

**CAMBRIDGE ARTS COUNCIL ADVISORY BOARD**  
**MEETING NOTES: DECEMBER 13, 2016, AT 6:00 PM**

**START:** 6:25 PM

**END:** 7:40 PM

**Members Present:**

Olufolakemi Alalade, Luis Edgardo Cotto, David Daniel, Lori Lander, Stella Aguirre McGregor, Diane Norris (Secretary), Katherine Shozawa

**Staff Present:** Jason Weeks, Julie Barry, Taylor Mortell

**Members Absent:** Lori Damon (Chair), Aliyah Gary, Ann Lawson, Diana Lempel, Calvin Lindsay

**MEETING MINUTES**

November meeting minutes reviewed, approved. Jason also reminded members to review the summary information from the MA State Ethics Commission and to submit the required Acknowledgment Form. He indicated that information for staff, Advisory Board and Public Art Commission is due to the City Clerk's office by December 30, 2016. Jason thanked the members for their prompt attention in this matter.

**DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

**Staffing Update**

Jason gave update on open positions. There are 125 applications for Jeremy's position (Public Art Administrator/FT). Dir. Of Marketing will close this week, approximately 50 applications so far. Collections Care Specialist to be posted in early 2017 in partnership with the Personnel Department. Jason will be reaching out to Board for feedback and interest in the formal position interview process. Interviews to take place during 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> week in January.

**FLOW: A Grant Program for the Port Neighborhood**

This program will be discussed at the Feb. 2017 meeting. Grant applications are due May 1, 2017.

**CAMBRIDGE ARTS: GRANT PROGRAM REVIEW**

Julie Barry, Director of Community Arts, presented an overview of the grant program and results this year:

This is the first year grants were submitted entirely online and reviewer materials could be accessed online, no binders. For the first time, Cambridge Arts staff were able to track pending applications due to the online process and strategic use of the SlideRoom database. With this information, staff were able to reach out and provide support to anyone who may have started but not yet completed an application. There were 8 of these and most said the reason not completed was that they did not have enough time.

Julie noted the benefits of the SlideRoom portal, which ensured that applicants knew that Cambridge Arts has specific local guidelines that are in addition to the minimum guidelines required by the Massachusetts Cultural Council and that are available via the online portal. She explained that since the MCC portal is used by over 325 communities, it tends to be very broad, whereas the Slide Room portal is able to be more robust and focused on the specific experience of applicants to the Cambridge Arts Grant Program.

*Respectfully submitted, Diane Norris, Secretary, Cambridge Arts Advisory Board*

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For 2016, there was an increase from 71 to 81 eligible applications.

Applications are reviewed under four categories with applicant numbers as follows:

1. Music (15)
2. Visual Art (12), Film & Video (6)
3. Dance (16)
4. Theater (8), Literature (4), & Multidisciplinary (15)

Julie noted that the number of theatre and literature submissions seem low this year, but she also clarified that several submissions in general self-identify as multidisciplinary when actually they fit closer to a particular prevailing art form. Julie clarified that being a multidisciplinary category does not improve chances as part of the panel review or review by Cambridge Arts Advisory Board.

The overall goal of the Grant Program is to offer more substantial grant amounts to grantees and it is fortunately working in that direction. Maximum ask amount was increased from \$2,000 to \$5,000 this year due in part to an increase in City of Cambridge funding. The program clearly states that the maximum ask is \$5,000, so Julie clarified that a proposal requesting \$8,000 was capped at the top of the \$5k range.

Julie went through 20 different funding scenarios and presented three scenarios to the Board. Of those scenarios, the most well-balanced and effective were agreed to be the following:

1. **Scenario 1v:** funds 33 projects and 5 field trip proposals (\$4,001 and over capped at \$3,750, \$2,001 to \$4,000 capped at 90%, \$1-\$2,000 at 100%)
2. **Scenario 2v:** funds 31 projects and 5 field trip proposals (\$4,001 and over capped at \$4,000, \$1 to \$4,000 at 100%)
3. **Scenario 3v:** funds 26 projects and 5 field trip proposals (at 100%)

Diane N asked if the projects with reduced funding in the past have still been successful. Julie clarified that only once was a project not able to be completed. The awarded projects tend to be seed money that can and do encourage matched and additional funding from external sources and partnerships.

Katherine S was a reviewer this year and confirmed that a lot can still be done for \$3,750, especially for first time applicants who automatically request the amount at the top of the funding range. Board members discussed benefits of funding relationship with Cambridge Arts and that repeat applicants get much stronger with added technical support and feedback such that the majority do receive funds in subsequent grant cycles.

Lori L felt strongly not to drop individual poetry application submissions, which was one of the Panelist-generated recommendations. Instead, she believes that poets need to be further encouraged. She also clarified that in general, individuals may have a difficult time competing with organizations and applauded the manner in which Cambridge Arts has developed a parallel process for individuals and organizations as a way to resolve this issue.

Lori L agreed to brainstorm with Julie on press releases and other ways to raise awareness on the need for and benefits of increased funding for the Grant Program.

*Respectfully submitted, Diane Norris, Secretary, Cambridge Arts Advisory Board*

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Jason noted that there needs to be a renewed targeted outreach to the CPS Department of Visual & Performing Arts given the transition with the centralized VPS Coordinator position. Over the years, Elaine Koury, former VPA Coordinator, was able to creatively identify more funds in the School District beyond Cambridge Arts support to further expand overall funding and support for the arts in Cambridge schools.

The 2016/17 Grant Program budget is \$91,433. Jason reminded the board that there was an increase of city funding from \$35K to \$70K and much work needs to be done with state funding and the current Legislature and other resources to ensure that the support from the Massachusetts Cultural Council stays intact and grows. He referenced the work of MCC and MASSCreative related to general and specific arts advocacy with the Governor and state Legislature. There was also discussion on developing strategies that could lead to further support from City Administration give the new opportunity of working with new City Manager Louis DePasquale.

Following general discussion, Luis C made a motion to approve the information presented in Scenario 1 and Lori L seconded the motion. The members present unanimously voted in the affirmative to support Scenario 1 as the preferred option and agreed it balanced and benefitted the most artists while also maintaining strong and sufficient funding levels for each project.

The meeting adjourned at 7:40 PM and the next Cambridge Arts Advisory Board Meeting is scheduled for January 10, 2017 at 6:00 PM.

*Respectfully submitted, Diane Norris, Secretary, Cambridge Arts Advisory Board*