



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

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

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 – FRACMN 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

southeastern minnesota arts council
WORKSHOPS



Join SEMAC in June!

SEMAC is offering three workshops for individual artists and culture bearers in our region. Executive Director Anastasia Shantin and Outreach & Accessibility Manager Sharon Mansur will share an overview of SEMAC's grant programs and professional development opportunities. They will also discuss the process of applying for an Individual Artists & Culture Bearers Grant (next deadline July 28th), share helpful tips and resources, and offer time for creatives to mingle and connect.

Lake City (in Person)

Monday, June 2 | 6-8p

Lake City Area Arts



Austin (in Person)

Thursday, June 3 | 6-8p

Austin Area Arts Center



Online (via Zoom)

Wednesday, June 25 | 6-8:30p

*Includes step-by-step of SEMAC grant application for individuals



All workshops are free. Registration is highly recommended for the June 2 and 3 workshops, and required for June 25. Visit semac.org for more information on our grant programs. Contact sharon@semac.org, (957) 281-6565, 711 TTY with questions or accessibility needs.



SEMAC activities are made possible by the generous support of the Minnesota State Arts Board and the Minnesota State Arts Board's grant program.

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/
- 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/
- Andy Sturdevant, Artist Resources Manager/Accessibility, Springboard for the Arts
- Amy Wightkin, Paramount Theatre Manager/Administrative Assistant, Austin Area Arts, SEMAC Board member

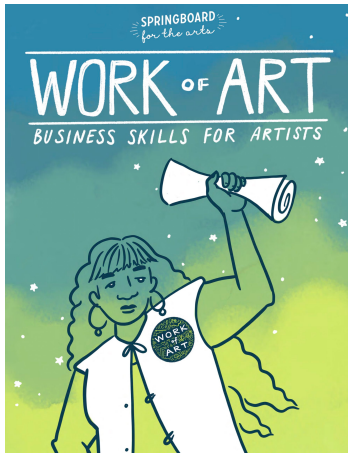
Contact and first conversations with:

- 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

- 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 & 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



MINUTES
Board of Directors Meeting
Tuesday, 9 September 2025, via Zoom

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

DIRECTORS ABSENT: Kjel Alkire

STAFF PRESENT: Anastasia Shartin, Karen Miller

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

Approval of the Agenda

Dir. Wightkin moved and Dir. Chai seconded approval of this meeting's agenda, as written. Motion passed unanimously.

Approval of the Minutes

Dir. Dietz moved and Dir. Boldt seconded approval of the minutes from the 8 July 2025 Board meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

President's Report

- Materials from the Freeborn County Arts Initiative appeal are now distributed to the full board from the Executive Committee.
- The review of General Operating Support applications is coming up. Volunteer reviewers include Rob Hardy, Tony Boldt, Steve Dietz, Melissa Wray, and Amy Wightkin splitting with Sophia Chai. Applications will be available to reviewers on September 18, in preparation for presentation to the November board meeting.

Treasurer's Report

Dir. Dietz moved and Dir. Chai seconded approval of the Treasurer's Report for FY2025. Motion passed unanimously.

Executive Director's Report

- See attached.

Grants Committee Report

- Over the next few months, the committee will be discussing details of the General Operating Support program.
- Guidelines about funding programming as religious expression/socialization will also be reviewed.

Monitoring Reports

- Dir. Hardy attended the capstone event of advancing artist grantee JC Sanford. His report will become part of the permanent record for that grant.
- Dir. Stinson attended the Ye Olde Opera House capstone event. Her report will become part of the permanent record for that grant.
- ED Shartin attended nine capstone events in July and August. Her reports will become part of the permanent record for those grants.
- Outreach & Accessibility Manager Mansur attended eight capstone events in July and August. Her reports will become part of the permanent record for those grants.

