



Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees
Wednesday, November 20, 2024

A regular meeting of the Cuyahoga Arts & Culture (CAC) Board of Trustees was called to order at 4:03 p.m. at Cleveland Public Library, Main Branch, Louis Stokes Wing, 2nd Floor.

The roll call showed that Trustees Blakemore, DiCosimo, