



Region of Waterloo Arts Fund Minutes

Thursday, January 15, 2015

4:06 p.m.

Waterloo County Room

Regional Administration Building

150 Frederick Street, Kitchener, Ontario

Present were: Chair M. Scott, S. Clevely, E. Bolton, P. Mulloy, P. Pulford, K. Redman, K. Seiling*, A. Thomas and J. Wichers

Members Absent: S. Gruetzmacher

S. Natolochny called the meeting to order and welcomed the guests.

Appointment of Directors / Election of Officers

a) Appointment of Directors

S. Natolochny provided a summary of the current board membership. She advised that P. Pulford has submitted his resignation, effective January 16, 2015; a copy was distributed to the members.

S. Natolochny provided a summary of the recruitment efforts of the Nominating/Membership Committee. She welcomed director nominees, E. Bolton and J. Wichers to the meeting and provided a biography for each.

Moved by P. Pulford

Seconded by P. Mulloy

That the Region of Waterloo Arts Fund approve the following appointments to the Board of Directors:

- Eric Bolton for a two-year renewable term ending December 31, 2016;
- Jisca Wichers for a two-year renewable term ending December 31, 2016.

Carried

b) Election of Officers – S. Natolochny

S. Natolochny conducted the election of Board Chair. A call was made for nominations. Marilyn Scott was nominated and stated that she was willing to serve. A call was made for further nominations; no others were forthcoming.

Moved by S. Clevely

Seconded by E. Bolton

That the nominations for the position of Chair be closed.

Carried

Marilyn Scott was elected as the Chair of the Region of Waterloo Arts Fund, by acclamation, for a one-year renewable term ending December 31, 2015.

A call was made for nominations for Vice Chair. Scott Clevely was nominated and accepted the nomination. A call was made for further nominations for Vice Chair and no others were forthcoming.

Moved by A. Thomas

Seconded by K. Seiling

That the nominations for the position of Vice Chair be closed.

Carried

Scott Clevely was elected as Vice Chair of the Region of Waterloo Arts Fund, by acclamation, for a one-year renewable term ending December 31, 2015.

M. Scott assumed the Chair.

S. Natolochny presented a Certificate of Appreciation to P. Pulford for his service on the Arts Fund board. M. Scott thanked him for his contributions.

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 – December 4, 2014

Moved by A. Thomas

Seconded by J. Wichers

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That the Region of Waterloo Arts Fund approve the open session minutes of the meeting held on December 4, 2014.

Carried

b) Closed Session – December 4, 2014

The Minutes of the closed session were distributed to the Board members during the meeting.

Moved by P. Pulford

Seconded by S. Clevely

That the Region of Waterloo Arts Fund approve the closed session minutes of the meeting held on December 4, 2014.

Carried

Correspondence

a) Paul Knowles, Re: F13-14 – Request for Project Extension

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

Moved by S. Clevely

Seconded by P. Mulloy

That the Region of Waterloo Arts Fund approve the request for project extension for Waterloo Song Cycle Collective/Paul Knowles' project (F13-14), until August 31, 2015, at which time a Final Report will be due.

Carried

b) Jacqueline Rula, Re: F13-11 – Request for Project Extension

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

Moved by S. Clevely

Seconded by E. Bolton

That the Region of Waterloo Arts Fund approve the request for project extension for Jacqueline Rula's project (F13-11), until August 31, 2015, at which time a Final Report will be due.

Carried

- c) Letters of Support for the Arts Fund were received for information.

New Business

- a) Review of 2014

M. Scott summarized the activities undertaken and the challenges faced by the Board in 2014, including a website re-design, reduced budget allocation, and a Peer Assessment Panel (PAP) pilot. She provided data about grants approved in 2014 and historically.

She stated that some issues arose out of the PAP pilot and noted that she has some potential resolutions for discussion by the Board as it accepts the opportunities to improve processes. Her recommendations included the following:

- retain a board member's ability to apply for a grant with the current Conflict of Interest rules in place
- formalize the Board Chair's neutrality, as recommended by the Panel Review Report
- clarify the technical criteria and eligibility requirements for grants
- recruit individuals - Artists-At-Large - to participate in the application review process on an ad hoc, non-voting basis when there are gaps on the Board for a particular artistic discipline
- enhance the functionality of the website with possible links to granted projects
- establish a group of former board members to coach prospective applicants on the completion of applications
- enhance outreach activities through a variety of initiatives including hosting an Open House in the spring and fall
- establish an ad hoc task force to review implementation of the recommended improvements
- review and revise the board's manual for greater understanding and functionality

She also advised the Board that she will be making a presentation on behalf of the Arts Fund to the Region's Budget Committee at the January 21st Public Input meeting.

