

SOUTH CAROLINA ARTS COMMISSION
Board of Commissioners Meeting
October 26, 2023

Note: The time, date, location, and agenda for this meeting were publicized as required by South Carolina laws covering meetings of public bodies.

Members Present

Dee Crawford, Dacey Bell, Flavia Harton, Dr. Sarah Lynn Hayes, Henry Horowitz, Barbara Nwokike, Dr. Richard Webb

Staff Present

David Platts, Nick Boismenu, Angela Brewbaker, Ashley Brown, Tanisha Brown, Amelia Dupont, Jonathan Eason, Kevin Flarisee, Laura Marcus Green, Krista Grendze, Milly Hough, Daphne Hudson, Victoria McCurry, La Ruchala Murphy, Amanda Noyes, Laurel Posey, Jason Rapp, Abby Rawl, Ce Scott-Fitts, Margot Strasburger, Amber Westbrook

Call to Order

Chair Dee Crawford called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

Approval of Minutes

Mrs. Crawford called for a motion to accept the August 17, 2023, minutes. Mrs. Harton made a motion; Mr. Bell seconded. The minutes were approved.

FY2024 First Quarter Financials

Senior Deputy Director Milly Hough reviewed the FY2024 first quarter financial statements. On the Balance Sheet, she noted that at this point in the fiscal year, the FY2024 ESSER funds have not been received. Staff has worked diligently to expend and close out the NEA FY2021 grant and are in the process of submitting the federal financial report and the final descriptive report for the FY2021 grant. Ms. Hough reviewed the Statement of Activities. The state carry-forward amount includes the \$1.5 million received from the state in non-recurring funds. Administration expenses are on track for this time of the year and include insurance policies and software licenses that are paid at the beginning of the year. In Statewide Arts Services there have been some changes with some of the arts operating expenses. For example, there are now line items for travel and panels included in the program expenses.

Mrs. Crawford called for a motion to approve the FY2024 first quarter financials as presented. Mr. Horowitz moved to accept. Mrs. Harton seconded. The motion was approved.

Grant Requests

Deputy Director Ashley Brown reviewed a request to add additional funds to FY2024 grant categories already approved at the June meeting:

- Partnerships \$500,000
- Special Projects \$2,000,000

TOTAL REQUEST: \$2,500,000

These additional funds will help support Arts Grow SC partners and their work on behalf of the Arts Commission. Examples of these partnerships include Coastal Carolina University and S.C. Future Makers, an initiative of the S.C. Manufacturers Alliance. Both partnerships are supporting college and career readiness for the new Creative Careers Studio, which will be used by high school students interested in entering the creative fields or activating the skills they have learned in the arts. The platform will be launched this fiscal year.

Other partnerships funded through these categories include early childhood initiatives with S.C. First Steps and the Wolf Trap Foundation, an early learning performing arts integration organization based in Washington, D.C. The Arts Commission brought in the Wolf Trap Foundation to give the keynote and offer sessions at S.C. First Step's annual conference, where more than 300 teachers received professional development in how to integrate early learning and the arts. Other partners include the S.C. Children's Theatre in Greenville and Spoleto Festival USA in Charleston, both of which are receiving grants to serve as Wolf Trap affiliates in S.C.

Mrs. Crawford called for a motion to approve the grant request. Mr. Bell made a motion to approve; Mrs. Harton seconded. The motion passed.

Hartsville Cultural District Presentation

Public Art Coordinator Margot Strasburger reviewed the purposes of a cultural district and introduced guests from the City of Hartsville – Main Street Manager Matt Winburn and Director of Tourism and Communications Michelle Byars Brown. Mr. Winburn and Ms. Brown presented Hartsville's application to become the state's tenth certified cultural district.

Mrs. Crawford called for a motion. Mr. Bell made a motion to approve the City of Hartsville's cultural district application. Mrs. Nwokike seconded. The motion passed.

Grants Data Spotlight

Data Strategist Jonathan Eason shared a map of the state demonstrating the statewide impact of four FY2023 Arts Grow SC partners - ArtsNow, based in Richland County; The ABC Institute, based in York County; the Governor's School in Greenville County, and Engaging Creative Minds in Charleston County. Each of the four featured grantees have impacted counties beyond their headquarters, including in opportunity counties or counties at risk for being added to the opportunity county list. Mr. Eason created the map in Tableau, which allows for visualization of the agency's impact using zip codes of areas supported by agency grants.

New Branding and Website Unveiling

Communications Director Jason Rapp presented the agency's redesigned branding and visual identity, including a new logo and new colors. Communications staff began the redesign by discussing how the agency could stand out as the "creative state agency" compared to other agencies. The Arts Commission has grown in grants, services, and people since the last logo refresh. The goals for the new branding are to visually embody the evolution of the agency, emphasize that the Arts Commission supports all art forms, and update how the agency is presented to the public. Mr. Rapp then presented the new website, which incorporates the new branding elements and allows greater flexibility in how those elements are used. With accessibility built in, the new site is easier to navigate. The new website is scheduled to launch in November.