New Business

- Approval of Individual Artist & Culture Bearer Grants *

<u>Score</u>	<u>Applicant</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Request</u>	<u>Recused</u>
27.86	Asuka Kakitani	Rice	\$6,000	
27.83	Gao Hong	Rice	\$6,000	
27.83	Jessalyn Finch	Olmsted	\$6,000	
27.71	Andrea Turini	Rice	\$6,000	
27.57	Sue Mundy	Wabasha	\$5,000	
26.83	Liz Bucheit	Fillmore	\$6,000	Wray
26.33	Terri Allred	Olmsted	\$4,000	
26.29	Lois Peterson	Winona	\$6,000	
26.00	Spencer Johannes	Olmsted	\$3,650	Wightkin
26.00	John Paulson	Winona	\$6,000	
25.83	Robert Armstrong	Winona	\$6,000	
25.83	Susanne Crane	Freeborn	\$6,000	
25.83	Charles Kernler	Winona	\$4,000	
25.71	Linda Rossi	Rice	\$6,000	

Dir. Stinson moved and Dir. Chai seconded the motion to award \$76,650 in full funding to the 14 individual artists and culture bearers that scored 25.71 and higher in this category. Motion passed with two abstentions.

County	Grants	Total Awarded
Dodge	0	0
Fillmore	1	\$6,000
Freeborn	1	\$6,000
Goodhue	0	0
Houston	0	0
Mower	0	0
Olmsted	3	\$13,650
Rice	4	\$24,000
Steele	0	0
Wabasha	1	\$5,000

County	Grants	Total Awarded
Winona	4	\$22,000
	14	\$76,650

- Resolution to Approve the Charitable Organization Annual Report
Dir. Stinson moved and Dir. Wightkin seconded the motion to approve the Charitable Organization Annual Report. Motion passed unanimously.
- Board Candidate Alejandro Castanon (résumé attached)
Dir. Chai moved and Dir. Boldt seconded the appointment of Alejandro Castanon as the Freeborn County representative to the SEMAC Board of Directors. Motion passed unanimously.
- Board Candidate Marcia Ratliff (résumé attached)
Dir. Wray moved and Dir. Wightkin seconded the appointment of Marcia Ratliff as the Winona County representative to the SEMAC Board of Directors. Motion passed unanimously.
- Panel Candidate Maggie Sather (résumé attached)
Dir. Dietz moved and Dir. Chai seconded the appointment of Maggie Sather as a visual arts panelist on the SEMAC Arts Advisory Panel. Motion passed unanimously.
- Proposal to Postpone Rural Arts Grant Program to FY2027
Dir. Dietz moved and Dir. Wray seconded the motion to postpone the Rural Arts Grant Program to FY2027, thus adding \$25,000 to the organizational grants budget and putting the remainder toward bolstering the launch. Motion passed unanimously.

The board went into executive session to discuss the appeal filed by Freeborn County Arts Initiative.

Dir. Chai moved and Dir. Wightkin seconded the motion to adjourn.

The Board of Directors meeting adjourned at 2:59pm.

- * After an error was found in reporting of the grant amount for Andrea Turini, an email poll to increase funding of Individual Artists from \$75,750 to \$76,650 was taken on 9/25/2025 from directors who attended the meeting on 9/9/2025. **Updated motion passed unanimously.** Dollar amounts expressed in this document have been updated to reflect the correct funding.



MINUTES
Board of Directors Meeting
Monday, 10 November 2025, via Zoom

DIRECTORS PRESENT: Alejandro Castañón, Sophia Chai, Steve Dietz, Rob Hardy, Marcia Ratliff, Amy Wightkin, Melissa Wray

DIRECTORS ABSENT: Tony Boldt, Laurel Stinson

STAFF PRESENT: Anastasia Shartin, Karen Miller, Desmond Anabrang

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

Approval of the Agenda

Dir. Wray moved and Dir. Chai seconded approval of this meeting's agenda, as written. Motion passed unanimously.

