

**REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MUSCATINE ART CENTER
April 17, 2025**

Present: Mark Latta, Aarzoo Baharani, David Meloy, Kathleen Haltmeyer, and Vince Lawson

Present On the phone: Sara Fitzer-Huston

Absent: Mark Seaman and Geri Kent

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by Latta at 12:00 PM.

Minutes:

Minutes of the March 20, 2025, Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees were reviewed and discussed. Moved/seconded (Baharani/Meloy) to approve the minutes. One dissenting vote: Fitzer-Huston. Motion carried.

Bills for Approval: Bills in the amount of \$2,948.38 were presented, reviewed, and discussed. Moved/seconded (Meloy/Haltmeyer) to approve the bills as presented. Motion carried.

Credit Card for Approval: A credit card in the amount of \$225.50 was presented, reviewed, and discussed. Moved/seconded (Haltmeyer/Lawson) to approve the bills as presented. Motion carried.

Credit Card for Approval: A credit card in the amount of \$45.84 was presented, reviewed, and discussed. Moved/seconded (Haltmeyer/Meloy) to approve the bills as presented. Motion carried.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Long-Range Planning:

The City Attorney provided notification that he did not have “any changes or revisions” to the agreement proposed by BNIM. The Muscatine Art Center Support Foundation Advisory Committee voted to increase the 2025 budget so that the Support Foundation will entirely fund the next phase of work as proposed by BNIM. Meloy made a motion to take the agreement proposed by BNIM to City Council. Haltmeyer seconded. Five votes in favor, Fitzer-Huston opposed. Motion carried.

Finance & Budget:

Alexander submitted a payment request in the amount of \$12,731 for the annual Cultural Leadership Partner grant administered by the Iowa Arts Council. The full grant is \$15,000, and the remainder will be requested no later than June 30, 2025.

The Muscatine Art Center was awarded \$5,000 through the Arts Dollars program from Quad City Arts. A portion will go to fund the Footlitters musical theater camp and a portion will help fund two summer interns, one to work in education and the other in collections.

Collections:

With the data conversion completed on March 11th, Loos and Carver have begun adding new and backlog collection items into the database. The two, along with Cooper, are reviewing the print collection for grading.

Bill Parks gifted a computer system including an oversized monitor and a large bed scanner. The system is set up in the Registrar’s office on the second floor of the Carriage House.

The triptych commissioned from Tim Schiffer for the 60th Anniversary has been added to the database and is stored in the vault. It will be unveiled at our 60th Anniversary event.

Building & Grounds:

The water feature in the Japanese Garden will be started up by Mark Latta. Japanese Garden volunteers have been pulling weeds and the mulching will begin next. Haltmeyer will post the hours we are working in the garden with Master Gardeners so they may also help.

The little library is installed. It was built by Kevin Sink, painted by Tim Newton, and installed by Mark Latta. It is a memorial to Linda Reichert.

Community Engagement

Expected by the end of May so far are five elementary school groups, Rockridge kindergartners and 4th graders studying Muscatine history from four of the Muscatine elementary schools. This is in addition to the partnership with the Muskie Early Learning Center that included three days of outreach at the end April to serve 300 kids ages 3 and 4 as well as an outreach night on April 8th that reached more than 100 people.

The Homeshool Assistance Program visits every month with over 30 students regularly participating and planning an exhibit of their art work in the Linkage Gallery showcases in May. Other groups have been or are scheduled to be hosted in the studio such the school credit recovery program, the MomCo, Parents as Teachers, the Conservation Corps' Mommy and Me program, and a group from Project SEARCH which prepares young adults with special needs for employment. (The Muscatine Art Center is a current worksite for a young man, accompanied by a supervisor, who works approximately 1.5 hours most days, Monday through Friday.)

The Muscatine Art Center will also host a painting party for Leadership Muscatine participants and offer an origami class as part of a state-wide collaboration with the Japan America Society of Iowa as well as Muscatine Sister Cities.

Personnel:

The Board of Trustees is looking for possible new board members. There is a need for one board member to start as soon as possible. Applications for the board go to City Hall. One person has applied and is willing to start an early term.

The Iowa Museum Association Conference for 2025 will be held in Cedar Rapids from April 27th through 29th. The keynote speaker is Dr. John Falk, a significant national figure on research regarding learning in information environments such as museums. Dr. Falk will speak twice on Monday, April 28th and sign copies of his new book, "Leaning into Value: Becoming a User-Focused Museum." Melanie Alexander will register for one-day, April 28th. Board members are encouraged to consider attending the conference. Information can be found at www.iowamuseums.org.

The Muscatine Art Center is looking for an education intern and a collections intern. The money was received from the Quad City Arts Dollars Grant we received. There is at least one applicant for both as of right now.

Director's Report: In Packet

Unfinished Business:

New Business:

Next Board meeting – May 15, 2025 at 12:00 P.M.

Adjourn:

Moved/seconded by (Baharani/Haltmeyer) to adjourn at 12:42 pm. The motion carried and the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Aarzo Baharani
Secretary
Muscatine Art Center Board of Trustees