



## ARTS AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS COMMISSION (A&CA) MINUTES – REGULAR MEETING

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**DATE:** Tuesday, 27 July 2021

**TIME:** 3:30 PM

**LOCATION:** Orpheum Room, Five Flags Civic Center, 450 Main St., Dubuque, IA 52001  
(virtual attendance offered via GoToMeeting)

**Commissioners Present:** Paula NEUHAUS (chair); Nicholas HALDER (vice-chair); Ryan DECKER (recorder); Noelle CHESNEY (attending virtually, arriving 3:48); Ali LEVASSEUR; Sue RIEDEL, Thomas ROBBINS.

**Staff Present:** Jenni PETERSEN-BRANT (coordinator); Mike WILLIAMS (intern)

**Public Present:** Jean TUCKER (attending virtually)

Levasseur called the meeting to order following staff assurance of Iowa Open Meeting compliance at 3:32 PM.

### **Roll Call & Procedural Notes**

1. Roll Call was taken of all present commissioners and staff.
2. Petersen-Brant briefly shared new procedural directives from the Clerk's office regarding COVID-19 transmission and liability mitigation, including mask use and waivers.

### **Nomination & Election of Officers**

1. Riedel nominated **Commissioner Neuhaus as Chair through June 30, 2022**. Neuhaus accepted. Halder seconded. No further nominations made. Vote: Unanimously affirmed. *Motion carried.*
2. Neuhaus nominated **Commissioner Halder as Vice-Chair through June 30, 2022**. Halder accepted. Riedel seconded. No further nominations made. Vote: Unanimously affirmed. *Motion carried.*
3. Riedel nominated **Commissioner Decker as Recorder through June 30, 2022**. Decker accepted. Robbins seconded. No further nominations made. Brief discussion on using gender-neutral officer title of 'Recorder' versus 'Secretary'. Vote: Unanimously affirmed. *Motion carried.*

### **Review of Minutes**

1. Commissioners reviewed and made grammatical corrections and minor additions to the 22 June 2021 regular meeting minutes and the 13 July 2021 special meeting minutes.

2. Riedel motioned to approve 22 June 2021 regular minutes with discussed corrections and additions. Levasseur seconded. Vote: Unanimously affirmed. *22 June 2021 Minutes approved.*
3. Levasseur motioned to approve 13 July 2021 special meeting minutes with discussed corrections and additions. Decker seconded. Vote: Unanimously affirmed. *13 July 2021 Minutes approved.*

### **Master Plan Working Group Reports**

Petersen-Brant provided oral updates from select Master Plan Working groups; notable updates include:

1. **Accessibility, Engagement & Inclusion (AEI)** continuing development of World Café program, to be delivered in cooperation with the Dubuque Renaissance Project. Next meeting is 9 August 2021.
2. **Branding & Communication** continuing development of a community-wide umbrella arts and culture communications campaign, which includes the eventual engagement professional marketing specialist services. Next meeting is in September 2021.

### **Staff Status Report**

Petersen-Brant provided a variety of status reports to the Commission; notable items include:

1. **Arts & Culture Intern:** Staff introduced, and Commissioners welcomed, Mike Williams as the new Arts & Culture Intern. Williams is a photographer, drone operator, and owner of Elevated Images with a robust portfolio of publicly identifiable work, including work for Travel Dubuque. Petersen-Brant noted Williams' entrepreneurial spirit, social media experience, and connection to the Creative Economy masterplan working group. Williams expressed his desire with the Commission to provide constituents the space and resources to be artists. Commissioners recognized and thanked Petersen-Brant and Riedel for their work in recruiting and securing Williams. Petersen-Brant and Williams will develop weekly work plans, currently including virtual beginning-of-week work distribution and end-of-week status updates. It is anticipated that Williams' workload will become more autonomous as the position and his experience in it evolves.
2. **Art on the River (AOTR):** Installation of pieces is underway. Commissioners are requested to attend the opening reception 6 August, 5-7 PM at the Grand River Center. Several community partners are participating in the opening: music provided by Northeast Iowa School of Music; a special Riverwalk Architrek and live portable mural painting organized by Heritage Works with supplies donated by Lowe's; and presence and participation of the Dubuque Plein Air Painters, Dubuque Urban Sketcher, and Dubuque Photography Club. The AOTR subcommittee is exploring programming to extend AOTR engagement throughout the year. Halder offered to provide opening comments on behalf of the Commission. Decker noted that a damaged piece, *Mother Earth*, will arrive later in the season; Petersen-Brant is working on stand-in signage for the opening reception and a "mini-reveal" of the piece at a later date. Decker noted that two more artists are still needed for portable murals. Levasseur noted the DubuqueFest's annual reception for the Dubuque Area Writers' Guild anthology will take place at the Alliant Energy Amphitheater, following the AOTR reception.
3. **Creative Resiliency Grant Program:** Ten applications were received. Chesney and the Grants subcommittee (Halder and Neuhaus) will review applications.
4. **NEA ARP Local Arts Agency Application:** Petersen-Brant has completed Part 1 of the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) American Rescue Plan (ARP) Local Arts Agency Regrants Program application, asking for \$500,000 over a two-year period to boost