Approval of the Minutes

Dir. Dietz moved and Dir. Wightkin seconded approval of the minutes from the 9 September 2025 Board meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

President's Report

- SEMAC has not received any communication from the Freeborn County Arts Initiative after we responded to their claims regarding nonpayment of FY2025 General Operating Support.
- New board reviewers will be needed for the second round of General Operating Support applications. Potential reviewers Ratliff, Wightkin, Chai and Castañón have agreed, and Dir. Stinson will be asked about her availability to review.

Treasurer's Report

- **Dir. Ratliff moved and Dir. Castañón seconded approval of the Treasurer's Report for the month of September. Motion passed unanimously.**

Executive Director's Report

- Dir. Alkire has resigned from the Board, effective immediately.
- See attached.

Monitoring Reports

- ED Shartin attended the capstone events for Friends of the Bohemian Brick Hall, Art of the Rural and individual artist Michael Speck. Her reports will become part of the permanent record for those grants.

- Outreach & Accessibility Manager Mansur attended three capstone events: individual artists Carla Galina and Julie Yost, Hiawatha Valley Mental Health Center, Winona ORC, and Great River Shakespeare Festival. Her reports will become part of the permanent record for those grants.

New Business

- 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>
29.00	Northfield Public Schools	1426SV	Rice	\$4,000	
25.60	Dover-Eyota Public Schools	1026SM	Olmsted	\$4,000	

- **Dir. Wray moved and Dir. Chai seconded the motion to award \$4,000 each to Dover-Eyota Public Schools and Northfield Public Schools. 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
27.60	Winona Symphony Orchestra	Winona	\$5,000	
27.60	Sandbar Storytelling Festival	Winona	\$5,000	
27.50	Mainspring	Houston	\$5,000	Wray
27.00	Albert Lea Art Center	Freeborn	\$4,952	Castañón
27.00	Mantorville Art Guild	Dodge	\$5,000	
27.00	Northfield Youth Choirs	Rice	\$5,000	
27.00	Rochester Music Guild	Olmsted	\$5,000	
27.00	Sheldon Theatre Brass Band	Goodhue	\$5,000	
27.00	Sing Out Loud	Olmsted	\$5,000	
26.80	Rochester Area Handbells	Olmsted	\$5,000	
26.75	Freeborn County Arts Initiative	Freeborn	\$5,000	Castañón
26.60	Winona Arts Center	Winona	\$5,000	
26.40	Rochester Male Chorus	Olmsted	\$5,000	
26.40	Southeast MN Bluegrass Association	Houston	\$5,000	
26.25	Mantorville Theatre Company	Dodge	\$5,000	
26.20	River Arts Alliance	Winona	\$5,000	
25.80	Bells of the Bluffs Handbell Ensemble	Goodhue	\$5,000	
25.60	Rochester Chamber Music Society	Olmsted	\$5,000	
25.20	Lake City Area Arts	Wabasha	\$5,000	

Dir. Chai moved and Dir. Dietz seconded the motion to award \$119,952 for FY2026 and \$119,952 for FY2027 in full funding to the 24

organizations that scored 25.20 and higher in this category. Motion passed with three abstentions.

