



## MINUTES

### Board of Directors Meeting

Tuesday, January 13, 2026 via Zoom

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DIRECTORS PRESENT: Tony Boldt, Alejandro Castañón, Sophia Chai, Steve Dietz, Rob Hardy, Laurel Stinson, Amy Wightkin, Melissa Wray

STAFF PRESENT: Desmond Anabrang, Anastasia Shartin

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1:31pm Dir. Hardy, Board President, called the meeting to order.

#### Approval of the Agenda

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

#### Approval of the Minutes

**Dir. Wray moved and Dir. Boldt seconded approval of the minutes from the last Board meeting. Motion passed unanimously.**

#### President's Report

- Marcia Ratcliff has stepped back from the board. As a result, SEMAC currently has board vacancies in some counties. Board members are invited to share any recommendations or names with Anastasia.
- SEMAC will begin a long-range planning process to review and potentially refine the organization's mission, vision, and values. Board input and approval will be sought throughout the process.
- Anastasia and the President have begun drafting expanded governance documentation to supplement the bylaws, including clarification on board appointments and policies related to grant deadlines and consequences. This will be brought to the board for review and approval at a later date.

#### Treasurer's Report

- **Dir. Wightkin moved and Dir. Chai seconded approval of the Treasurer's Report. Motion passed unanimously.**

#### Executive Director's Report

- Karen's retirement.
- Sarah Cutlip as the new contract Communications Manager
- Rural analysis report summary.
- Arts Advocacy day happening March 3

New Business

•Agenda Amendment

Motion to add Item E (Use of Discretionary Funds in Light of Current Events

- **Dir. Castañón moved and Dir. Boldt seconded the motion to add Discretionary Funds into New Business as item E. Motion passed unanimously.**

•Approval of Artists & Culture Bearers in the Schools Grants

<u>Score</u>	<u>Applicant</u>	<u>Grant</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Request</u>	<u>Recused</u>
26.60	Lake City Public Schools	1626SM	Wabasha	\$4,000	
25.00	Riverway Learning Community	1726SV	Winona	\$3,995	
24.40	Winona Area Public Schools	1926SV	Wabasha	\$4,000	
24.00	Austin Public Schools	1526SM	Mower	\$3,995	Wightkin

- **Dir. Chai moved and Dir. Stinson seconded the motion to award \$15,990 for the applicants of the Artists & Culture Bearers in the Schools Grants. Motion passed unanimously.**

•Approval of General Operating Support Grants

<u>Score</u>	<u>Applicant</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Request</u>	<u>Recused</u>
29.20	Rochester Repertory Theatre Company	Olmsted	\$5,000	
29.20	Theatre du Mississippi	Winona	\$5,000	
28.80	Frozen River Film Festival	Winona	\$5,000	
28.20	Zumbrota State Theatre	Goodhue	\$5,000	
27.75	Austin Symphony Orchestra	Mower	\$5,000	Wightkin

- **Dir. Castañón moved and Dir. Stinson seconded the motion to award \$25,000 to fund the 5 organizations that scored 27.00 and higher in this category. Motion passed unanimously.**

•Approval of Emergency Relief Fund Participation.

- An overview of the Emergency Relief Fund (ERF) was shared. While five organizations participated in an earlier pilot round, SEMAC did not due to staff transitions. Each participating organization operates its ERF independently and defines its own program model.
- SEMAC has been allocated \$36,500 for ERF. Per guidance, 20% (approx. \$7,000) will be reserved for administrative costs, leaving \$29,500 for direct relief. Individual awards are anticipated to be around \$500, allowing for approximately 59 awards.
- A proposed timeline was presented: staff will draft the program in January, seek Executive Committee feedback in February, present a final draft in March, launch the program by the end of March, and distribute funds by the end of June.

- Board approval of the ERF program was requested due to the rapid nature of the opportunity and funding timeline.
- **Dir. Dietz moved and Dir. Wightkin seconded the approval of the Emergency Relief Fund. Motion passed unanimously.**
  
- Approval Christopher Porter as new Board Member
  - **Dir. Wightkin moved and Dir. Stinson seconded the appointment of Christopher Porter as a new Board Member. Motion passed unanimously.**
  
- **Discretionary Funds in Light of Current Events (Item E)**
  - **Dir. Chai moved and Dir. Wray seconded to approve discretionary funds with a cap of up to \$6,000. Motion passed unanimously.**

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

The Board of Directors meeting adjourned at 3:15pm.