



Region of Waterloo Arts Fund Minutes

Thursday, September 11, 2014
3:24 p.m.
Room 218
Regional Administration Building
150 Frederick Street, Kitchener, Ontario

Present were: Chair M. Scott, I. Cisterna, M. de Groot*, J. Haalboom*, P. Mulloy, P. Pulford*, K. Seiling* and A. Thomas*

Members Absent: S. Clevely and S. Gruetzmacher

Declarations of Pecuniary Interest Under The Conflict of Interest Policy of The Region of Waterloo Arts Fund

None declared

Approval of Minutes

a) Open Session – June 5, 2014

Moved by P. Pulford

Seconded by J. Haalboom

That the Region of Waterloo Arts Fund approve the open session minutes of the meeting held on June 5, 2014.

Carried

b) Closed Session – June 5, 2014

Moved by P. Pulford

Seconded by J. Haalboom

That the Region of Waterloo Arts Fund approve the closed session minutes of the meeting held on June 5, 2014.

Carried

1701504

Business Arising from the Minutes

a) Review of Spring 2014 Application Review Process

M. Scott stated the Spring 2014 application review process warrants group discussion and input but that the commitment was made to pilot the process for one year so the matter will be discussed again at the December board meeting. A more extensive review of the pilot process will take place once two granting rounds have been completed. She presented an overview of the feedback received related to the Spring 2014 application review process.

She provided statistics related to the Spring 2014 application round including the number of applications in each stage; the total grant amounts requested; and, the number of applications eliminated during the stage 1 review and during the pre-evaluation of the stage 2 review, as well as the number of applications that received grants.

She identified the members of the Peer Assessment Panel (PAP) and advised that more than thirty individuals were contacted during the recruitment process for the five-person panel. She noted that the PAP is predicated on the ability to find enough qualified panelists who don't have a conflict of interest with any of the applications received and that, given the experience of the first round of the pilot review, the numbers of those eligible and/or available was smaller than anticipated.

She advised that feedback has been received from members of the board, members of the Task Force, the PAP panelists and support staff. She provided an overview of the feedback offered by the PAP, including the need for a comprehensive orientation, more time to review applications and a greater understanding of the grant criteria. As a result of the PAP feedback, the meeting dates for review of the Fall 2014 applications have been set as two separate dates. The Fall 2014 applications will be reviewed by PAP members on December 3 and the Board will meet to receive and consider the PAP recommendations on the following day.

M. Scott noted that 16 Stage 2 applications were eliminated during the pre-evaluation at the PAP review meeting, suggesting that some of these applications should have been eliminated during the Stage 1 review and that the Stage 1 eligibility criteria needs to be reassessed. She also expressed concern with the significant workload increase for the Chair, the Task Force members and support staff, as well as the impact on the role and mandate of the Board members. She raised the issue of the role of the Board Chair at the PAP Review meetings, stating her concerns about the potential for arbitrary decision-making without Board input; she cited the review of an application that had been made by a for-profit organization. She sought direction from the Board about the role of the Chair during the PAP review meetings.

M. de Groot, a member of the Task Force, offered his feedback, suggesting that both feasibility and artistic merit be evaluated during the PAP application review. He expressed his concern for consistency in upholding the grant eligibility criteria. He cautioned that the eligibility criteria not be revised halfway through the process.

The document, Stage 1 Technical Review of Arts Fund Grant Applications, was distributed to the board for review and M. Scott drew attention to the legal status issue, pertinent in determining whether an organization is not-for-profit; this document had been used by the Board during the Spring 2014 Stage 1 application review. M. Scott suggested that greater due diligence during the Stage 1 review could reduce the number of ineligible Stage 2 applications.

P. Pulford, a member of the Task Force, noted that he also sat in on the PAP meeting as Board Vice Chair and he expressed his strong support for the PAP process. He stated that there are three key areas in the evaluation process that require closer review, including:

- Do we penalize people for having other funding sources for their project? Should this be a factor in the review of the application?
- Do we continue to fund very large organizations that already have confirmed significant funding from other sources?
- Do we allow the Board Chair to intercede during the PAP meeting to ensure that the technical criteria is being met?

The Board discussed the matter of having the Chair intercede during the PAP review and there was general agreement that this protocol be accepted and that the Board be alerted if there are issues. The Chair can share details during the Board's review of the PAP recommendations for Stage 2 grants.

The other Board members were invited to share their feedback about the PAP review pilot. Issues raised included lack of continuity during the application review process; lack of expertise in all arts genres with a 5-member PAP; recruitment for both the Board and the PAP; and, the relay/hand-off system for Board member involvement in the review of applications.