The Board discussed the proposed recommendations and agreed to the following:

- continue dealing with any direct and indirect declared conflicts of interest of Board members in the same manner as in 2014
- direct the task force to consider the neutrality of the Chair and propose a course of action to the Board
- strengthen the technical Stage 1 application review criteria, whereby the primary filter will be the technical criteria and artistic merit will be the secondary filter

- establish an Artist-at-Large group to widen the reach in the arts community and bring expertise where there may be a discipline gap on the board; these individuals would participate in both application review stages
- host an Open House in mid-February to improve communication with the public; also have a single fact sheet about the Arts Fund
- establish a group of former board members to provide coaching and their expertise to prospective applicants, as a pilot; the Chair will recruit coaches; information about the pilot program could be listed on the website and accessible for prospective applicants
- establish a Task Force on Best Practices to develop the initiatives proposed at this meeting

Moved by S. Clevely

Seconded by P. Mulloy

That the Region of Waterloo Arts Fund approve the following initiatives and best practices, effective immediately, as discussed during the January 15, 2015 Board meeting:

- i. Members of the Board will retain the right to apply for Arts Fund grants. The procedures for addressing conflict of interest, as stipulated during the 2014 application review rounds will be retained. If a member has a direct conflict of interest, they will recuse themselves from either or both rounds for the duration of the application evaluation. If a member has an indirect conflict of interest, they will recuse themselves from either or both rounds during discussion involving the related application.
- ii. The neutrality of the Chair and the ability to vote on governance and application review decisions will be reviewed by the Task Force on Best Practices and a recommendation will be made to the Board.
- iii. Review the Stage 1 technical criteria language, by the Task Force, to reduce ambiguity and to ensure that the Stage 2 applications meet the grant criteria. Stage 1 review will involve a primary filter of the technical review and a secondary filter for artistic merit. Stage 2 review will involve a primary filter of artistic merit and a secondary filter review including, but not limited to project viability, budget feasibility and applicant's track record/experience.
- iv. Review and enhance the Arts Fund website to ensure best practices in communicating with members of the arts community and the public-at-large, specifically enhancements to provide links to projects funded by the Arts Fund.

- v. Establish a volunteer group of Artist-at-Large Advisors, to expand the reach into the arts community and to ensure that there is sufficient expertise available for the board to knowledgeably evaluate the merit of applications. Artist-at-Large Advisors are to be invited on an as-needed basis to augment and fill gaps in disciplines, and would participate along with the board in the review of both Stage 1 and Stage 2 applications but only during those specific applications which match their discipline area of expertise. Artists-at-Large Advisors will sign an agreement of confidentiality, will not have voting privileges nor will they have direct responsibility for the review and approvals of the grant applications.
- vi. Plan an Open House session for potential applicants in advance of the Stage 1 application submission deadline for the Spring 2015 round. This is intended to be an informal information session hosted by the Board to respond to general questions about the Fund. In addition, a Fact Sheet will be developed for distribution at the Open House and posted on the website. A subsequent Open House will be planned for the Fall.
- vii. Establish a group of Coaches to be drawn from former Board members and/or successful grant applicants, to provide coaching and mentoring to prospective grant applicants;

And That the above-noted initiatives be established on a trial basis for the 2015 funding cycle, with a review and evaluation at the end of December 2015;

And Further That the Board members be appointed to a Task Force to develop best practices as noted above.

Carried

P. Pulford abstained from voting and stated that he wasn't in support of the Artists-at-Large/Advisors not having the ability to vote; he requested that this be noted in the minutes.

b) Nominating/Membership Committee Appointments

Moved by K. Redman

Seconded by J. Wichers

That the Region of Waterloo Arts Fund appoint M. Scott, A. Thomas and E. Bolton to serve on the Nominating/Membership Committee for a term ending December 31, 2015.

Carried

c) Final Reports Review Committee Appointments

The Board agreed that this Committee be made up of four (4) members; the fourth will be recruited at a later date.

Moved by P. Mulloy

Seconded by P. Pulford

That the Region of Waterloo Arts Fund appoint M. Scott, S. Clevely and J. Wichers to serve on the Final Reports Review Committee for a term ending December 31, 2015.

Carried

d) Communications Committee Appointments

Moved by S. Clevely

Seconded by K. Redman

That the Region of Waterloo Arts Fund appoint M. Scott, P. Mulloy, A. Thomas to serve on the Communications Committee for a term ending December 31, 2015.

Carried

e) Task Force on Best Practices

Moved by J. Wichers

Seconded by E. Bolton

That the Region of Waterloo Arts Fund appoint M. Scott, S. Clevely, A. Thomas and S. Gruetzmacher to the Task Force on Best Practices for a one-year term ending December 31, 2015.

Carried

* K. Seiling left the meeting at 5:55 p.m.

d) Distribution of 2015 Promotional Post Cards

M. Scott advised that the 2015 promotional postcards were available for distribution. Those members who agreed to distribute were given their packages; the balance will be mailed.

Other Business

a) Grant Writing Workshop

A Grant Writing Workshop promotional flyer was received for information and all members were encouraged to attend the February 11, 2015 event to be held at Globe Studios in Kitchener.

b) Music Workshop Panelist

Rufus John is seeking a volunteer from the Arts Fund Board to participate as a panelist for his granted project, Music Is My Weapon. The event is planned for March 28, 2015 in Cambridge. E. Bolton advised that he's involved as a panelist and suggested that this may be sufficient representation from the Board. He will follow-up with R. John.

c) Board Orientation

An orientation session for new and existing Board members is being planned and a revised Director's Manual is being reviewed by the Chair and staff.

d) Aaron Gottfried

M. Scott provided background on the concerns expressed by Mr. Gottfried during several communications/exchanges over the past several months. The Board was in agreement that reply correspondence be prepared for Mr. Gottfried and that he be reminded that the Arts Fund application review process doesn't allow for an appeal.

Next Meeting – April 9, 2015

Adjourn

Moved by A. Thomas

Seconded by E. Bolton

That the meeting adjourn at 6:09 p.m.

Carried

Board Chair, M. Scott

Corporate Clerk, S. Natolochny