



**MINUTES**  
**Board of Directors Meeting**  
*Tuesday, 8 July 2025, Mantorville MN*

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DIRECTORS PRESENT: Kjel Alkire, Tony Boldt, Steve Dietz, Rob Hardy, Elisha Marin, Laurel Stinson, Amy Wightkin, Melissa Wray (zoom)

DIRECTORS ABSENT: Sophia Chai

STAFF PRESENT: Anastasia Shartin, Sharon Mansur

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2:40pm Dir. Hardy, Board President, called the meeting to order.

Approval of the Agenda

**Dir. Alkire moved and Dir. Marin seconded approval of this meeting's agenda, as written. Motion passed unanimously.**

Approval of the Minutes

**Dir. Alkire moved and Dir. Stinson seconded approval of the minutes from the 10 June 2025 Board meeting. Motion passed unanimously.**

Presentation by MSAB

- Sue Gens, ED, with Michael Charron, Board Member
- Overview of MSAB: Mission, Key Duties, Revenue/Expenditures
- Clean Water Land, and Legacy Amendment, including discussion with SEMAC board
- Key Issues: Grants, Impact, Public Support

President's Report

- Thank you to Elisha Marin for his service on the Board.
- Reminder to fill out beginning of fiscal year paperwork.

Executive Director's Report

- See attached.

Outreach & Accessibility Manager Report

- See attached.

**Dir. Hardy moved and Dir. Marin seconded the motion to adjourn.**

The Board of Directors meeting adjourned at 4:18pm.

# Executive Director Report for Board Meeting July 8, 2025

## Grantmaking:

- Reviewed and updated applications for Project Grant for Individual Artists & Culture Bearers, General Operating Support Grant, and Artists & Culture Bearers in the Schools Grant
- June 6 – met with Spencer Johannes about joining the Arts Advisory Panel
- June 24 – Arts Advisory Panel Anti-Bias Training with Exposed Brick Theatre
- Offered online step-by-step grant writing workshops for Individual Artists & Culture Bearers (15 registrants) and for General Operating Support (9 registrants)
- Applications opened for Individual Artists & Culture Bearers and for General Operating Support
- Signed Fiscal Agent Agreement with Minnesota State Arts Board

## MSAB/McKnight/MCA/FACMN:

- June 12 – observed MSAB Board Meeting (online)
- June 27 – FACMN Executive Committee Meeting
- June 30 – attended McKnight Foundation webinar “Voices from the Field: A Minnesota Conversation on Federal Funding and Policy Impacts” featuring Tonya Allen, president of McKnight, and Keith Ellison, attorney general of Minnesota

## Regional Networking (June 7 – July 3, 2025):

- June 14, Wabasha, **Wabasha County** – “Driftless Water Dance” by Espoir DelMain at the outdoor amphitheater near the Eagle Center
- June 17, Rochester, **Olmsted County** – attended meeting organized by Lisa Higgs to discuss creating a Cultural Plan for Rochester
- June 19, Northfield, **Rice County** – Opening reception for Rocky Casillas’s exhibition, *You are the Universe/Eres el Universo* at the Northfield Art Guild
- June 21, Austin, **Mower County** – Artist talk by Suz Szucs for her exhibition, *Breathing in Place: Lake Erie* at Riverland Community College
- June 21, Austin, **Mower County** – World Refugee Day Inviting Table at the Welcome Center
- June 21, Owatonna, **Steele County** – *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang* at the Little Theatre of Owatonna
- June 29, Austin, **Mower County** – *Hairspray* presented by Summerset Theatre at Riverland

## Communications:

- Mailed posters, flyers, and rack cards to 60 organizations in SEMAC region
- Sent July e-newsletter to 1,286 recipients (53% opens)

## Other:

- Finalized job announcement for Grant Programs Manager and posted on SEMAC website, Springboard for the Arts job board, and Handshake; announced in July newsletter
- Met weekly with John Skillings, financial trainer with Propel Non-profits
- June 16 – with Sharon Mansur, met with Nancy Ariza, Springboard for the Arts, to confirm professional development workshops for individual artists and culture bearers
- June 17 – with Sharon Mansur, took public tour of Mayo art collection
- June 18 – met with Sara Wessling, Propel Nonprofits, to continue discussing plans to offer professional development workshops for organizations
- July 1 – SEMAC Executive Committee Meeting
- July 1 – met with Marcia Ratliff, executive director of Engage Winona, about the SEMAC Board
- July 2 – met with US Bank about investing funds
- July 2 – met with Niila Hebert, director of the Minnesota Alliance for Volunteer Advancement (MAVA), to continue discussing plans for offer a workshop for organizations
- July 3 – met with Mary Kay Feltes, retired Owatonna Library Director, about the SEMAC Board



## Outreach & Accessibility Manager Report

### SEMAC Board Meeting July 8, 2025

**Sharon Mansur**

Here are a few highlights from my role as SEMAC's new Outreach & Accessibility Manager:

#### **OVERALL**

##### **General onboarding/orientation**

Office and computer setup, communications, scheduling, resources, contacts.

