

MINUTES  
COCA Board of Directors Meeting  
Thursday, May 18, 2023  
4:00pm  
COCA Office at DOMI Station

In-Person — Nathan Archer, Haiqiong Deng, Paul Lewis, Jr., Beth Keating, Katherine Maiorana, Rachelle McClure, Brindi Pamulapati, Kristen Summers, Dan Taylor

Virtual — Carol Hill, Ayne Markos, E. Marie Sissle, Jennifer Wright

Absent— Donmetrie Clark, Amanda Clements, Kim Harding, Lucia Fishburne, Jeremy Matlow, Michelle Personette, Brian Welch

Staff—Kathleen Spehar, Summer Callahan, Sam Joslin, Sahara Lyon, Samantha Sumler, Nick Pavlovik (virtual)

Members of the public — Kerri Post (virtual)

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

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m.

COCA's newest Board Member Brindi Pamulapati was acknowledged and thanked. New staff members Sam Joslin, Public Art & Exhibitions Manager and Summer Callahan, Grants Manager, were introduced.

II. CONSENT AGENDA

- a. Board of Directors Meeting Minutes – March 30, 2023
- b. Executive Committee Meeting Minutes – April 20, 2023 (for review only)
- c. Balance Sheet Statement as of April 30, 2023
- d. Budget v. Actual Statement as of April 30, 2023

Rachelle moved to approve the consent agenda and Nathan seconded. The consent agenda was approved unanimously.

III. Old Business

There was no old business.

IV. New Business

- a. Bylaws revisions

Kathleen stated that bylaw revision is a result of conversations last year. During the board application process for second term appointments, COCA was informed by the County of a new policy that impacted COCA's process. After legal consultation, this new process required a COCA bylaws change. Language was revised on Page 3, "apply to" language was added. On page 4, "expiration" language was removed. Dan noted this was already vetted by the Executive

Committee. There were no questions about the bylaws revisions. Katherine motioned to approve. Rachelle seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

b. Board of Directors Seat: Business/Economic Development (County)

Kathleen stated that Kati Schardl's resignation has created a vacancy on the COCA Board of Directors. The seat, Business/Economic Development (County) has been posted on [tallahasseearts.org](http://tallahasseearts.org) and applications have been received. There are three candidates:

- Neil Mooney, Attorney with the Mooney Law firm. Mooney has participated in community service and volunteered at art galleries, Big Brothers Big Sisters and 4H.
- Gia Williams, CEO of Grover Creative. She works with clients regionally and nationally on marketing and brand development.
- Reenee Williams, Rapid Response Coordinator at CareerSource Capital Region. She is an experienced volunteer and grant panelist and formerly the Entertainment Director and State Manager at Ready for Life in Tallahassee.
- Alternate: Aaron Michael Hanselman, church musician. He has experience in finance, operations, marketing, public speaking and performance.

Dan stated that this slate will be presented to the County Commission, who will select the new board member, but that he loves the applicants. There are no questions from the board about the applicants. Dan requests a motion to present the slate to the County Commission. Nathan motioned to approve, Paul seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.

V. Reports

a. COCA Connects FY23 Sub-Committee Reports

Kristen delivered the Membership Sub-Committee report. She stated the "Build to 300" campaign was launched. As of the board meeting, membership has dropped to 239 with 1 new member gained. She informed the board the drop in membership is attributable to individual and household membership; group membership remains stable. The Membership Sub-Committee plans for monthly promotions on social media. To reach the campaign goal, board members are asked to pass out "member cards," share about COCA on their personal social media and brainstorm ways to improve COCA membership. Kathleen stated the subcommittee is also considering a larger, more robust membership campaign in the future. Kathleen stated she will update the board by email every two weeks about the campaign's progress.

