

**Indiana Arts Commission  
Quarterly Business Meeting**

Friday, March 10, 2023, 9:00 a.m. (ET)  
The Arts Federation  
638 North St. Lafayette, IN 47901  
Alberta Barker, Chair

*Members Present: Azizi Arrington-Slocum, Alberta Barker, R na Bradley, Ruth Ann Cowling, Dave Haist, Greg Hull, Jake Oakman, Sofia Souto, Renee Thomas, Anne Valentine*

*Members Present via Zoom: Chad Bolser, Walter Knabe, Laurie McRobbie, Kelsey Peaper*

*Members Absent: Dusty Stemer*

*Staff present: Eric Ashby, Connie Brahm, T a Franco, Stephanie Haines, Suzette Jones Hartsfield, Miah Michaelsen, Stephanie Pfenner, Paige Sharp, Andr  Zhang Sonera*

*Guests: Anne McKim (RAP Chair), Jon Kay (TAI)*

**MINUTES**

**1. Call to Order.** Indiana Arts Commission (IAC) Chair Alberta Barker called the meeting to order at 9:00 am. Mayor Roswarski welcomed the Commission to Lafayette and spoke about the impact of arts and culture as an important part of economic development and quality of place. The Arts Federation (TAF) Director, Tetia Lee, also welcomed the Commission and provided insight into TAF’s programs and work as the Region 4 Regional Arts Partner (RAP). The Commission also welcomed new IAC Grants and Research Manager Eric Ashby. Members in attendance as listed above.

**2. Approval of Agenda and December 9, 2022 Meeting Minutes.** Ms. Barker submitted the agenda and December 9, 2022 minutes for approval. Ms. McRobbie noted an edit to the minutes since she was not in attendance but was listed as such. It was noted the minutes would be amended and the action would reflect the edit. Commissioner Dave Haist motioned to approve. Commissioner Ruth Ann Cowling seconded. By roll call vote, all were in favor. The motion carried.

**3. Consent Agenda.** Ms. Barker submitted the following consent agenda items for approval and reports for review. She noted that all items included memos and information in the Commissioner’s meeting materials and asked if any member would like a consent agenda item moved to the full agenda for discussion. Hearing none, she motioned to approve. Commissioner Jake Oakman motioned. Commissioner R na Bradley seconded. By roll call vote, all were in favor. The motioned carried for the following items:

**a. Items Submitted for Commission Approval**

- i. FY23 Year to date Financials
- ii. CY23 Agency Goals
- iii. On Ramp Cohort
- iv. Creative Convergence Early Action Grant Guidelines
- v. Cultural District Guidelines

**b. Reports for review:**

- i. Indiana General Assembly, 2023 Session Update
- ii. Arts Trust Report
- iii. Communications Report
- iv. Governor’s Arts Awards Update
- v. Strategic Framework Update
- vi. Poet Laureate Report
- vii. Partnerships
- viii. Commission Slate of Officers for FY2024

**4. Committee Reports**

**a. Committee on the Future**

- i. FY24 Budget First Look.** IAC Deputy Director of Operations and Strategic Partnerships Andr  Zhang Sonera provided the Commission with a first look at the FY24 budget (Attached). He noted this draft is presented on the assumptions that the Governor’s biannual budget will move forward as submitted including a 2% reserve and that the agency’s Federal allocation from the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) will be the same as in FY23. It was noted the legislative session ends April 29<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Zhang Sonera pointed out differences between the FY24 draft budget and the FY23 budget which included an increase in the personnel line item due to the state’s revenue compensation study and that the IAC is fully staffed; increased investment in core programs; community investments with Indiana Communities Institute, Lifelong Arts, and Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Access (IDEA). In

addition, 2023 is a biannual year for the Governor's Arts Awards so the agency has included funds for video production services. Mr. Zhang Sonera added that the agency will be providing the Commission with the final budget after the confirmation of the agency's allocation for June approval.

- ii. **Electronic Meeting Policy Revision.** Mr. Zhang Sonera submitted a revised public meeting policy (attached) for Commission Approval. It was noted that the original policy approved by the Commission in 2020 was based on Indiana Code for municipalities. This revised policy is based on the Indiana Code for State Agencies. It was noted that much of the policy is the same except the in-person quorum now requires 1/3 of the sitting members to be physically present. If the Commission has a full complement of 15 members, then the Commission will need 5 in person members to conduct business. It was further noted that the policy requires at least 1 meeting be attended in person by each member in a calendar year. Ms. Barker called to approve the electronic meeting policy revision. Commissioner Greg Hull motioned to approve. Commissioner Azizi Arrington Slocum seconded the motion. By roll call vote, the motion carried.