##### **Role development**

Director's initial priority list plus more discussion with: SEMAC Staff, Board, community meetings, and referencing: SEMAC's Needs Survey and Biennial Plan, Exposed Brick Theatre's FORUM Equity and Evaluation Report.

##### **Looking forward to:**

- Deepening outreach and accessibility initiatives to support our programs and advocacy work aligned with our mission and values
- Being open, responsive and supportive to our community's needs



#### **OUTREACH**

##### **Individual Artist & Culture Bearer Grant Workshops/Panels**

Participated in these events, sharing content related to funding and creative support resources, personal experiences with the grant writing process, encouraging proposals and inviting 1:1 meetings for grant application assistance.

- Minnesota State Arts Board (MSAB) and SEMAC at the Owatonna Arts Center, Jan 2025
- Red Wing Arts ArtSpeak series - Grants Panel with Adam Wiltgen, MSAB Program Officer and Bao Phi, McKnight Arts & Culture Program Officer, Red Wing, MN, Jan 2025
- Virtual Step-by-Step Grant Workshop, Jan 2025
- Lake City Area Arts, Lake City, MN, June 2025
- Austin Area Arts, Austin, MN, June 2025
- Virtual Step-by-Step Grant Workshop, June 2025



## Native/Indigenous/First People's Relationship Building

Growing connections in our region:

- The Honoring Dakota Project
- Art of the Rural's Native/Indigenous/First Nations initiatives
- Winona State University's Turtle Island Student Organization
- Provided contacts and proposal feedback for City of LaCrescent's call for Indigenous public art installation

## Looking forward to:

- Prairie Island Indian Community's Tinta Wita Wacipi (Pow Wow), July 2025  
<https://redwing.org/events/tinta-wita-wacipi-annual-pow-wow/>
- Connecting with Carleton College's Indigenous Engagement in Place initiative  
<https://www.carleton.edu/indigenous-engagement/>
- Continuing outreach aligned with equity groups and initiatives regarding IDEA: inclusion, diversity, equity and inclusion values, needs and priorities
- Continuing to attend SEMAC and community events to keep listening and learning
- Moving at the speed of trust (from adrienne maree brown, *Emergent Strategy*)  
<https://adriennemareebrown.net/book/emergent-strategy/>



## Dance Rehearsal Spaces in SE Minnesota

Sparked by a request from the MN Dance Task Force as they branch out of metro focused dance community support to include Greater Minnesota. This became a research project to identify at least one dance rehearsal friendly studio/space in each of SEMAC's 11 counties. SEMAC now has a list that we as well as the task force can share and reference. This was also was a wonderful opportunity to connect with dance/movement creatives and educators throughout our region via email and phone conversations.

Total spaces identified: 19

<https://dancemn.org/submissions/introducing-the-mn-dance-task-force/>

## Resource Lists

An evolving project to gather resources to share on our website, in workshops and 1:1 meetings and consultations.

- Individual Artists & Culture Bearers Resources
- Organizational Resources
- Emergency Resources for Creatives
- Dance Rehearsal Spaces in SE Minnesota



## Looking forward to:

- ~Continuing to apply IDEA lenses to SEMAC's initiatives
- ~Supporting SEMAC grant workshops, and continuing identifying counties with low application and/or award rates for individuals
- ~Launching a new partnership with Springboard for the Arts to bring their *Work of Art: Business Skills for Artists* workshops to the SEMAC community as well as Propel and MN Alliance for Volunteer Advancement workshops for organizations
- ~Inviting more meetings with artists and culture bearers for grant writing assistance

The Minnesota State Arts Board presents:

## Accessibility 101

for Arts and Culture Organizations

Featured presenter:

National Endowment for the Arts  
Office of Accessibility

## ACCESSIBILITY

### Arts accessibility contacts

Between January and May I attended several webinars and started to gather accessibility resources in MN and beyond. I also reached out and met with the following accessibility focused MN based arts administrators. These connections resulted in valuable resources, ideas, and a growing support network regarding accessibility in the arts.

