chair Nina Fialkow called the meeting to order at 11:45 AM

Committee Members Present

Nina Fialkow, Chair of Executive Committee and Mass Cultural Council
Marc Carroll, Vice Chair
Victoria Marsh, Chair of Grants Committee
Troy Siebels, Co-chair of Advocacy Committee
Sherry Dong, Co-chair, Advocacy Committee

Staff members present were

Anita Walker, Executive Director
David Slatery, Deputy Director
Jen Lawless, Operations Director
Bethann Steiner, Communications Director
Erik Holmgren, Program Manager, Creative Youth Development (CYD)

Nina Fialkow opened the meeting by referring to the Open Meeting Law statement circulated with the materials.

Nina asked Erik Holmgren to give a brief update on the status of CYD programs. Erik mentioned the outreach staff was making to CYD programs and holding virtual convenings. He mentioned an all-hands Thursday call on the field of Creative Youth Development with programs which had attracted national attention and the last call had more than

100 participants. Everyone is looking to remake their programs to reflect the current realities and environment. Many teaching artists had lost their jobs as programs were forced to close but were still looking for ways to connect to young people.

Nina then asked Anita to address the need for this meeting. Anita mentioned that staff were surprised to learn, the day after the last Council meeting on April 7, that the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) was really move to speed on the delivery of CARES Act funds to state arts agencies- such that we received \$475,300 in funds on April 17. Anita reported she and David Slatery were on a call with the NEA on April 16 where the chair of the NEA, Mary Ann Carter, indicated that their approach would be pragmatic and practical and told the states "You have the money. Now put it to work." Anita mentioned that she had spoken with MassHumanities who had received funds from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) and had learned that those funds had more restrictions. The NEA funds have relatively few restrictions- the funds can be used for operations- there is no match requirement or additional reporting requirements. The NEA along with providing funds to the states is also making direct grants (and they are funding already-funded organizations because it will be quicker to get the dollars out).

Anita indicated the Council was focused on the highest and best use of these funds and how to deploy them quickly. She noted there was a big need in the CYD field. A lot of foundations have stopped funding their programs in the past few years and the youth participants have been deprived of their program safe spaces in the current emergency. We expect there will be COVID-related trauma associated with this emergency that the programs will need to deal with.

Our existing CYD grantees (74 programs) have already been vetted and qualified for grants so we could send out the grants immediately. CYD is our most diverse program.

Erik mentioned that we are also working with the Linde and Klarman Foundations to keep these CYD programs going and these CARES Act funds will help with that.

David summarized the requirements of the program as summarized in the circulated materials.

Troy Siebels asked why these organizations would receive this funding as opposed to others in the field and the funds going toward expenses.

Anita mentioned the Safe Harbors program discussed at the last Council meeting which provided a \$2250 stipend to organizations as a form of COVID relief. Any CYD organizations which received that funding would have their CARES Act funding reduced by a similar amount. Anita stated that CYD organizations had helped advocated for the NEA funding and had so far not received any specific COVID relief. The gaming funds had been redirected elsewhere. Anita also mentioned that the NEA specifically sanctioned the use of up to \$50,000 of funds for expenses and we are proposing less than that and anything we spend on expenses in FY21 we can spend on future grants.

The Committee discussed the messaging and communications strategy with Bethann Steiner.

Nina then called for a vote. Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was unanimously held by roll call vote (and noting that member Jo-Ann Davis was absent)

RESOLVED: that the Executive Committee recommends that the Council approve the allocation of NEA CARES Act funds to its Creative Youth Development programs in accordance with the memo provided to it at its April 27, 2020 Meeting.

Nina then asked about a delegation of authority to the Executive Committee so that the Council could authorize the funds quickly and would not need to call an additional meeting should more emergency funding be made available. Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was unanimously held by roll call vote (and noting that member Jo-Ann Davis was absent)

RESOLVED: That the Executive Committee recommend to the Council the delegation of the power to authorize the allocation of any emergency funding, received for purposes of response to the current COVID-19 crisis from the National Endowment for the Arts or other source, to any existing grant program of Mass Cultural Council provided, that 1) the Committee notifies the Council that it is taking such action and 2) such action is brought to the Council for ratification at the next occurring Council Meeting.

Nina asked that Erik be present at the Council meeting on the 29th. Anita thanked the members for coming on such short notice and for helping us move so quickly on COVID relief programs. We have three new

programs we have developed in the past month and are putting them out with no additional staff. Anita thanked the staff for helping to make this all happen and the committee agreed.

There being no more business to come before the Committee, Nina as Chair adjourned the meeting.