Correspondence

a) Paul McGough, Acquaintance, Re: S13-52 – Request for Project Extension

The Board discussed the request and directed staff to send written notification of the Board's decision.

Moved by P. Mulloy

Seconded by J. Haalboom

That the Region of Waterloo Arts Fund approve the request for project extension for Acquaintance's project (S13-52), until February 28, 2015, at which time a Final Report will be due.

Carried

b) Gary Kirkham, Re: S13-62 – Request for Project Extension

The Board discussed the request and directed staff to send written notification of the Board's decision.

Moved by I. Cisterna

Seconded by P. Pulford

That the Region of Waterloo Arts Fund approve the request for project extension for Gary Kirkham's project (S13-62), until November 30, 2014, at which time a Final Report will be due.

Carried

c) Lori Crewe, Re: S13-06 – Request for Project Extension

The Board discussed the request and directed staff to send written notification of the Board's decision.

Moved by P. Mulloy

Seconded by M. de Groot

That the Region of Waterloo Arts Fund approve the request for project extension for Lori Crewe's project (S13-06), until October 31, 2014, at which time a Final Report will be due.

Carried

d) Paul Campsall and Tom Knowlton, Re: S13-28 – Request for Project Extension

The Board discussed the request and directed staff to send written notification of the Board's decision.

Moved by M. de Groot

Seconded by I. Cisterna

That the Region of Waterloo Arts Fund approve the request for project extension for Paul Campsall and Tom Knowlton's project (S13-28), until February 28, 2015, at which time a Final Report will be due.

Carried

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e) Jeremy Singer, Re: S13-30 – Request for Project Extension

The Board discussed the request and directed staff to send written notification of the Board's decision.

Moved by P. Mulloy

Seconded by P. Pulford

That the Region of Waterloo Arts Fund approve the request for project extension for Jeremy Singer's project (S13-30), until November 30, 2014, at which time a Final Report will be due.

Carried

f) Pamela Malloy, The New Quarterly, Re: S14-18, Letter of Appreciation was received for information. In response to a question from a Board member about the annual Wild Writers Literary Festival, she stated that the event will be held November 7-9, 2014 and that she would forward information to staff to send to the Board. M. Scott will coordinate with P. Mulloy to include the 'case study' of the Arts Fund support to The New Quarterly on the Testimonials page of the website.

g) Deborah Pryce, Re: S14-38, Letter of Appreciation was received for information.

New Business

a) Final Reports Review Committee Update / Payment of Arts Fund Grant in Installments – Policy Review

M. Scott provided an update stating that since the last Board meeting, Demand for Payment letters were sent to 4 files and resulted in the submission of 3 Final Reports and the return of grant funds for 1 file. She advised that 17 Final Reports were reviewed by the committee on September 5th and that requests have been made for additional information on 2 files. She stated that currently there are 2 files that haven't submitted Final Reports by the August 31, 2014 deadline; follow-up is planned for files S13-49 (Flush Ink Productions) and S13-69 (High Rise Studio). In addition, file F12-50 (Good for Naughts) hasn't submitted a Final Report for the March 31, 2014 deadline and, as a result, requires a Non-Compliance letter to be sent. She sought assistance from M. de Groot in the follow-up with High Rise Studio.

M. Scott referred to the Final Reports Procedures document that had been emailed to the Board in advance of the meeting and she suggested that the Board delegate responsibility to staff to send Non-Compliance letters automatically one month after the Final Report deadline has passed. The Board agreed to this revised procedure. The Board will continue to review and approve any required actions related to Demand for Payment correspondence.

M. Scott stated that the Final Reports Review Committee considered the current policy on the payment of grants in installments, specifically the formula for holding back the second installment. The Committee recommends that the current formula of 90% payment upon receipt of the signed grant Agreement and 10% payment upon receipt, review and approval of the Final Report form be maintained. The board agreed to support the Committee's recommendation.

b) Applicants Disqualified from Receiving Future Arts Fund Grants – Policy Update

M. Scott provided an overview of the Board-approved list of individuals and organizations that are disqualified from receiving future grants as a result of being in default of their grant agreement; she distributed a copy of the current policy. The Board agreed to the necessity of reviewing the list when evaluating Stage 1 applications. The Board discussed how to handle disqualifications for persons associated with organizations and it was agreed that both the individual associated with the organization and the organization would be recorded on the disqualification list. The Board also agreed that should a disqualified organization come under new leadership and make an application, the disqualification would be considered on a case-by-case basis.

