

**DRAFT**

MINUTES  
COCA Executive Committee Meeting  
Thursday, December 8, 2022

COCA Office at DOMI Station

Attendance

In-person: Dan Taylor, Kathy Maiorana, E Marie Sissle, Rachelle McClure

Absent: Lucia Fishburne, Kristen Summers

Staff: Kathleen Spehar, Hillary Crawford, Sahara Lyon, Sarah Painter, Samantha Sumler, Nick Pavlovik (virtual)

Other: Kerri Post (virtual)

I. CALL TO ORDER, WELCOME GUESTS, and PUBLIC INPUT

4:00 pm Chair Dan Taylor called the meeting to order.

II. CONSENT AGENDA

E. Marie moved to approve the consent agenda; Nathan seconded. The motion was unanimously approved

III. REPORTS

A. COCA Connects FY22 Sub-Committee Reports

Membership Subcommittee- Kristen Summers, Subcommittee Chair was absent. COCA staff Sarah Lyon and Executive Director Kathleen Spehar provided a membership campaign update. The campaign was launched using Constant Contact and social media. 8 memberships and 2 business memberships have been secured so far. 13,700 emails were sent out on Giving Tuesday. 4,000 (30%) of recipients opened the first email of those 4,000, 2,700 (75%) opened the second email. Another email is scheduled to go out today. Membership is also being promoted in newsletters.

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) Sub-Committee- E Marie Sissle, Subcommittee Chair. A DEI event was held Tuesday morning at Vino Beano. It was a collaboration with Capital City Chamber and there were approximately 20 attendees. Not many arts people in attendance, so the next meeting will be replicated but held at a different time of day.

Grants Subcommittee- Amanda Clements, Subcommittee Chair. The subcommittee met in September. There was an update on the Cultural Facilities Matching Grant open projects, and the committee approved moving forward with the extensions for both projects. The guidelines for the FY23 Cultural Grant – Round 2 (City funding) were approved as well, and that program is now live in Submittable. There is a meeting next week to go over the proposed changes for FY24. Once the FY24 grant documents are approved by the committee, they will be presented to

the County. Changes include making the Marketing Grant an add-on to the Cultural Grant and offering a public eligibility review for TDT requirements. The County approved the contract extension for Facilities Matching Grant Program contract through September 2024. FAMU has submitted their final report, which has been approved and the file has been closed. Tallahassee Museum has been sent the amendment for their contract, and we are awaiting its execution.

There is an addition of a public eligibility meeting proposed for the FY24 application review process with the County. Adding this meeting would also greatly reduce the current review timeline, which is lengthy, address some concern that the current process may violate the sunshine laws as it is outside of a public meeting, and the eligibility is subjective. This would improve transparency in the process, and help grantees better understand the county's concerns in relation to the tourism statute. It would also cut down review time for COCA staff and keep COCA from going back and forth between the County and grantees. Kathy asked if the Visit Tallahassee team was on board with the meeting. Hillary affirmed the County had not been advised of potential changes at this time, as they must first be presented to the grant subcommittee. Kathy stated that based on previous feedback the County may not be open to holding the public eligibility meeting.

Kathleen affirmed COCA will discuss this proposed change with the grants subcommittee at their upcoming meeting and decide on a couple of different solutions. COCA is looking for ways to increase transparency and efficiency.

Dan asked about the merging of the Cultural and Marketing grant programs, and what the amount of the marketing grant is. Hillary said the Marketing Grant is \$3,000 for marketing out-of-county, which is a requirement of the TDT statute. The single application would be more streamlined for applicants, and potentially remove eligibility barriers due to lack of marketing out of County. Kathleen stated that we would need to confirm with the County that combining the programs would not interfere with our contract deliverables.

A. Chair

Dan had no report but requested that "COCA Priorities" be added to the next Executive Committee meeting to make sure that COCA is not overextending its resources.

B Staff

Samantha Sumler, Marketing Manager continues to offer consultations with the cultural community to address their marketing needs. In January, Samantha will meet with the Holocaust Education Research Center regarding the promotion of their partnership with Monticello Opera House presenting *The Diary of Anne Frank* production. Samantha said that the street team is doing well on Instagram. They encouraged board members to continue to post at cultural events and to tag COCA. Samantha has worked with the *Spotlight* author to confirm stories through January. Videos for *The Arts Live Here* campaign continue to be produced. COCA has set up advertising packages with the Florida Museum of History and Franklin County. Promotional items are being inventoried and will be updated. Messaging has been sent out to advise constituents that COCA offices will be closed between Christmas and New Years holidays.

A press release went out for the Asphalt Art Project, and there was a feature call about the initiative with ABC 27 today.

Sahara Lyon, Arts Education Manager gave her report. All arts education grant contracts are executed, and all payments have been requested. After the last board meeting there was an opening for the Winter Fest exhibition with about 200 attendees. Most staff were in attendance, as well as the public art and art education interns. Participating teachers will each receive \$153; the checks will go out in January. Sahara is now writing monthly arts & education articles for the Democrat. The current article is about a workshop COCA is doing with Sable Palm Elementary School, working with Javon Austin, who is their Family and Community Outreach Coordinator. The program, *Beacon Parent*, is an extension of the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) and the parents get points for participation. The program is part of a workshop series and COCA is providing the craft. On January 3<sup>rd</sup> COCA will host a drumming workshop for teachers with Giving Tree Music. This date is a teacher planning day, so teachers are more likely to attend. The business card requested for COCA Board members to promote membership has been created and will be available at the next board meeting.

