

SOUTH CAROLINA ARTS COMMISSION*

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING MINUTES • 5 February 2026

(via Zoom)

Board Members Present

Flavia Harton (chair), Heidi Carey, Rip Parks, Jessica Rourke, Linda Stern, Danielle Thompson

Staff Present

David Platts, Ashley Brown, Kimberly Washburn Motte, Ce Scott-Fitts; Nick Boismenu, Angela Brewbaker, Daisha Calhoun, McKenzie Drake, Maria Earl, Jonathan Eason, Krista Grendze, Trinity Howell, Wendy Jackson, Amanda McSwine, Mikayla Moore, Amanda Noyes, Laurel Posey, Johnathan Rabon, Jason Rapp, Harvee White, and Hailey Yasinski.

Others Present

Brad Jayne

Call to Order

HARTON called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m.

Executive Session

- HARTON motioned for the Board of Commissioners to enter executive session to discuss a personnel matter.
 - CAREY made a motion to enter Executive Session.
 - A vote was taken, and the motion was approved, and the Commissioners and PLATTS entered Executive Session at 10:03.
 - The Board exited Executive Session at 10:34

Executive Session Business

Following executive session, PLATTS made a public announcement that he intends to retire and provided comments about his tenure and 33 years of public service, complimenting the staff and board. An interim plan had previously been presented to Flavia, and then the board upon executive session.

HARTON responded praising PLATTS and the staff. She is calling BROWN as the interim executive director.

The floor was open for questions and discussion. PLATTS clarified he would step away in July or August.

- HARTON called for a motion to approve the interim executive director plan.
 - STERN motioned to approve. CAREY seconded.
 - A vote was taken, and the motion was approved as presented unanimously.

Approval of October 2025 Minutes

Meeting minutes from the Oct. 30, 2025 meeting were presented for approval and/or comment.

- HARTON called for a motion to approve.
 - PARKS motioned to approve. STERN seconded.
- A vote was taken, and the minutes were approved as presented unanimously.

FY26 Second Quarter Financials

BREWBAKER made a presentation reviewing FY26 Q2 financials. Her assessment is that SCAC financials are where they “are expected to be at this time of the year.” She pointed out some items in the income section, to include \$1 million in nonrecurring funds for organizational support that is delayed until February. She conferred with some contacts in the Executive Budget Office, and that transaction should occur “at any point soon.”

Administration expenses are in line, with many being frontloaded in the front part of the fiscal year (dues, etc.) and include rent payments for the main SCAC offices and for the Olde English Arts Hub for the entire year.

Expenses in the Statewide Arts Services section include grants and programmatic spending. Expenses for grant panelists (reviewers) will be upcoming in Q3.

The balance sheet was noted to be in good standing for Q2. Two (2) federal grants from the National Endowment for the Arts closed out in December 2025. SCAC is trying to be better at spending those grants in the year they are awarded so as not to carry forward funding as much as in the past. The grants that closed were from FY23 and FY24.

- PARKS asked clarifying question on depreciation of state assets. BREWBAKER explains that works of art, such as in the State Art Collection, need to be included there, but it is an accounting practice for the books.
- HARTON called for a motion to approve.
 - STERN motioned to approve Q2 financials. PARKS seconded.
- A vote was taken, and the financials were approved as presented unanimously.

Grants Request

BROWN began with compliments and thanks to PLATTS before making a presentation of Summer Arts Education Project grant requests totaling \$410,000. The category is

announced as being transitioned to a one-year grant cycle with the exhaustion of Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) funding. The SAEP grant funds projects in May and June only because of the SCAC's fiscal year break in July. Questions and comments were requested. There were none.

- HARTON called for a motion to approve the grant requests.
 - ROURKE motioned to approve. THOMPSON seconded.
- A vote was taken, and the SAEP grant requests were approved as presented unanimously.

