



**Regional Arts Commission
Grants & Programs Committee Minutes
August 29, 2024 via ZOOM
9:30 a.m.**

Call to Order

Gennaria called the August 29, 2024, meeting to order at 9:37 a.m. and asked Lea to conduct the Committee roll call.

Committee Members in Attendance

Jerry Gennaria - chair, Angela Williams, Roz Johnson – ex officio

Committee Members Absent

Robert Arbuthnot
David Wilson

Staff Attendees

Vanessa Cooksey, Ann Haubrich, Leigh Winter, Angie Peters, Lea Sutherlin

Approval of Minutes

Gennaria then called for the approval of the minutes from the May 9, 2024, Grants & Programs Committee meeting.

Motion made by Williams, seconded by Johnson, and unanimously carried to approve the May 9, 2024 Grants & Programs Committee minutes. Votes were as follows:

Yea – Gennaria, Williams, Johnson

Nay – none

Abstain - none

Gennaria called for the following reports:

ARPA Funds Update (Haubrich/Cooksey)

Tourism Grants

Cooksey reported on Tourism Grants as follows: (1) expressed appreciation and excitement for RAC's ARPA for the Arts program; (2) all ARPA funds will have been distributed by the end of September 2024; (3) all ARPA fund grants included in this packet; (4) RAC is compliant with Municipal Board Bill and with the US Treasury guidelines; (5) gratitude for the team, particularly Ann Haubrich, Leigh Winter, Chloe





Smith, and Tracey Morgan for ensuring that these funds have the highest and best impact on artists and arts organizations; (6) redirecting some ARPA grants to Hotel/Motel grant funds due to lack of staffing/capacity for compliance; (7) ARPA grantees and impact on tourism; (8) possible reallocation of additional ARPA funds by the City; and (9) Belford and Peters meeting with aldermanic president Megan Green who acknowledged the great work being done by RAC.

Mural Grants

Cooksey then reported on the mural grants as follows: (1) all murals will be completed by September 1; and (2) invite sent to all Commissioners to join the staff/team in the City Hall Rotunda on September 23 to meet and thank muralists, and to celebrate and wrap up this project.

Gennaria asked about reallocation/redirection of some of the ARPA funds.

Cooksey explained the various component of reallocation/redirection of those funds.

FY 2025 Hotel/Motel Tax Grants Cycle

Haubrich presented a PPT and reviewed Hotel/Motel Tax grantmaking for grants for organizations, grants for individual artists, next steps, and looking ahead as follows: (1) intent to eliminate any disconnects between application and the work; (2) Organization Grant total budget of \$2.5M – new annual application, considering staff issued recommendations/stipulations and weighted staff review, one year commitment with opportunity for renewal, will maintain 2024 tiers, and will maintain financial review panel for grants over \$50K; (3) Program Support Grants total budget of \$500K - annual application, maintain current application process with \$10K cap, and improve fiscal sponsorship; (4) Artist Support Grants total budget of \$1M, new simplified application, annual grant, individual capped at \$7500 and collectives capped at \$10K, equal distribution through City and County, and considering integration of lottery selection process using reviewer ratings – Smith researched existing similar process; (5) next steps for Grants team – [a] draft definition of artist for application process, [b] research appropriate lottery processes to pilot for 2025 Artist Support Grants, [c] simplify application questions and draft timeline with input from MARCOMM team, [d] provide applicant education around the process and continue office hours, [e] continue to refine reviewer process, webinars and implicit bias workshop conducted by Commissioner Rudy Nickens, [f] Stallings assisting with deeper dive into reviewer data/analysis, [g] looking ahead to 2026; and (6) alignment with RAC’s Theory of Change, with the support of this Committee; (7) review best practices from other places regarding time commitments and the impact on communities and the arts sector; (8) will take time to review historic data from old grantmaking system and review current database; (9) making grants transformative and not just transactional; (10) possibility of staggering cohorts to analyze process and make changes as needed and communicate those changes and educate all applicants and potential applicants about new grant making processes and systems; and (11) continue to build trust and demonstrate the value in building long-term relationships with grantees.



Gennaria mentioned that he had the opportunity to review this information prior to this meeting and had offered some input. Gennaria then expressed his satisfaction with the outcome and added that he is interested in exploring how these ideas can be implemented.

Williams remarked that the work appears to be of high quality and expressed a particular interest in the tactical aspects regarding execution of the lottery selection process and the outcomes that may arise from it. She added that overall, the plan is well-conceived.

Haubrich noted that the PPT presentation for this report would be shared with this Committee.

Program Updates

Gennaria asked Haubrich to share program updates.

CAT Institute

Haubrich gave the following update on the CAT Institute: (1) working on curriculum for cohort in partnership with Great Rivers Greenway; (2) 27th cohort sponsored by the Regional Arts Commission; (3) two new faculty members including Kathryn Bentley, theatre and a community focused artist and Shelly Goebel Parker, and MSW and art therapist who utilizes counseling techniques and cross cultural practices in her work; (4) applications close on August 31; (5) cohort will be determined by September 23; and (6) sessions begin with a Kickoff at RAC @ The Foundry on October 4 – Commissioners invited.

Artist INC

Haubrich gave the following update on Artist INC: (1) RAC's second cohort begins September 17 and concludes November 12; (2) group of 25 regional artists participating; (3) diverse group from a wide range of disciplines; (4) looking forward to another successful fall program with assistance from local artist Zenique Gardner Perry who helped lead the program last year; and (5) Artist INC is a popular professional development program from Mid America Arts Alliance and this is RAC's last year as part of the contract.

Gyo Obata

Haubrich provided the following update on Gyo Obata: (1) RAC has experienced two successful years with Gyo Obata since its relaunch post-pandemic; (2) RAC currently lacks the staff capacity to manage the program in 2024; (3) The Gateway Foundation has offered to take on the facilitation of the program; and (4) RAC is happy to see the program continue and will share all relevant information with the Gateway Foundation.

Gennaria called for any additional reports.

Cooksey shared the following update: (1) will collaborate with KEB to create the FY 2025 budget; (2) no communication from Explore STL regarding expected revenues for 2025; (3) while the County amount was received from Explore STL on August 16, the City amount has not yet been provided, which may





affect RAC's rollover funds; and (4) crucial to keep the Commissioners updated on RAC's financial status, as granting funds and managing programs are central to RAC's mission.

Williams asked if there is a contingency in place.

Cooksey shared the following: (1) due to the delay in receiving the May payments, the Finance Committee and the Executive Committee convened and approved the use of the proceeds from the building sale as a type of line of credit; (2) RAC's building sale proceeds are being held in a savings account; (3) will develop a fiscal policy that, while preference is not to use these funds for non-specific purposes, will allow leverage to use as a working line of credit if necessary; and (4) her [Cooksey's] recommendation is to adopt a conservative approach regarding the Explore St. Louis forecast for 2025, projecting a percentage lower than their estimates, as this aligns with RAC's experiences this year and will help ensure sufficient rollover funds to cover grants while waiting for Hotel/Motel revenue.

Adjournment

Motion made by Williams, seconded by Gennaria, and unanimously approved to adjourn the August 29, 2024 Grants & Programs Committee meeting at 10:10 a.m.

Votes were as follows:

Yea – Gennaria, Williams, Johnson

Nay – none

Abstain - none

Submitted by

L. Sutherlin, Exec. Asst. & Commission Administrator

Attachments

- Grants & Programs Committee Minutes, May 9, 2024
- ARPA Grants Summary