Sarah Painter, Public Art Manager shared the Bond mural project has been completed, artwork for the art garden and banners are completed, and production and locations are being finalized. Staff will be meeting with Parks and Recreation next week regarding installation. The project will be completed upon installation. The Photofest opening had about 50 attendees at the airport. Staff is working on ways to better track attendance. The six Photofest winners will be highlighted on social media over the break, using scheduled posts. She is currently finalizing artist contracts for next year's exhibitions and will have the schedule completed once contracts are executed. COCA is hoping to do more receptions next year if the funds are available. Parking is a barrier to the airport events, but parking validation is available. There is an RFQ currently open for the Bloomberg Asphalt Art Project which closes tomorrow. Applicants that are eligible will be invited to submit a full proposal. There will be a community input forum and the neighborhood residents will review the artwork and provide feedback. The mural painting will take place in Spring of 2023.

Rachelle stated that based on the priorities of the mayor, COCA should continue to bring her and the commissioner's ideas about how to activate City Hall and the downtown area.

Hillary Crawford, Grants Manager confirmed the application for FY23 Cultural Grant – Round 2 (City funding) will close tonight at 11:59 PM. Currently COCA has 15 submissions – 6 of those are new organizations, in addition to the 3 new organizations funded in Round 1. There are 16 submissions currently in draft status. She anticipates having between 20 and 30 applications total.

As reported earlier, Hillary continues working on changes for the FY24 grant programs. Those changes will be presented to our partners at the County early next year. COCA will continue to advocate to the City for an investment in the grant program to fund community arts programs. Ideally there would be one application that COCA could fund with TDT or City funds depending

on the eligibility of the program. COCA would like to apply for the Bloomberg Public Art Challenge with the mayor to support a two-year program to activate public art in Tallahassee in concert with the Bicentennial celebration. Staff continues to seek out additional grant funding for COCA programs and operations. An application was submitted to the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) under the Local Arts Agency (LAA) category for sub-granting funds. The awards will be announced in March. Staff will meet in early in 2023 to discuss plans for applying to the NEA for FY24. All FY23 COCA grant contracts have been executed and all payments, except for three grantees with extensions, have been requested.

Nick Pavlovick, Business Manager, provided an update. COCA is close to completing all payments for Cultural, Marketing, and Education grants. The field work has been completed for the audit, and the auditors are moving to creating the financial statements. Drafts of the audit should be provided in early January, with the final audit to be presented by the auditor at the January 19<sup>th</sup> board meeting. The County contract has been renewed and we have received the payment. The City contract for the new grant program is being finalized. Once the city contract is executed, we will receive the payment. There is also a City contract for services that is in process. COCA move has required transferring and discontinuing of services at the old building.

#### C. Executive Director

Kathleen Spehar provided her report. Arts Advocacy days for the FY24 Florida legislature will be March 21-23, 2023. COCA is again working with the Florida Cultural Alliance to assist them with their programming for statewide arts officials. COCA has over 600 completed surveys for Arts & Economic Prosperity 6 (AEP6). Surveying will end at the end of April 2023, and COCA must have 800 surveys at that time. Staff is noticing that there are a lot of tourists that are showing up on these surveys, at least 1 in 3 from different parts of the country or different parts of Florida.

Kathleen has been meeting with the newly elected commissioners. They're interested in arts initiatives and look forward to continuing to work with COCA. Newly appointed board member Carol Hill will be filling the open City Business seat. Carol will join us at the January board meeting. The City artist seat vacated by the resignation of April Fitzpatrick and is currently being advertised. The Commissioner seat formerly held by Commissioner Dozier is awaiting appointment by the County Commission at the January commission meeting. COCA relocated offices to DOMI Station on Wednesday, December 7. The old building will still be accessible to staff for the next two weeks.

COCA will be out of the building and the utilities will be turned off by the 15<sup>th</sup> of December, although the lease runs through the 31<sup>st</sup>. Currently there is not a tenant scheduled to move into the old building. A company was hired to help with the move and Kathleen thanked Cosby Hayes for painting the wall at the new building. Staff will be working to unpack and arrange the office over the next few weeks. Staff is also working on Wayfinding for the new building.

Dan asked where the COCA Board meetings would take place. Kathleen shared the COCA lobby area and DOMI small conference room could accommodate the Executive Committee meetings,

and the full Board meetings would eventually be held in the conference room at the new Visitor's Center after construction is completed. Kathy offered the conference room at Sachs Media for the January board meeting, if needed.

Rachelle asked if Kathleen to find out if DOMI had a clean desk policy for their co-working spaces. There was discussion about ways to activate the space and use the new location to market COCA and our services. Kathy asked when the construction would be completed. Kathleen said the plan was for January, however there could be more delays. Dan asked about the COCA holiday office closure. Kathleen confirmed COCA staff will be working remotely the week of December 19th. The offices will close on December 23<sup>rd</sup> and reopen on January 3<sup>rd</sup>. Rachelle suggested that we implement more interns to assist with activating the new office space.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

- a. Radical Generosity Membership Campaign

Covered during the Subcommittee Report.

V. NEW BUSINESS

No New Business

VI. ANNOUNCEMENTS

E Marie shared that SOMO Playhouse is partnering with the City to offer a free performing arts program at the Palmer Munroe Teen Center. The program starts January 20<sup>th</sup>.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 5:16 PM

Respectfully submitted by Hillary Crawford