



MINUTES
Board of Directors Meeting
Tuesday, March 10, 2026 via Zoom

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

STAFF PRESENT: Desmond Anabrang, Anastasia Shartin

1:36pm Dir. Hardy, Board President, called the meeting to order.

Approval of the Agenda

Dir. Stinson moved and Dir. Chai 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

- Proposed revisions to the By-laws to clarify procedures for online and in-person meetings, as well as the possibility of taking action between meetings via email when unanimously approved. If unanimous approval is not reached, the matter will be brought to the next meeting.
- Additional policy updates formalizing current practices, including deadlines for contracts and final reports, handling of the 990 form, and procedures for filling vacancies on the Board and Arts Advisory Panels.

Treasurer's Report

- We are on solid financial footing.
- ED Shartin and Dir. Stinson met with the auditor; the audit will be shared with the Board via email.
- Audit figures will be used for the 990, with the goal of completion by the May meeting.
- **Dir. Stinson moved and Dir. Wightkin seconded approval of the Treasurer's Report. Motion passed unanimously.**

Executive Director's Report

- Arts Advocacy Day (March 3) was successful, with over 100 meetings with legislators being held. Thirty-five participants registered from SEMAC region, with approximately a dozen attending the morning meetup in Rochester. Key

messages included appreciation for arts funding and the economic impact of the arts (\$1.6 billion in Minnesota).

- Three of four organizational skill-building workshops have been completed. The most recent workshop, in partnership with the Minnesota Alliance for Volunteer Advancement, focused on volunteer recruitment and retention. Approximately 20 registered, with 11 attendees. The final workshop on strategic planning is scheduled for April 23.
- Mission and Vision review is underway. A survey has received 35 responses to date and will continue to be promoted. Results will inform the March 5 in-person meeting in Rochester (Cascade Meadows), followed by a Board Retreat on June 15.
- Discretionary funds: up to \$6,000 approved; approximately \$5,000 distributed across multiple counties (Rice, Steele, Olmsted, Goodhue, Winona, Mower, Wabasha). Distribution is currently paused while additional opportunities are explored.
- Ongoing discussions with the University of Minnesota Extension (Regional Sustainable Development Partnerships) regarding a potential initiative connecting arts and well-being. SEMAC will be notified in mid-March if selected to move forward in this competitive process.

Grants Committee Report

- Continued discussion on revisiting the General Operating Support (GenOps) program, including questions around distribution and impact.
- Exploration of a “Flexible Support Grant” model, inspired by MRAC and Prairie Lakes, which consolidates multiple programs into a single, more flexible funding opportunity.
- Staff expressed interest in this model as a way to reduce barriers and increase accessibility for applicants. Initial feedback from committee members has been positive.
- Next committee meeting scheduled for April 6; Board members are invited to join or share relevant resources.

New Business

- Approval of Updates to By-laws (see attached)
 - **Dir. Wightkin moved and Dir. Stinson seconded the motion to approve revisions to the By-laws. Motion passed unanimously.**
- Approval of New Policies regarding submission of Final Report (see attached)
 - **Dir. Stinson moved and Dir. Wightkin seconded the motion to approve the new policies. Motion passed unanimously.**
- Approval of New Emergency Relief Fund Grant Program Structure (see attached)
 - **Dir. Stinson moved and Dir. Wray seconded the motion to approve the new ERF Program Structure. Motion passed unanimously.**
- Approval of Project Support for Individual Artists and Culture Bearers Grants

<u>Score</u>	<u>Applicant</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Request</u>	<u>Recused</u>
29.50	Lydia Hansen	Olmsted	\$ 3,310	Melissa

28.14	Nicole Nfonoyim-Hara	Olmsted	\$4,000	Steve
28.14	Soojin Lee	Olmsted	\$6,000	
28.13	Heidi Eger	Fillmore	\$ 3,995	
27.75	Gloria Alatorre	Winona	\$4,000	
27.13	Raelynn Peter	Winona	\$4,000	
27.00	Kara Elizabeth Maloney	Fillmore	\$3,000	
27.00	Julie Fakler	Rice	\$6,000	
26.88	Ashante Gills	Olmsted	\$ 3,700	
26.86	Nicole Havekost	Olmsted	\$ 5,950	
26.57	David Ullman	Rice	\$6,000	
26.50	Chalymar Martinez Flores	Winona	\$4,000	

- **Dir. Wightkin moved and Dir. Chai seconded the motion to award \$53,955 to fund the 12 individual artists that scored 26.50 and higher in this category. Dir. Dietz and Dir. Wray recused themselves for conflict of interest. Motion passed unanimously.**
- Approval of New Policies regarding the submission of Contractual Agreement (see attached)
 - **Dir. Dietz moved and Dir. Chai seconded the motion to approve the new policies.**
 - **Amendment to change the “will” to “may”. Dir Stinson moved and Dir. Porter seconded the motion to change the policy.**
 - **Dir. Chai moved and Dir. Wray seconded the motion to approve the new policy as amended. Motion passed unanimously.**
- **Dir. Wray moved and Dir. Wightkin seconded the motion to adjourn. . Motion passed unanimously.**

The Board of Directors meeting adjourned at 3:05pm.