Operating Support grant program capacity, individual artist grants, and a part-time position in direct administrative support of said NEA funds. The City is paying for a grant writer, experienced in City grant applications and reasonable confidence in our application, to collaborate with Petersen-Brant in Part 2 of the NEA application process. Awards are announced in November with full awarded-funding available 1 December 2021.

### **City Clerk's Public Meetings Directive**

Petersen-Brant elaborated on the aforementioned meetings directive from the City Clerk's Office ("Roll Call & Procedural Notes"-2).

1. This directive is the result of the expiration of the Governor's Emergency Declaration, 25 July 2021 as it impacts Iowa Open Meetings Law. These procedures apply to all public City Board and Commission meetings.
2. **Liability waivers** must be signed, not to hold the City liable for illness incurred as a result of participating in public meetings.
3. **Masks** need to be worn upon entering the space/room designated for public meeting. Participants can *mutually agree* to remove masks once the meeting is in session. While masks must be worn into the meeting room, this may not be true of the building or facility itself, public or private.
4. **In-Person quorum** is required to conduct business, though virtual attendance and participation will continue to be made available. This means a minimum of four (4) A&CA Commissioners must meet in-person, on-site for our business to proceed.
5. Petersen-Brant will get clarification from the Clerk's office as to how this information should be disseminated to the public for A&CA Commission meetings, and whether or not the directive applies to Taskforce/Working Group meetings and business.

### **Review of FY22 Operating Support Grant Application Scoring & Award Recommendation**

1. Commission reviewed Recommendation Options 1 (6% or \$30K max to all applicants) and Recommendation 2 (6% or \$30K max of applicant percentage scores) proposed at the July special meeting, both of which were significantly beyond capacity.
2. Petersen-Brant presented Recommendation Option 3 (precise and rounded versions), prepared from discussion at the July special meeting. Option features six tiers of funding based on score percentages of eligible funds, maxing at \$30K per award. Tiers award Full or \$30K-max amounts, 4.5%, 4%, 3.5%, 3%, and 2.75%, respectively.
3. While the selective rounding of Option 3 did keep the funding within the \$250,000 earmarked budget, Decker expressed concern that arbitrary rounding is not the most equitable to the Applicants, and preferred true rounding. Halder provided true rounded figures to the nearest hundred-dollar amount per applicant, yielding a total figure \$700 over budget. Petersen-Brant advised that approx. \$1,000 of unspent Creative Resiliency grant program funding could be returned to the Operating Support grant program to cover this overage.
4. Commission discussed merits and demerits of awarding all applicants (including very low-scoring applicants) as opposed to funding fewer applicants at greater amounts. As it pertains to FY22, no minimum score for funding eligibility was set or published. Halder noted that, while applicants and their applications do not (generally) change considerably, reviewers and their subsequent scores do change annually, and sometimes drastically. Minimum scores, reviewer selection, and scoring benchmarks are all items the Commission would like to discuss and address further at a future opportunity.