The Grants Sub-Committee did not need to meet, so there were no updates. The DEI (Diversity, Equity & Inclusion) Sub-Committee has not met, so there were no updates.

b. Liaisons Report

Jennifer delivered her liaison report. FSU's Opening Nights has announced a new concert, the *Gipsy Kings*, co-presented with Visit Tallahassee and Leon County. The rest of Opening Night's

slate will be announced August 1. The FSU (Florida State University) College of Music's summer opera will begin May 16. The FSU School of Theatre has announced their 23-24 season. FSU art professor Lilian Garcia-Roig received the 2023-2024 Robert O. Lawton Distinguished Professorship—the first time a visual artist has received this honor. No other liaisons were present to share a report.

c. Chair Report

Dan reported that he and Kathy attended the *Building Better Boards* training. One takeaway from that experience: could grantees attend board meetings and give a 3-5 minute presentation? Kristin was in favor. Kathleen noted that the next Board meeting in September has a full agenda, including approving the slate of COCA grant applications, reviewing the AEP6 results, etc. If September's meeting agenda is too full, presentations could be scheduled for October or November. Dan also requested that board members continue tagging COCA and other hashtags as they attend events.

d. Staff Reports

*Sahara Lyon, Arts Education Manager*

Sahara stated that the school year ends next Wednesday. She is communicating with arts education grantees and writing articles about grant projects where possible. COCA held the Creative Tallahassee awards ceremony at the beginning of May, and Sahara is currently working with Sam Joslin to coordinate the next show. Dan commended the reception and asked about using Eventbrite; Sahara confirmed that Eventbrite accurately predicted/recorded attendance for supplies and grant-writing purposes. Sahara is working on upcoming grants: the Division of Arts and Culture/National Endowment for the Arts partnership grant, Florida Humanities grant and the Duke Foundation grant. Dan asked if Sahara anticipated receiving the grant; Sahara stated that there were changes to the local impact program and that she was advised, for now, to wait to apply.

*Samantha Sumler, Marketing & Communications Manager*

Samantha stated that COCA staff and board volunteered to attend Tallahassee Pride, Chain of Parks, and Word of South festivals. The Creative Tallahassee reception included a social media campaign featuring all the participating artists, which was successful. Samantha plans to create similar campaigns for upcoming summer and fall projects, such as Asphalt Arts. They hosted a marketing workshop with Visit Tallahassee, which will be featured in all Thursday newsletters until the end of June. Samantha also plans to create a similar workshop series on creating video content. They stated that a QR code for the COCA website has been added to the door to COCA's section at DOMI Station and that new merch has been created and purchased, including a car magnet, waterless tattoos, and additional COCA mugs. Samantha stated that COCA will use two new logos during June- the updated rainbow flag and the trans pride flag- which will be available on vinyl sticker sheets designed by Nathan. Stickers have long been requested by artists and designers in the community.

*Nick Pavlovik, Business Manager*

Nick said he is onboarding new COCA staff. There is one remaining payment to be made on the FY23 Cultural Grant to the Riley House. Nick stated that he is renewing COCA's tax status and seeking a new auditor, who would ideally be in place by the beginning of the fiscal year. He shared that auditor prices have doubled, and he is seeking an auditor who will offer their services that include an in-kind component. Kathleen asked the COCA board for nonprofit auditor recommendations.

*Summer Callahan, Grants Manager*

Summer stated that she is reviewing FY23 interim grant reports and that all reports with an associated payment have been reviewed. Applications for the 2024 fiscal year COCA grant programs are open. Summer said she held a How to Apply webinar and is now consulting with potential applicants. Summer also said she is working with Kathleen and Sahara to identify funding sources for COCA and will take on more board of director responsibilities in the future.