2026 Governor's Awards Recommendations

PLATTS began the presentation of panel recommendations for the 2026 Governor's Awards for the Arts. He made preliminary comments about the process and thanked panelists for their work in this cycle. Their recommendations, by category, were:

- ACCESSIBILITY: Columbia Museum of Art in Columbia.
- ARTIST: William "Bill" Harris of McConnells.
- INDIVIDUAL: Tiffany Reed Silverman of James Island.
- ARTS IN EDUCATION (Individual): Dr. Richard O'Malley of Florence.
- ARTS IN EDUCATION (Organization): ArtsNOW in Columbia.
- SPECIAL AWARD: Ian Welch of Hampton County.

SCOTT-FITTS added justifications for Ian Welch, a special award proposed by HODGES. HARTON, holder of HODGES' proxy, opened discussion on Welch because he, being nominated by a commissioner, was outside the panel process (thus in the "Special Award" category). The floor was opened for questions/comments, of which there were none.

- HARTON called for a motion to approve the panel recommendations.
 - CAREY motioned to approve. STERN seconded.
- A vote was taken, and the recommendations were accepted unanimously.

STERN asked a follow-up question about Bill Harris and the State Art Collection.

Arts Hub Update

WASHBURN MOTTE provided updates to SCAC Arts Hubs.

- The Upstate Arts Hub will be located in the Greenville Center for Creative Arts, with one office.
- The Western Piedmont Hub will be in Arts Center of Greenwood, with two offices.
- The Olde English hub partner will be Arts Council of York County, but the office will be at the McCrory Building, one office space and one conference room space.

- The Pee Dee/Grand Strand partner is Florence Once Schools, and the Hub office will be in their McClenaghan Administrative Building, one office.
- The Lowcountry Arts Hub partner is in Summerville at the Public Works Arts Center. Temporarily there are two office spaces, but after renovation there will be four.

The SCAC is currently taking applications for three Arts Hub Coordinator positions until Feb. 10. The hope is that SCAC can on-board the three coordinators in the spring. Each coordinator will manage two hubs for the initial period as Hubs launch, through FY27. In FY28 the plan is to fill out the final three Hub Coordinator positions.

PARKS requested the slide deck and how to promote the openings. HARTON praised the presentation. PLATTS praised the presentation.

Program Spotlight: Artist Entrepreneur

SCOTT-FITTS made a presentation on the Artist Entrepreneur Incubator. She thanked DRAKE for managing the program well. She shared that in July 2025 there were around 30 people for the first in-person AEI session. The SC Small Business Development Center is a partner in FY26. Artist grantee alumni have also presented. The tax session, Taxes for Humans, was popular. Two additional events remain in the series for FY26.

PARKS lauded the program's value to artists and promised to direct artists to the posted resources.

Strategic Plan Update

EASON updated the board on agency progress toward its strategic plan using data visualization tools showing FY26 grants as of February. The awards are tentative as they have not submitted final reports. BROWN provided context about counties that don't currently have awards; programs staff are working to ensure grants are awarded in all 46 counties for the fiscal year. No questions or comments were made.

Agency Updates

PLATTS provided agency-wide updates on staffing and FY27 budget requests to the Governor's Office and House Ways & Means subcommittee. SCAC is requesting \$3 million in recurring funds, with \$2.5 million going to the Arts Industry Operating Support category. Grantees are affected by inflation and there has been no increase in support, plus SCAC has been unable to fund new applicants. \$500,000 would go to programming for the Creative Careers Studio and website upgrades. The South Carolina Arts Alliance's signature events, Arts Summit and Arts Day at the Statehouse, are next week. The SC Arts Leadership Institute surpassed its registration goal and is coming later in the month in Clemson.

Other Business

HARTON requested additional comments or business from the commissioners.

- HARTON took the opportunity to reassure staff regarding the leadership transition.
- STERN commented she will assist in advocating for the FY27 budget request as needed, that it should be an easy sell.

Adjournment

Upon completion of business,

- HARTON called for a motion to adjourn.
 - PARKS motioned to approve. STERN seconded.
- A vote was taken, the motion to adjourn was approved unanimously, and the meeting adjourned at 11:49 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jason L. Rapp