5. Chesney motioned, Decker seconded, Recommendation Option 3 (tiered/weighted), with true rounding to the nearest hundred-dollar amounts, totaling \$250,700 in funding with the gap covered by anticipated, unallocated monies returned from the Creative Resiliency Grant funding pool. Vote: Unanimously affirmed. *Aforementioned FY22 Operating Support Funding Award Recommendation 3 to City Council carries.*

### **FY21 Budget Carryovers**

Petersen-Brant shared that as part of the City's budget and budget amendment process, a memorandum was recently submitted to the City Manager requesting \$23,500 in new carryovers for a total FY22 use of \$111,000 in FY21 surpluses from Arts & Cultural Affairs (under the Economic Development Office). These new requests would support the aforementioned City arts and culture campaign ("Master Plan Working Group Reports") and expanded Art on the River programming ("Staff Status Report"), as well as additional Arts Train registration for City staff and eventual Art Train-related projects and contracting. The memorandum also outlines a \$42,871 carryover of unspent, previously received grant funds for Art En Route and the Dubuque Renaissance Project, and \$28,111 in previously approved carryovers for the Creative Resiliency grant program, the Arts & Economic Prosperity Study, and an 11<sup>th</sup> Art on the River sculpture for the 2021-22 exhibit. Petersen-Brant will update the Commission on the City Manager's response to the new \$23,500 in carryover request.

### **Committee Assignments**

As the Commission roster and officer appointments have shifted, the Commission collectively discussed the need for revisiting subcommittee assignments. These subcommittees currently include Grants, Arts Mean Business, and Art on the River. No Commissioners presently indicated a desire to be relieved of current committee assignments. Riedel suggested reestablishing the Calendar subcommittee. Commissioners indicated a desire to wait for A&CA strategic planning to commence before determining new subcommittees and/or assignments, the exception being Arts Mean Business, which has the most impending business.

### **Public Comment**

Space for public comment was offered, but no comments were made.

### **Current Events**

Current events reported by Commissioners and Staff include:

1. Heritage Center Season Announcement (performing arts), today, Univ. of Dubuque
2. Taste of Summer (music/culinary series) concludes 5 August, National Mississippi River Museum & Aquarium/Dubuque Co. Historical Society
- 3. ART ON THE RIVER 2021 public art exhibit opening reception – 6 August, City of Dubuque Arts & Cultural Affairs – *please save the date!***
4. DAWG Anthology Release Party (literary arts), 6 August, Dubuque Co. Fine Arts Society
5. DubuqueFest (art/music festival), 7-8 August, Dubuque Co. Fine Arts Society
6. *Frozen, Jr.* (youth musical), 13-15 August, Grand Opera House
7. *Hate Mail* (play), 13-29 August, Bell Tower Theater
8. Makers Faire (crafts/trades), 14 August, National Mississippi River Museum & Aquarium/Dubuque Co. Historical Society
9. Dubuque Farmers Market (culinary/art/music series), ongoing, Dubuque Main Street

Adjournment motioned by Levasseur, seconded by Decker at 5:10 PM. Vote: Unanimously affirmed. *Motion carried.*

**Next Meeting: Tuesday, 24 August 2021 at 3:30 PM**

Respectfully submitted:

Jenni Petersen-Brant  
Arts & Cultural Affairs Coordinator, City of Dubuque

These minutes were passed and approved on August 24, 2021.

Witnessed By: *Paula Neuhaus*  
Paula Neuhaus (Oct 29, 2021 10:21 CDT) (signature)

Paula Neuhaus (printed)  
Chair (officer position)

# Minutes\_Arts Commission-Regular Meeting\_07.27.2021\_approved

Final Audit Report

2021-10-29

Created:	2021-10-29
By:	Jenni Petersen-Brant (jbrant@cityofdubuque.org)
Status:	Signed
Transaction ID:	CBJCHBCAABAAsMdnFwx3U5rWqrFFDB3DZIrZKw6TW_IB

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2021-10-29 - 2:43:08 AM GMT- IP address: 173.27.212.32
-  Document emailed to Paula Neuhaus (pneuhaus@rivermuseum.com) for signature  
2021-10-29 - 2:43:31 AM GMT
-  Email viewed by Paula Neuhaus (pneuhaus@rivermuseum.com)  
2021-10-29 - 3:21:43 PM GMT- IP address: 65.158.88.51
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Signature Date: 2021-10-29 - 3:21:50 PM GMT - Time Source: server- IP address: 65.158.88.51
-  Agreement completed.  
2021-10-29 - 3:21:50 PM GMT