*Sam Joslin, Public Art & Exhibitions Manager*

Sam stated that Asphalt Arts is scheduled for May 26 and 27 pending clear weather and no rain. A digital flyer advertising volunteer painting opportunities has been created and placed in the FSU Art Department newsletter, the FAMU (Florida A & M University) Art Department newsletter, the Bond neighborhood newsletter and other newsletters contacted by the City of Tallahassee. The flyer includes a hyperlink sign-up for volunteers to assist. Sam stated the Creative Tallahassee exhibition will be de-installed on June 6, replaced by the extension exhibition, which also features Dan and Kristen's work. The extension exhibition will last until June 2024. In the main City gallery spaces, a solo exhibit/reception/artist talk for the next featured artist, Tracy Faust Hunt, is planned. Sam stated the current airport gallery will be unavailable due to construction, but that she and Kathleen have identified another gallery space at the airport. Kathleen hoped both gallery spaces would be usable during this airport gallery transition period.

e. Executive Director Report

Kathleen reported how delighted she is with the new staff. Kathleen then moved to advocacy and grant program updates, stated that funding recommendations from the state are available, pending the Governor's approval:

- Cultural Museums for Leon County represents 29 grants and funded at 67%. This means all recommended applications will receive approximately 67% of their request.
- Culture Builds Florida for Leon County represents 7 grants and was funded at 100%.
- Cultural Facilities for Leon County represents 1 grant for LeMoyne Arts, which was funded at 100%.
- Cultural Endowment for the entire state was not funded.

Kathleen stated this was a successful outcome and asked the board to thank their legislators. She then moved local grant program updates. Kathleen stated that three projects will receive CRA (Community Redevelopment Agency) funding, pending one more voting round: LeMoyne Arts, Challenger Learning Center, and Indaba Theatre. The final approval of these projects will

be determined this summer. She then provided an Arts & Economic Prosperity 6 update (AEP6). COCA has reached their goal of 800 responses, and will continue collecting surveys through this month, especially at BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) events. COCA intern Parker Franklin is working on this initiative. Kathleen stated that the economic impact survey launch is scheduled for October 2023 and that COCA plans to host one or two guests from Americans for the Arts for this occasion.

Kathleen provided community project updates. She stated *Asphalt Art* planning is continuing after being rescheduled from April 2023. Kathleen stated the art garden installation in the Bond neighborhood is completed and that COCA continues to work with the City to monitor those plantings. The banner project was completed with community input, but the neighborhood has requested a redesign. Kathleen stated that COCA is working with Opening Nights to bring back Tallahassee Music Week (TMW), but currently there is no dedicated funding to support it. Kathleen announced COCA received a National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) grant award which has some flexibility for sub-granting. Kathleen stated that COCA is participating in multiple Bicentennial planning task forces, including legislative, marketing, history, etc.- and hopes to involve COCA grantees, too.

Kathleen shared a local arts & culture facilities update. She stated the Sheridan Center project is no longer in conversation with the FSU College of Music, and instead, the Sheridan Center is considering a partnership with TCC (Tallahassee Community College). Kathleen shared the Bradfordville Blues Club is still seeking a permanent space and plan to operate out of the American Legion off Lake Ella starting in July.

Kathleen then provided operational updates. She stated that COCA is still in conversation with the City regarding COCA's contract, but that the contract should be finalized by the end of May. She requested that the Board members suggest colleagues who would be suited for the two open board seats. Kathleen provided more information about the NEA grant award from April, which can be used for sub-granting. This money can be used if the City provides insufficient or no funds. The money is flexible enough to be used for organizations and individuals, including creating a new individual artist grant program. With the official opening of the Amtrack Campus. Kathleen shared that COCA staff have weekly office hours, which will be posted on COCA's website and on social media. Kathleen stated that COCA's mid-year report was sent to Board members in April. Several commissioners reached out to thank COCA for their excellent work and service to the community. Kathleen also shared that she hopes to use the conference room at the Amtrack Campus for future Board meetings.

#### VI. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ayne stated that COCA's Midyear Report was excellent.

#### VII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned by Dan at 5:13 pm.

*Respectfully submitted by Summer Callahan and Sahara Lyon*

