



## **Arts Education & Access Fund Oversight Committee**

**Date:** June 8, 2023

**Time:** 7:00pm- 8:30pm

**Location:** Zoom Meeting

**Attendees:** AOC Members: Jenn Falco, Ellen Thomas, Hana Layson, Margo Norton, Leah Faure, Jessica Lagunas, Eric Miller, Carlee Smith, Suzy Root

City of Portland Staff: Amelia Hicks, Barbra Rice, Jeff Hawthorne, Dawn Isaacs, Darion Jones, Stephan Herrera, Tyler Wallace, Nancy Thorington

### **1. Greetings/Introductions (Jenn Falco)**

- a. Introductions.

### **2. AOC Annual Report to Council (Darion Jones, Arts Policy Advisor to Commissioner Ryan)**

- a. Process for submitting/presenting AOC Reports to Council
  - 5 years of reports weren't received by council in required process, so the reports weren't recorded officially.
  - We are working on bringing everything to council at once, with all 5 years of data.
  - Committee working with City Arts program to submit report.
  - Intention is not to change too much.
  - There were inconsistencies with data so we need to clarify the data collection mechanism.
- b. Working towards an August date to present reports.
- c. Presentation by Commissioner Ryan will be shared with committee in advance as an engagement opportunity.

### **3. Request for Public Comments**

- a. No comments.

#### **4. Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes**

- a. Meeting notes from April 13, 2023 provided to group.
- b. Meeting minutes stand approved.

#### **5. Portland's New Arts Education Coordinator**

- a. City Arts Manager Jeff Hawthorne introduced newly hired Arts Education Coordinator Dawn Isaacs.
- b. She will be helping with collecting data from schools and collaborating with the committee and the schools.
- c. Dawn shared her background and plans:
  - Finishing up role at Catlin Gabel School; there for 12 years.
  - Started career in California with experience teaching in lots of different school environments.
  - Arts are essential for children to understand the world and themselves.
  - Looking forward to learning how she can be supportive of the committee and their work.

#### **6. Revenue Update (Barbra Rice)**

- a. Overview of most recent AEF Revenue Report from March 10, 2023
- b. TY 2022 collections to date: \$7.8 million. TY 2021 collections this time last year: \$8.4 million.
  - We are still in Tax Season.
  - Projected to complete return entry by end of month.
  - Working on non-filer campaign for TY 2022 with compliance efforts starting in July and run through September. This normally brings in another \$3-4 mill.
  - Typically that puts us around \$10 mill. By the time the first round of disbursements take place in Dec.
  - As current year compliance is worked on, outstanding debt from past years is addressed so revenue continues to come in on older tax years. We'd expect to get to \$12 mill. Over time for TY 2022.
- c. School disbursements for TY 2021 were the highest since before the pandemic, which was due to an increase in average teacher salary, not a recovery in enrollment.
- d. Fiscal year 2022/2023 RACC distributions were \$3.5 mil.- in line with prev. years.
- e. This year we are anticipating there will be sufficient funds to fully fund the school district's portion and are optimistic that RACC will receive their normal amount under the funding formula in City code.
- f. Impact of the pandemic on Arts Tax collections:
  - For TY 2019, due in 2020, impact to collections of about \$1 million that may never be recovered.

- Collections for the last 2 years have been more in line with historical numbers.
- g.** Response to regional economist's perspective that population decline in Portland could impact AEAF revenues:
  - In the event that population decreases enough to impact tax collections, schools would still receive funds first and RACC would be the first to feel impact.
  - We are not anticipating that happening in the near future because:
    - i.** Every year we continue to collect on delinquent back tax years (last year we disbursed over \$2 mill. To RACC from back years 2012-2020)
    - ii.** Our new tax system has enhanced our collection capabilities as well as made it easier for people to pay.
- h.** Tyler Wallace clarified that the portion that schools get from tax is defined by a formula and doesn't have anything to do with the exact amount of tax collected. Only if revenue collected for the year dipped under \$8.5 million would the school's disbursement be affected.
- i.** Margo Norton asked why are this year's collections running behind last year's?
  - Too soon to tell final numbers. There are many factors that could play into that, and amount could end up being similar.
- j.** Leah Faure asked about process for advertising the tax or sending reminders:
  - Funds for advertising are limited, so Rev. Div. tries to get the most bang for the buck with type of mailers it sends out.
  - City Arts Program will have more influence on the flyer sent out in the future.
- k.** Jessica Lagunas asked Is the Arts Tax always going to be disbursed to the schools to fund teacher's salaries exclusively?
  - City code dictates the formula for how it's distributed.