## **b. Programs, Grants and Services**

### **i. Status of FY24/25 Arts Organization Support (AOS) and FY24 Arts Project Support (APS) Applications (Eric).**

IAC Grants and Data Manager Eric Ashby provided information on the status of the FY24/25 AOS And APS applications. Mr. Ashby noted the applications closed at midnight on March 8, 2023 with a total of 254 AOS applications submitted which is up 5% from the previous year. It was noted that the Regional Arts Partners are being funded separately as organizations out of this pool this year. Mr. Ashby continued that 241 APS applications were submitted, which is up 2.5% from last year. The programs combined totaled 495 applications which is up 4% from the previous application cycle and include 79 counties which is also a 4% increase. It was noted that the agency continues to work to get all 92 counties and Ms. Sharp will speak to the Commission about strategies to meet this goal later in the meeting. It was noted that the public grant panels are scheduled from April 24 – May 5<sup>th</sup> and the agency is conducting orientation webinars for panelists to better communicate roles and expectations. Once eligible applicants are paneled through online public panels, they will be scored, and funding recommendations will be provided to the Commission for approval at the June quarterly meeting. Discussion followed on reaching all counties. Ms. Sharp noted that should our budget request hold we can invest additional funds to build relationships in counties not funded. For new counties who have submitted applications it shows organic arts activity. Regional Arts Partner Chair Anne McKim noted that the partners have been reaching out to specific counties where we don't have existing relationships and are leveraging connections through libraries and community foundations.

- ii. **Arts Project Support (APS) Equity Review Process Introduction.** IAC Deputy Director of Programs Paige Sharp presented the equity review process for the Arts Project Support program. She noted the agency recognizes that this program is not getting to the depth and breadth it could be considering it is one of two primary programs the agency utilizes to get funding out through the state. She noted the APS program differs from the AOS program in that it gets funds out to non-arts organizations which is important in rural parts of the state and counties that do not have an arts organization. She noted the agency is seeking to evaluate this program as we did the AOS program to better understand how we can go deeper and provide greater equity. She noted understanding why we are still not getting funding to all counties is part of this evaluation. She noted we know that some challenges that impede smaller, non-arts organizations from applying to this program include a time-consuming application that has little return on investment, especially considering many of these organizations are volunteer run and under resourced. It was noted that another challenge is that there is a long lead time from applying to when an organization is actually funded. She noted that changing the APS program is inevitable to make it more equitable. She noted that through this review process we may find that we will change the program and add another mechanism to address these challenges. She continued that understanding why we see so many repeat grantees in this program who are performing organizations and better understanding organizations that identify as multidisciplinary will also be a part of this review. She noted the goal of this review is to align the APS program with the agency's cultural equity statement and to develop an actionable plan which will necessitate utilizing consultants and better understanding how other state arts agencies are doing this work in addition to gathering field input. She noted the timeline is to assess this input and present recommendations to the Commission by September to approve the FY25 guidelines at the December quarterly meeting. Commissioner Laurie McRobbie noted that in talking about the nature of arts organizations in underserved counties, the agency may want to look at the research Professor Grønberg has done on arts organizations in Indiana. Ms. Sharp noted the agency has worked with her before of which the greatest outcome was better understanding how significant turnover in this sector is, which is why some applicants did not get into the grant pool for FY24. Ms. Michaelsen added since Professor Grønberg surveys all sorts of non-profits, she could help us understand their needs and how many there are. Ms. Cowling questioned if there were any kind

of lists from other counties that can be shared with commissioners and RAPs. She noted perhaps if commissioners knew of eligible non-profits who aren't applying, they could reach out. Ms. Michaelsen noted that we need field input from those we don't serve as well as from those we do serve. In answer to Ms. Cowlings comment she noted when we identify those counties that will not receive funding, developing and leveraging relationships in those counties will be key and certainly Commissioners can play a role in that. Ms. Valentine suggested utilizing the Accelerate Indiana Municipalities (AIM) network if there is a county that has not applied. Ms. Sharp noted that thinking of multiple strategies is important as there are certainly other networks and structures we are not thinking about. Ms. Michaelsen added that the agency attended the AIM conference where Ms. Haines had a session on creative aging. Ms. Michaelsen further noted that we are currently talking about organizations as the focus of our strategies, but we are open to other partners, and it may be that we come back with recommendations to the Commission that may include artists or convention and visitors' bureaus. She added that we are interested in projects, not necessarily the vehicle to get the projects out into the state. Ms. Valentine also suggested utilizing the Office of Community and Rural Affairs (OCRA) community liaisons. Ms. Sharp noted that because we are going forward in this process, much the same as we did for the AOS program review, there are opportunities for Commissioners to be involved as well.