- Scott Artley, Accessibility consultant, former Accessibility Coordinator at MRAC [www.scottartley.com/](http://www.scottartley.com/)
- Zoe Cinel, Curator, Rochester Arts Center <https://www.rochesterartcenter.org/>
- Annick Dall-Desbois, Outreach & Accessibility Coordinator, MSAB <https://www.arts.state.mn.us/grants/accessible-arts.htm>
- Cheyenne De Menge, Outreach & Accessibility Coordinator, Arrowhead Regional Arts Council <https://www.aracouncil.org/>
- Aimee Kuiper, Engagement Manager, Metro Regional Arts Council <https://mrac.org/>
- Jes Reyes, Accessibility Coordinator, COMPAS [www.compas.org/](http://www.compas.org/)
- Andy Sturdevant, Artist Resources Manager/Accessibility, Springboard for the Arts
- Amy Wightkin, Paramount Theatre Manager/Administrative Assistant, Austin Area Arts, SEMAC Board member

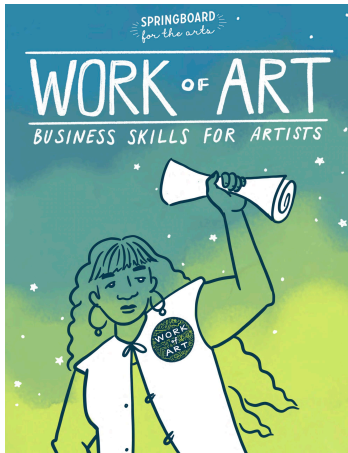
## Contact and first conversations with:

- Ability Building Community (ABC) <https://abcinc.org/>
- A Great Day Farm <https://agreatdayfarm.org>
- MN State Academies for the Deaf & Blind <https://www.msa.state.mn.us/>
- NAMI of SE Minnesota <https://namisemn.org/>
- PossAbilities <https://www.possabilities.org/>

## Language Services

Building on Anastasia's research, I established connections with these organizations towards learning more about the needs of newcomers they serve, discuss SEMAC's programs, and explore potential partnerships providing translation and interpretation services for SEMAC:

- Intercultural Mutual Assistance Association, Rochester, MN <https://imaa.net/>
- Hispanic Outreach of Goodhue County <https://hispanicoutreach.org/>
- Welcome Center, Austin, MN <https://prc-austinmn.org/welcome-center/>



## Trainings

-Springboard for the Arts' *Work of Art Business Skills for Artists* facilitation training, Nov 2024

<https://springboardforthearts.org/work-with-artists/intensive/>

-Mental Health First Aid, Jan 2025 [www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org](http://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org)

- Springboard for the Arts' Accessibility Training, with Andy Sturdevant, May 2025

## Looking forward to:

- Deepening relationships with followup conversations, attending events, facilitate SEMAC support as appropriate
- Continuing to utilize an accessibility lens at SEMAC, implementing more incremental access steps, working towards more integrated in depth initiatives
- Attending the Leadership Exchange in Arts & Disability (LEAD) conference in 2026

## SEMAC and Community Events Attended in 2025 (to date)

January	<i>The River Connects Us</i> exhibit opening, Winona Arts Center, Winona, MN
February	Rachel Pauli's <i>Gourd-geous Community</i> mural, Winona Library, Winona, MN
March	International Owl Festival, Houston, MN Lindsay Krage, <i>Barn Quilt Trail</i> Reception, Anthem Skateshop, Winona, MN
April	Honoring Dakota Project, Community crafting circle, Winona History Center Rochester International Film Festival, Pop's Art Theater, Rochester, MN Samantha Reiter-Johnson's <i>Through Bees' Eyes</i> reception, Quarry Hill Nature Center, Rochester, MN <i>Bridging Research &amp; Community</i> , Winona State University's Women's Gender & Sexuality Studies, WSU Ethnic Studies, The Honoring Dakota Project, Red Wing Library, Red Wing, MN
May	Community lunch and conversation with The Honoring Dakota Project, WSU Turtle Island Student Organization, Art of the Rural, Winona, MN Zumbro River Fiber Arts 50th Anniversary opening, History Center of Olmsted County, Rochester, MN <i>Our Relative Haha Wakpa</i> gathering, Anderson Center, Red Wing Prairie Island Tribal Historic Preservation Office, Red Wing, MN SEMYO Concert, Century High School, Rochester, MN <i>Young Authors Young Artists</i> conference, Rochester, MN
June	Espoir del Main's <i>Driftless Water Dance Performance</i> , National Eagle Center, Wabasha, MN
July	Annual Somali Cultural Festival, Somali American Social Service Association, Rochester Community and Technical College, Rochester, MN