## **7. Annual Meeting of Portland-area Superintendents (Margo Norton)**

- a.** Meeting held May 26<sup>th</sup>, 2023
- b.** Attended by AEAF Committee members Hana Layson, Margo Norton and Jenn Falco.
- c.** Written recap provided to group in meeting materials.
- d.** Impact of the AEAF was discussed and examples of how the AEAF is enhancing K-5 arts education in Portland area.
- e.** Districts also reported how they were also investing in middle and high school arts education with work progressing on continuous pathways.
- f.** Hana Layson stated it was great to see people coming together and the collaborative energy among all participants. Was struck by how much schools need to rely on other sources of funding to provide arts opportunities. There are still significant inequities between some districts and they still have a ways to go to provide full pathways in arts.

- g. Suzy Root asked about discussing enrollment at meeting. Concerned about the number of Arts teachers being cut to part time and the effect that has on the schools and communities.
  - o Margo offered to have Jeff follow up about Suzy's questions.
- h. Challenges and opportunities were discussed including:
  - o Declining student enrollment
  - o Stabilizing funding levels
  - o Opportunities for coordination between districts by sharing strategies, teacher development plans, benchmarks, etc.
- i. Jeff Hawthorne stated it was no surprise that we heard the call to revisit the arts tax funding formula being discussed. Commissioner Ryan has engaged in conversations regarding this but we don't know how soon he may take up the cause.
- j. Funding for arts teachers is being supplemented by other funds and those other funds may have changed causing possible cuts to teachers.
- k. Carlee Smith asked how often the Superintendents meeting takes place
  - o Jeff answered that the IGA with schools has an annual meeting built into the agreement.
- l. Suzy Root brought up issue of school funding inequities:
  - o When Arts Tax money first started being disbursed to districts the funding that was previously in place was either moved to something else and the arts tax was used for teacher funding exclusively, or arts tax funds were added to the program and made it larger or more robust.
  - o In some schools the programs got better and in some they did not, based on the strategies the school used.
  - o Concerned about school leadership changes and the effect this has on the arts programs.

## 8. Bylaws

- a. Cover memo and bylaws templates Version 1 and 2 provided to group in meeting materials.
- b. Margo Norton proposed motion to move forward with directing the chair of the AEAF committee to work with the Arts Manager to resolve the substantive issues identified and clarify and/or edit sections identified in the memo; and to proceed to secure final city approval of the Bylaws Version 2.
- c. Motion seconded by Eric Miller, and others.
- d. Discussion or comments?
  - o No debate
- e. Vote:
  - o All AEAF members vote YES.
  - o Motion carried.

**9. City Arts Manager Update (Jeff Hawthorne)**

- a. City Arts Manager Report provided in meeting materials.
- b. Overview of City Arts Program's recent work on:
  - Hiring new Arts Education Coordinator
  - Annual Meeting with Superintendents
  - AEAF Reports going to Council
  - Cultural Planning
    - i. Assessing the state of arts and culture in the tri-county area.
    - ii. Community engagement and listening phase just concluded with more than 1200 residents providing feedback.
    - iii. Draft plan to be completed by end of year and released for review and feedback.
    - iv. Plan to be presented to govt. agencies for adoption in early 2024.

**10. Other Items**

- a. Two AEAF members recently resigned:
  - Stephanie Whitlock
  - Joaquin Lopez

**11. Close**

- a. Meeting adjourned 8:17 pm.