

Harford County Cultural Arts Board

Monday, December 5, 2022

Present: Chuck Bowden (Chairperson), Jessica Cleaver (Coordinator), Heidi Neff Chuffo, Chris Depkin, Gigi Devanney, Sierra Keys, Peter McCallum (attended virtually), Christina McLoughlin, Wendy Roberts, Bill Rothenbach, and Erin Whipple

Absent: Emily Fadgen, Karen Heppen, Angie Sokolov, and Elizabeth Stevens. Aurora Kahoe who represents outgoing Councilman Chad Shrodes also was absent.

- The meeting was brought to order by Chuck Bowden at 6:04 p.m..
- The consent agenda was addressed which consisted of the following three items—the November 7, 2022 meeting minutes, the financial report, and pertinent update reports. Peter McCallum moved to approve these items and Bill Rothenbach provided the second. The consent agenda items were approved unanimously.
- Jessica Cleaver reviewed an Arts in Education grant request submitted from Bel Air High School entitled: “Arts & Immersion: Exploring Smithsonian Art Museums and the National Mall.” Chuck Bowden recused himself from the deliberations because he is a faculty member at Bel Air High School. Considerable discussion focused on the transportation costs and that the bus company being contracted is from Pennsylvania. The decision to vote on funding this grant request was tabled until the grantees provide three bid statements from Maryland-based private bus contractors and, and explain why they are not planning to use a transportation company Harford County Public Schools already contracted. The purpose for acquiring these bid statements is to secure the best “quality” transportation price available.
- The Board discussed Community Arts Development guidelines in the three specific areas of (a) definitions, (b) memberships, and (c) crediting requirements. A draft that encompasses ideas in each of these three areas will be shared for review at the January 9, 2023 Board meeting.
- Chuck Bowden introduced the roundtable discussion for priority #2 in the following three areas: (a) Among Arts Board members; (b) Among the arts community; and (c) Among all Harford Countians. It was decided to postpone the discussion for “Among Arts Board members” until the new county executive either confirms or makes changes to the current Harford County Cultural Arts Board.

Several key points were offered related to the discussion of “Among arts community.” First, the Board needs to emphasize that all grant recipients include the Harford County Cultural Arts Board logo on their websites, event programs, and other literature. In addition, grant recipients need to send a copy of any event programs to the Harford County Cultural Arts Board. Second, Board members need to make a concerted effort to attend grant recipient events to demonstrate support for arts initiatives. Third, when recruiting new Board members, clear, explicit information needs to be shared regarding

what the Harford County Cultural Arts Board does and expectations that Board members must fulfill. In addition, the Board brainstormed ideas for the Harford County Arts Festival Day. Finally, the Board discussed reasons for why there is a dearth of applications for the arts in education grants.

- There were several other salient discussions that also occurred. First, Bill Rothenbach proposed the formation of a small work group to begin preparing key strategies for the next arts fair. Second, Gigi Devanney suggested that the Harford County Cultural Arts Board refine its goals and message immediately. Bill Rothenbach recommended Gigi Devanney for the work group and Sierra Keys also volunteered to serve. An invitation was extended for other interested Board members to participate in this small work group. “Big picture” ideas generated by this group will be presented at the January 9, 2023 Board meeting. Jessica Cleaver urged that this initiative be completed by the end of January, 2023. Part of the rationale for this is to be prepared by March, 2023 in order to participate in the Harford County 250th anniversary celebration.
- Christina McLoughlin offered some related key points about fiscal sponsorship queries. First, the Harford County Cultural Arts Board does accept applications with fiscal sponsorships. She asserted that the Board should ask the Maryland State Arts Council for guidance on how to review this aspect of impacted applications. Second, based on her experience it is challenging to find good and trustworthy fiscal sponsors. Third, the missions of the grant applicant and the fiscal sponsor must align. Fourth, the work of a credible sponsor is arduous and complex. Finally, the Harford County Cultural Arts Board should not assume the role of acting as a sponsor since this is too time consuming.
- The next meeting of the full Harford County Cultural Arts Board will be held on January 9, 2023. This meeting will be held at the Bel Air Public Library and will be followed by a celebratory dinner at MaGerks Pub and Grill.
- The meeting was formally concluded at 7:32 p.m. by Chuck Bowden.