- Approval of Programming & Project Support Grants for Organizations

<u>Score</u>	<u>Applicant</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Request</u>	<u>Recused</u>
29.25	Southeast Service Cooperative	Olmsted	\$6,000	
29.00	Winona Symphony Orchestra	Winona	\$8,000	
29.00	Sheldon Theatre of Performing Arts	Goodhue	\$11,000	
28.67	Summerset Community Theatre	Mower	\$11,000	
28.60	Eagle Bluff Environmental Learning Center	Fillmore	\$6,000	
28.50	Southeast Minnesota Bluegrass Association	Houston	\$6,000	
28.40	Austin Symphony Orchestra	Mower	\$5,000	Wightkin
28.25	Big Turn	Goodhue	\$11,000	
28.20	International Cello Institute	Rice	\$11,000	
28.00	Zumbro Valley Chorus	Mower	\$11,000	
28.00	Great River Shakespeare Festival	Winona	\$11,000	
28.00	Bluff Country Studio Art Tour	Winona	\$6,200	
28.00	Sandbar Storytelling Festival	Winona	\$11,000	
27.80	Paradise Center for the Arts	Rice	\$11,000	
27.80	Choral Arts Ensemble of Rochester	Olmsted	\$10,000	
27.80	Rochester International Film Group	Olmsted	\$6,000	
27.80	Red Wing Arts	Goodhue	\$11,000	
27.80	Freeborn County Arts Initiative	Freeborn	\$11,000	Castañón
27.75	Winona Arts Center	Winona	\$7,520	
27.67	Rochester Symphony	Olmsted	\$11,000	
27.40	Lanesboro Community Theatre	Fillmore	\$7,425	
27.40	Bridge Chamber Music Festival	Rice	\$10,235	
27.25	Rochester Civic Theatre Company	Olmsted	\$11,000	
27.25	Winona Creators Collective	Winona	\$10,580	
27.20	Olmsted County	Olmsted	\$6,000	
27.20	Austin Area Arts	Mower	\$11,000	Wightkin
26.50	City of Whalan	Fillmore	\$6,000	
25.75	Wits' End Theatre	Fillmore	\$7,350	
25.00	International Owl Center	Houston	\$6,000	
24.40	Byron Community Education	Olmsted	\$6,000	

Dir. Wray moved and Dir. Chai seconded the motion to award \$237,960 in full funding to the 26 organizations that scored 27.20 and higher in this category, plus \$25,350 to the next four rural applicants. Motion passed with two abstentions.

Since the last Board meeting, SEMAC awarded grants to 56 applicants representing ten counties for a total of \$391,262 in funding. This includes two Artists & Culture Bearers

in the Schools grants for \$8,000, 24 General Operating Support grants for \$119,952, and 30 Programming & Project Support for Organizations grants for \$49,310.

County	Grants	Total Awarded
Dodge	2	\$10,000
Fillmore	4	\$26,775
Freeborn	3	\$20,952
Goodhue	6	\$48,000
Houston	4	\$22,000
Mower	5	\$43,000
Olmsted	14	\$90,000
Rice	5	\$41,235
Steele	0	0
Wabasha	1	\$5,000
Winona	12	\$84,300
	56	\$391,262

- Panel Candidate Jacob Smithburg
Dir. Castañón moved and Dir. Wightkin seconded the appointment of Jacob Smithburg as a panelist on the SEMAC Arts Advisory Panel. Motion passed unanimously.
- Minnesota Paid Leave Policy
Dir. Ratliff moved and Dir. Wray seconded the motion for SEMAC to pay the full premium for employees who take the leave. Motion passed unanimously.

Dir. Dietz moved and Dir. Wray seconded the motion to adjourn.

The Board of Directors meeting adjourned at 3:00pm.



MINUTES

Board of Directors Meeting

Tuesday, January 13, 2026 via Zoom

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

STAFF PRESENT: Desmond Anabrang, Anastasia Shartin

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.



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.



MINUTES
Board of Directors Meeting
Tuesday, May 12, 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

1:32pm Dir. Hardy, Board President, called the meeting to order.

Approval of the Agenda

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

Approval of the Minutes

- **Dir. Wray moved and Dir. Hardy seconded approval of the minutes from the last Board meeting.**
- **Executive Dir. Shartin noted an amendment to add Dir. Porter to the list of directors present in the March Board of Directors meeting minutes.**
- **Motion to amend the March Board meeting minutes to include Dir. Porter and approve the amended minutes was passed unanimously.**

President's Report

- The next in-person Board of Directors meeting will take place on Monday, June 15, 2026, at the Anderson Center. Part of the meeting will serve as a Board retreat, while part will be a regular business meeting.
- As part of the end-of-fiscal-year business, the Board will elect or re-elect officers for the positions of President, Vice President, and Treasurer. Nominations, including self-nominations, may be made at the meeting.
- Directors interested in serving in one of these officer roles are encouraged to contact Dir. Hardy and Executive Dir. Shartin prior to the meeting. Questions regarding responsibilities or time commitments may also be directed to them.