iii. **Accessibility Overview.** Ms. Haines provided a presentation on accessibility. She noted that aside from being the agency's education manager she is also the 504 coordinator. She noted that section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act protects people with disabilities from discrimination. She noted this law applies to the IAC because we receive federal funding. She continued that the ADA by comparison applies to all commercial and public facilities where the public is invited in. She noted the agency in these roles provides technical assistance and information to help our arts organizations comply as well since their grant funding includes both state and federal funds. She noted that there is a section in the agency's grant applications that asks about the accessibility of a program or organization. She noted all situations are different as many organizations use grandfathered in buildings or they may rent space for projects or maybe putting on an outdoor festival. She noted that part of the agency's technical assistance is talking through what ADA compliance means for them. She further noted that part of our capacity building in this area for organizations recently took the form of a webinar with the Great Lakes ADA. She noted that we will be following up with a series of capacity building webinars to help organizations understand how they are going to make accommodations of which Betty Siegel from the Kennedy Center will be leading one of them. She continued that in addition to helping our organizations in their compliance the IAC also seeks to grow in its own efforts in accessibility. For example, making sure that applications can be read with screen readers. She further noted that she attends the Leadership Exchange in Arts and Disability (LEAD) conference to gather resources and peer learning around accessibility. She further noted the IAC has an accessibility committee that meets 2 times a year to gain feedback on our programs, applications, etc. Ms. Haines noted if Commissioners have any questions from constituents in their communities on accessibility, they can link those to our website which has a wealth of resources. Ms. McRobbie questioned if our website itself is accessible to hearing and sight impairments? Ms. Brahm noted the state itself owns our website. Ms. McRobbie added that IU has put teams of undergrads out in non-profits to do website development with the added requirement that websites are ADA compliant. She suggested making a connection to do a check of the IAC's website. Ms. Valentine noted that this is something that needs to be done across all of state government. Ms. Cowling noted she appreciated the agency focusing on capacity building in this area.

iv. **Indiana Department of Education (IDOE).** Ms. Haines provided information on the evolution of the agency's arts education programing. She noted the agency began with the Partnering Arts Community and Education (PACE) pilot program which investigated the impact of arts integration in rural and metropolitan title funded classrooms between 2014 and 2021. She noted the research showed positive and consistent growth for students and has laid the bedrock for the agency's next steps with the Indiana Department of Education which came alongside the agency at the end of the PACE pilot through arts integration learning labs in 2021 which provided training for teachers and artists in arts integration work. With the success of these trainings, the agency went back to the IDOE to continue doing this work and now has a new 2-year contract for \$450K to expand these learnings into the Indiana Education fellowship for Creative Teaching and invest in the 2023 Indiana Summer Institute for Creative Teaching. She noted the fellowship will include 20 educators from across the state who will be selected to join the fellowship cohort and receive a customized experience of learning along with a fully-funded artist residency project and a \$1,000 honorarium. Ms. Haines noted the guidelines (attached) are being submitted for Commission approval. In addition, the Commission is being asked to approve ceding authority to staff and the selection committee inclusive of IAC Commissioner representation and IDOE staff representation to select the cohort. The Commission was provided with the materials. Ms. Barker called to approve the guidelines and to cede authority to staff and the selection committee as stated to select the cohort. Ms. Valentine called to approve. Ms. Bradley seconded. By roll call vote all were in favor.

v. **Lifelong Arts.** Ms. Haines presented the continued work of the agency around creative aging for older adults. She noted the agency began to investigate what this work might look like in 2021 with grant funding from the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (NASAA). She noted the pilot program trained 25 artists in this work and provided \$1500 fellowships for them to go back to their communities to do the work. The pilot outcomes and national research were then presented to the Family Social Services Administration division of aging who are providing funding to expand this work. It was noted the expansion will allow the inclusion of aging service providers to be able to apply and receive funding to partner with an artist. The program expansion will include 4 sessions in the upcoming year in Ft. Wayne, Bloomington, Gary and Evansville. The agency will also be partnering with the University of Indianapolis on the research component of this work. Ms. Haines noted the guidelines for this program have already been approved, but the Commission will need to approve ceding the selection and funding approval to the Creative Aging review panel since there are rolling deadlines. Ms. Cowling commented on the Commission's visit to Westminster Village in Lafayette, which shows the need for this type of programming and that the agency is on the right track. Ms. Haines noted that Westminster is the gold standard in this work. Because this is not the case in most communities, hopefully this program is fulfilling that need. She noted that artists are in every community, we just need to make the fit happen, which is the perfect roll for the IAC. She continued that the goal is to train artists to train each other. Ms. Michaelsen added that these organizations then potentially become APS grant applicants. Ms. Barker appreciated all the work and success that this program has had with individuals who are aging and their families. Ms. Barker called to approve ceding selection and funding approval to the Creative Aging Review panel. Ms. Valentine motioned to approve. Mr. Haist seconded the motion. By roll call vote the motion carried.