The Board agreed to revise the current list in the policy to include Lisa O'Connell and/or Pat the Dog (F10-41 defaulted agreement) and David Delouchery (F11-23 defaulted agreement).

In response to a Board inquiry about whether notification letters will be sent to advise the applicants of the disqualification, it was noted that the applicants are aware of the impact of their defaulted agreements with the Arts Fund.

c) Memo: Preservation of Region of Waterloo Arts Fund Archives

S. Natolochny provided an overview of the arrangements to store and preserve non-active successful application files and Board meeting files. At this time, unsuccessful application files (2008-2013) can be confidentially destroyed and successful application files (Fall 2008; Spring 2009; and Fall 2009) can be reviewed and stored with the Region of Waterloo Archives. Once the files are archived, all members of the public will have access to the files, per the policy in place. In response to a Board question about the cost, S. Natolochny confirmed that the fees are covered through the Arts Fund budget.

Moved by P. Pulford

Seconded by P. Mulloy

That the Board of Directors of the Region of Waterloo Arts Fund transfer the records ready for permanent preservation;

And that the Region of Waterloo Arts Fund approve an expenditure, not to exceed \$710.00, to preserve these records to the Region of Waterloo Archives.

Carried

* J. Haalboom left the meeting at 4:48 p.m.

d) 2015 Promotional Item

M. Scott summarized the content of the current promotional postcard and sought Board input about whether to use a similar design for 2015 or to develop a new promotional item; she noted the past distribution methods. There was general agreement to use a postcard for 2015 promotion and to maintain the 2014 postcard design. Staff will revise the postcard with 2015 application deadline dates and the Communications Committee will have final approval.

The Board discussed asking PAP members to help distribute the postcards and the use of social media to promote the Arts Fund. M. Scott agreed that promotion through various social media would be beneficial but she suggested that social media promotion be postponed until there are more resources to develop and sustain the initiatives. She agreed that there continues to be potential to better utilize the website.

The Board discussed the method of distribution, as well as updating the postcard distribution list to ensure consistent coverage across the Region. In 2014, the postcards were distributed primarily through regular mail. Staff were directed to forward a copy of the current distribution list to the Board for review and suggested revisions.

e) 2015 Schedule of Meetings

M. Scott noted that there are additional meeting dates, specifically for the PAP Stage 2 review meetings. She added that the meeting dates are scheduled to align with the annual application deadlines.

Moved by P. Mulloy

Seconded by I. Cisterna

That the Region of Waterloo Arts Fund approve the 2015 Schedule of Meetings as distributed.

Carried

f) Nominating Committee Update

M. Scott provided an overview of the current members' term expiry dates and the overall impact on board recruitment. She encouraged all Board members to provide the Nominating Committee with recommendations for Board membership.

Other Business

a) Grant Workshop Update

M. Scott gratefully acknowledged Isabella Stefanescu for sharing her expertise and experience with grant writing during two (2) recent Arts Fund sponsored workshops; she highlighted the locations and attendance for each.

* K. Seiling left the meeting at 5:00 p.m.; quorum was lost at this time.

b) Task Force Membership

M. Scott discussed the Task Force membership, noting that P. Pulford won't be participating in the Fall 2014 Stage 1 application review since his spouse has submitted an application. Since the Task Force is also responsible for recruiting PAP members, this could pose a conflict on the Task Force. She proposed that a Board member volunteer to assist with recruiting PAP members for the Fall 2014 round. She also requested that Board members send her a list of potential PAP candidates.

The Board discussed options, including the website, for updating the public on the measures that have been implemented to address conflict of interest concerns. This matter will be addressed at a later date, once both 2014 application rounds are completed.

* A. Thomas joined the meeting at 5:15 p.m.; the meeting returned to quorum.

c) Technical Criteria

The Board discussed the current technical criteria used to evaluate Stage 1 applications, noting the need to review, define and revise the criteria, specifically the matter of funding festivals. M. Scott advised that revisions to the technical criteria shouldn't take place mid-cycle.

* P. Pulford and M. de Groot left the meeting at 5:30 p.m.; quorum was lost at this time.

It was agreed by the remaining members that the matter of funding festivals would be discussed at the December Board meeting.

Fall 2014 Grant Applications were distributed to the Board members during the course of the meeting, with the exception of P. Pulford in light of his conflict.

Next Meeting – October 2, 2014 (Fall 2014 Stage 1 Technical Review of Applications)

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 5:52 p.m.

Board Chair, M. Scott

Corporate Clerk, S. Natolochny