Treasurer's Report

- The financial report indicates that SEMAC remains on solid financial footing.
- **Dir. Hardy moved and Dir. Wightkin seconded approval of the Financial Report. Motion passed unanimously.**
- Board members reviewed the Form 990, which had been included in the Board packet prior to the meeting.
- **Dir. Stinson moved and Dir. Hardy seconded approval of the Form 990 for submission. Motion passed unanimously.**

Executive Director's Report

- Executive Dir. Shartin shared that Desmond's family has arrived in Rochester. A gathering for Board members and staff to meet the family will be planned later this summer.
- Executive Dir. Shartin reported that SEMAC was not selected to continue work with the University of Minnesota Extension Regional Sustainable Development Partnerships on a proposed arts and wellbeing initiative. Despite this, SEMAC continues to support arts and wellbeing programming through monthly "A Moment to Breathe and Be Together" sessions, resource lists for artists and culture bearers, and related grant activities.
- Emergency Relief Funds (ERF) have launched, with 17 submitted applications and four draft applications received prior to the May 19 deadline. Applications will undergo eligibility review followed by a random selection process, with 20 ERF gifts awarded per round across three rounds.
- Desmond completed a pilot step-by-step application video for ERF. SEMAC is considering expanding this format to future grant programs. SEMAC also hosted two ERF Q&A sessions to assist applicants.
- Executive Dir. Shartin reported that SEMAC hosted an accessibility workshop with consultant Scott Artley focused on disability inclusion. SEMAC plans to continue offering accessibility-related workshops in the future.
- Executive Dir. Shartin proposed increasing the FY2026 Programming & Project Support Grants for Organizations budget by \$11,805. She explained that year-end projections and carry-forward funds indicate the organization can support the increase without negatively impacting next year's operations.
 - Directors discussed the proposal, including the impact of state funding reductions, SEMAC's reserve funds, and balancing current-year support with future fiscal planning. Several directors expressed support for restoring some funding to the grant program.
 - **Dir. Dietz moved and Dir. Chai seconded the motion to allocate an additional \$11,805 to Programming and Project Support Grants for Organizations. Motion passed unanimously.**

New Business

- Approval of Programming and Project Support Grants for Organizations

<u>Score</u>	<u>Applicant</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Request</u>
30.00	Winona Dakota Unity Alliance	Winona	\$6,000
29.33	City of Chatfield	Fillmore	\$6,000
29.25	City of Northfield Public Library	Rice	\$6,000
29.25	Honoring Dakota Project	Goodhue	\$11,000
29.00	Calliope Theatre Company	Olmsted	\$11,000
29.00	Mainspring	Houston	\$11,000
28.60	Minnesota Marine Art Museum	Winona	\$11,000
28.50	Southeastern MN Youth Orchestras	Olmsted	\$11,000
28.33	Root River Current	Fillmore	\$6,000

