

AOC Grants Subcommittee Meeting

Date:

29 August 2023 11:00 a.m.-12:03 p.m.

Attendees:

Jeff Hawthorne, City Arts Manager

Margo Norton, AOC TSCC Member

Ellen Thomas, AOC Committee Member

Carlee Smith, AOC Committee Member

Dawn Isaacs, City AEAF Coordinator

Helen Daltoso, RACC Grants Manager

Review of Grant Subcommittee Goals:

1. **Enhance Reporting.** Direct/guide future (more in-depth) reporting on AEAF-funded grants
2. **Program Evaluation.** Understand the metrics the current grants administrator has been using for grants to determine whether they align with the AEAF ballot measure or whether changes might be advisable.
3. **Grants Oversight Reporting Schedule.** Determine when we can report on the last fiscal year of grant activity (22/23 - just ended on 30 June) and what a "standard" reporting cycle moving forward should be.
4. **Inform the City's RFP Process** for future grants administration services by advising on the grant reporting and evaluation metrics that should be communicated in the RFP.

Timeline Goals:

The subcommittee asked about the timeline for the City issuing a new RFP for grant services . The City advised the goal is Thanksgiving 2023 – allowing three months for a detailed selection process after responses are received. The eventual goal is to have providers in place at/around 1 July 2024.

AEAF Monies:

RACC had a surplus of \$4M of AEAF funds, of which \$2M have been spent down in the most recent special allocation of AEAF Funds. RACC may be directed to spend, or to reserve, the remaining approximately \$2M. RACC will still need to fund GOS grants if its contract were to expire. Decision to be made about whether there will be more than one grant provider, one for GOS and one for access – that will guide the City's direction to RACC.

Adding Criteria for Grant Reporting

The committee discussed what the timeline for AOC grant reporting is – is it past FY or only moving forward? The AOC Chair advised that is up to the committee to make a recommendation about grant oversight report development moving forward. The subcommittee is to consider what is reasonable, and achievable for the past vs. future years and make a recommendation to the full committee.

Committee members were advised to focus on the criteria they want to see the City Arts Manager provide to grants service providers as the AOC is responsible for contracts oversight.

The subcommittee wants to go beyond reporting solely on what organizations and how much money is awarded. The subcommittee wants to move to additional information like detailed **demographics** (is the arts tax money reaching broad geographic and economic strata across PDX? Are they in schools with the greatest needs for arts ed? Who is being served in what neighborhoods?) and **impact/outcomes**. The AOC subcommittee wants to be able to answer the question “Where is [the AEAF Fund] in my neighborhood?” for grants. The committee and the City noted that some of this information might be currently available through RACC and its grant reporting systems.

Criteria to consider/Ballot Measure Language:

Where is your organization located? Who do you serve? Who are your artists? What communities do they identify with? What did you plan to do? What did you actually do? Can you share a success story? Grants reporting should ideally include both quantitative and qualitative information - from hard data to anecdotal insight. Subcommittee members noted that project and community grants people are often busy so there needs to be an easy, efficient process potentially through a short survey. A subcommittee member developed a 10-question survey, which they will try to find a copy of to share with the rest of the subcommittee to provide some ideas for expanded grants evaluation questions.

The subcommittee discussed the ballot measure language: The AEAF funds high-quality arts access for K-12 students and works to make arts experiences available for underserved communities. There is currently a written 95/5 split between the two objectives. Because the initial funds go to K-5 kids through certified arts educators, RACC has often focused more on access grants. The committee asked the City if it can be more directive about how to spend AEAF funds – for K-12 and underserved communities. Perhaps the next set of grant providers should also meet with the City and the AOC much like educators meet with the AEAF grants coordinator.

Further Discussion of Ballot Measure:

The AEAF requires that grants go to non-profit organizations. The subcommittee wonders if that is the case with the current grants service provider? Also, should a code change be necessary for any changes to grant administration services, should the non-profit language be expanded to include schools and/or municipalities?

The subcommittee noted that the full AOC committee can make recommendations about policy, specifically how these clauses like the following are interpreted: “A minimum of 5 percent of the remaining funds shall be distributed to RACC for the purpose of providing grants and programs to non-profit arts organizations, other nonprofits and schools that will give access to high-quality arts experiences to Kindergarten through 12th grade students (K-12) and for grants and programs that will make arts and culture experiences available to Portland residents, with particular emphasis on programs directed to communities who are underserved by local arts providers.” (Portland City Code 5.73.030)

The committee asked whether administrative and overhead costs are part of the upcoming grants RFP? The City answered in the affirmative. How the administrative or overhead expense is paid (general fund, or arts tax money, or a blend) is yet to be determined– but the City confirmed there will be an allowance for grants program management and oversight.

The AOC should impact the scope of work and the performance evaluation of future grant service providers/contractors. The committee discussed needing to clarify what the contractor should do (in terms of priority grant activities) and how they report (per grant, and on their program). The committee discussed a goal of more specific information, and ongoing discussion with the City and the committee and any service providers. E.g. – how will we know what is high quality? What was the access? How many people did you reach? Did you achieve your goal?

Next steps:

The Grants subcommittee has set a goal to meet multiple times during September, working to address its objectives and provide recommendations to the full AOC committee at the next standing meeting on 12 October 2023. To accomplish this goal, it must provide its recommendations to the Committee Chair by 1 October for agenda and public notice purposes.