**5. Regional Arts Partnership (RAP).** RAP Chair Anne McKim from the Arts Council of Southwestern Indiana noted the RAPS are in the midst of the granting cycle of AOS And APS. She highlighted that when we talk about rural, small, volunteer run organizations the RAPS are very involved in helping applicants make the application process more accessible. She noted we have more applicants than we had in the past and working to get into unfunded counties is a part of that work. In these efforts, RAPS have been reaching out to convention and visitors bureaus, chambers, libraries and other non-arts organizations who are engrained in their communities. She noted that in response to Ms. Cowlings question on who we are not working with, we have had progress with applicants in IDEA and community engagement. She noted now we look to progress organizations on accessibility work. She noted that the changes that came during the pandemic and have stuck around such as use of webinars for trainings and collaboration of the partners has ensured that the information applicants are receiving is consistent across the state. Ms. McKim added that facilitating AOS and APS funding is only a part of the RAPS work as we think about who could benefit from the lifelong arts and creative educators' trainings. Ms. McKim added that on behalf of her colleagues we value being invited to the commission meetings to let you know that we are the boots on the ground for you to make your decisions. Ms. Barker noted that the commission appreciates the partners and there is no way the Commission can do the work with them.

**6. Traditional Arts Indiana Presentation.** Jon Kay with Traditional Arts Indiana spoke to the Commission about the statewide partnership between TAI and the IAC since 1998. He presented information on the apprenticeship program which identifies tradition bearers who pass down important cultural knowledge through new generations to seed cultural traditions into the future. Mr. Kay provided examples such as hoop net makers, Zapotec weavers, and glass artists who have been in this program. Mr. Hull questioned whether there are any retrospectives of apprenticeship work. Mr. Kay noted site visits and exit interviews are documented. Ms. Cowling questioned whether retrospectives travel to libraries. Mr. Kay noted that exhibits are available through interlibrary loan and TAI also works with them to program artists. Ms. Michaelsen noted that part of the NEA funding the IAC receives is earmarked for folk arts which is how the agency funds TAI. She noted the NEA's interest in traditional arts is increasing so she could see those funds increasing in the future. Ms. Michaelsen noted that we are very fortunate to have TAI and Jon Kay's specific expertise noting that the reason for the TAI/IU partnership is that there is a folklore program. Mr. Kay added that 8-9 graduates of this program are state folklorists in other states. It was further noted that related to the NEA, TAI just received an independent NEA grant for \$45K. Mr. Kay added that if any commissioners know of any traditional artists in their communities to let him know. Ms. Bradley questioned the definition of traditional. Mr. Kay noted that in the sense of folk traditions there is a community or group behind it and a social and time depth aspect to it. He noted *traditional* is not just from the past because it is relevant to current society with time depth and a social network around it. Ms. Bradley questioned if hip-hop or graffiti art could be considered a traditional art. Mr. Kay noted pulling back from popular media and looking into vernacular traditions such as tagging versus graffiti, for example, there is a social aspect and also a passage of time. He added that if you can tell me about the group it belongs to and you can talk about a community with history and pedigree then that is what this tradition means.

**7. Consent Agenda Items Moved to Full Agenda (if any).** No items were moved from the consent agenda to the full meeting.

**8. Old Business and New Business.** Mr. Zhang Sonera noted that the new Commissioner portal and financial dashboard will be online for the next round of June meetings and will provide a one stop shop where commissioners will have access to all documents, meeting materials, and all of information in one place. He noted that the commission will also have access to the financial dashboard which provides access to granting data by county and legislative district. It was noted that commissioners will gain access to the portal by creating a login and password. One-on-one tech assistance will also be provided. Mr. Oakman questioned if there is a movement to get away from paper materials with the dashboard. Ms. Michaelsen noted both options will be available. Mr. Haist noted it is a great asset. Ms. Barker noted that we have been discussing this for a while so will be glad to see it go live. Ms. Barker noted that for the June meeting the Commission will be approving the new slate of officers with Ms. Valentine as chair, Dave Haist as Vice-Chair and Rëna Bradley as Secretary.

**9. Adjournment of Quarterly Meeting.** Ms. Barker called to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Valentine motioned. Mr. Oakman seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 11:35 a.m.