28.20	Hispanic Outreach of Goodhue County	Goodhue	\$6,000
27.80	Rochester Art Center	Olmsted	\$11,000
27.75	Downtown Oranoco Gold Rush Days	Olmsted	\$6,000
27.40	Save the Northfield Depot	Rice	\$6,000
27.40	Hometown Opera Company	Olmsted	\$5,300
27.25	Frozen River Film Festival	Winona	\$11,000
27.20	Dreamery Rural Arts Initiative	Fillmore	\$9,000
27.00	Little Theatre of Owatonna	Steele	\$11,000
27.00	Anderson Center at Tower View	Goodhue	\$11,000
27.00	Austin Symphony Orchestra	Mower	\$11,000
26.60	Lake Song Chorus	Freeborn	\$4,000
26.60	Vintage Band Festival	Rice	\$11,000
26.50	Center for Integration and Mediation Services	Olmsted	\$5,500
26.50	Mantorville Theatre Company	Dodge	\$7,500
26.50	Lanesboro Community Theater	Fillmore	\$10,620
26.40	Northfield Union of Youth	Rice	\$6,000
26.40	MacPhail Center for Music - Austin	Mower	\$10,575
26.40	A Great Day Farm	Rice	\$6,000
26.25	River Junctions Arts Council	Wabasha	\$11,000

- Dir. Castañón, Dir. Hardy, Dir. Stinson, Dir. Wightkin, Dir. Wray, recused themselves and was sent into a breakout room for the duration of the discussion and the voting of the grant applications.
- **Dir. Dietz moved and Dir. Porter seconded the motion to award \$238,495 for the applicants of the Programming and Project Support Grants for Organizations. Motion passed unanimously.**
- Approval of Abdiwali Amin to the panel
 - **Dir. Chai moved and Dir. Stinson seconded the motion to approve Abdiwali Amin to the panel. Motion passed unanimously.**
- Approval of Hope Schwen to the panel
 - **Dir. Stinson moved and Dir. Chai seconded the motion to approve Hope Schwen to the panel. Motion passed unanimously.**
- Approval of Credit Line Policy
 - This is a policy that we want to have because grantees are required as part of their contract to put their required credit line on all their publicity, verbally mentioned. There have been many instances where grantees left it out. But it's a requirement for the grant, so we want to have a policy to reinforce the fact that this is a requirement, and with some consequences for not fulfilling the requirement.
 - The most important thing to talk about is the consequences for not putting the credit line or logo as required. We figured that sometimes grantees forget, so we thought we should just flag their file to indicate that they didn't do it once. But if they continue not to do it, they will be ineligible to apply the year after, and the third time the grantee will be disqualified from applying for future grants. But because there are a lot of extenuating

circumstances, we added the Director and the Executive Committee will have a full discretion, so that if we find out that there were really compelling reasons that they deserve another chance, we could give it to them and not a hard your disqualified forever, but this will give discretion for those circumstances.

- Dir. Dietz points out that Social Media and email blasts is a confusing area of discussion when it comes to credit line and logo. Especially because the language will be twice as long as the caption. Dir. Dietz also felt that some of the non-compliance consequences are too extreme and he won't vote for that.
- Dir. Wray points out that SEMAC should look into if the States Arts Board have some sort of policy in place if people don't use their credit properly. It might be worth asking if they have a process. She agrees with Dir. Dietz that this is a little steep for a fact that this issue is a bit confusing when it comes to the placement of credit and logo across different platforms. So another way to approach this if SEMAC could also do a video of examples of these are the places where you should definitely have it, how it looks, across different platform. Sort of a tutorial of when and where it is used. Just a couple of warnings before we get to the point before we start having this strong policy, to give people time to learn, just because of how ambiguous it is over the years.
- Dir. Hardy agrees with Dir. Wray that SEMAC should investigate the Arts Board's consequences. Dir. Wightkin also agrees that SEMAC should have a better description of process in implementing the credit line and logo. It might be a nice thing to have some guidance or procedure people could follow to know that they are doing it correctly.
- Dir. Chai also suggests that SEMAC should have multiple points of reminders about the credit line and logo. Dir. Wray added that we should also explain why this is important. Some storytelling of why would help people to understand.
- Dir. Castañón offers to assist staff to better guide applicants in using the credit line and logo correctly.

- **Dir. Wray moved and Dir. Wightkin seconded the motion to adjourn.
Motion passed unanimously.**

The Board of Directors meeting adjourned at 3:04pm.