Agency Updates

Executive Director David Platts shared several updates:

- Staff presented the agency’s FY2025 budget request to the Governor’s staff on October 12. The request includes \$3 million in new recurring state funds to sustain Arts Grow SC and expand the agency’s other programs. The expansion would be in the form of a hub model of geographic locations around the state and would increase access and support for current and new grantees and partners.
- During the August meeting, Mr. Platts joined virtually from Alabama, where he was attending that state arts agency’s leadership retreat. He is exploring the idea of offering something similar for S.C. arts organization leaders late in 2024.
- The downstairs renovation office expansion project has met state requirements and has been approved to move forward, with an estimated time frame to begin renovation in November. The bid process has opened for contractors.
- Staff has just finished interviews for a new executive assistant and are in different phases of interviewing for an arts learning coordinator, a cross sector coordinator and a rural arts director. These additional hires will bring the staff total to 27 and allow the agency to continue to grow support across the state.

Mr. Platts shared an update about South Arts, the Arts Commission’s regional affiliate. Founded in 1975, South Arts’ mission to build Southern vitality through the arts by working in partnership with nine states – Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, South Carolina, and Tennessee. As a nonprofit, South Arts is supported by NEA, dues from member states and through foundations and businesses. Two recent South Arts programs that benefited South Carolina organizations include the Jazz Roads Creative Residency and the Southern Cultural Treasures program.

Mrs. Crawford asked if there were any new partnerships. Mr. Platts mentioned that a new partnership with Clemson University Extension is supporting Ag and Art Tours, which take place in more than 20 counties.

Accountability Report

Ms. Hough referred board members to the FY23 Accountability Report narrative in the meeting packet. The narrative serves as a record of accomplishments for the year.

Strategic Plan Update

Ms. Hough shared strategic plan highlights from staff FY2024 first quarter reports. *(report attached to minutes.)*

Board Member Updates

Mrs. Nwokike invited the commissioners to visit the recently opened International African American Museum in Charleston. Dr. Hayes reported that the Rock Hill Symphony is expecting 700 people for a family concert with the new conductor and that 54 young Suzuki students will give a demonstration. Another event will include 2,200 fifth grade and middle school students.

Other Business

There was no other business.

Adjournment

Mrs. Crawford called for a motion to adjourn. Mrs. Nwokike made a motion, seconded by Mr. Bell. The meeting adjourned at 11:30 a.m.

FY2024 Q1 Strategic Plan Highlights (presented during Oct. 26, 2023 board meeting)

1. Program and grants staff kicked off the “Spark Tour” in Spartanburg at Chapman Cultural Center’s Mayfair Studios August 24. Staff presented information about our grants and programs to artists and arts administrators at this in-person event. The next stop was Hartsville at the Black Creek Arts Council on September 20 and Florence just this week. Additional sessions are planned for Beaufort/Bluffton and Walterboro.
2. SC Artists in Action (SCAiA) participated in a session about Artists Proposals with Arts Commission staff and an external consultant. The session was designed to teach participating artists how to tell their stories and strengthen applications to secure opportunities promoting their work.
3. The partnership with SC State Library and the SC Libraries Association was expanded to increase awareness of the Rural Libraries Public Engagement Grant.
4. A video about the Folklife Field School workshop, “I Got A Story To Tell: Community Documentary Videography” was posted on the Hub and on our YouTube channel. The video highlights the importance of artists monetizing their art form.
5. The Arts Directory renewal process has begun for artists who have been on the directory for at least three years. This group of artists has until May 2024 to complete their renewal process. There are 87 artists up for renewal this year.
6. Two partnerships have been established – one with SC Future Makers and one with Athenaeum Press at Coastal Carolina University as part of the soon-to-be Creative Careers Studio website. SC Future Makers is a program of the SC Manufacturer’s Alliance. Their website features career profiles from multiple industries. SCAC staff will work with them to showcase creative professionals and to create videos highlighting the intersection of creative jobs within the manufacturing industry. Staff will work with Athenaeum Press to interview and highlight creative professionals in their network.
7. Twenty-four Arts for All SC accessibility grants are currently in progress with operating support grantees. Able SC will provide continued support this fiscal year via additional audits if needed, technical assistance and follow-up site visits. Able SC will also provide professional development opportunities for our arts organizations.
8. Thirteen Public Art Office Hours sessions were attended by constituents from Colleton, Beaufort, Richland, Lexington, Newberry, Spartanburg, Greenwood, and Greenville counties.
9. The Governor’s Awards for the Arts and the Jean Laney Harris Folk Heritage Awards opened for nominations in early September, with a closing date of November 5.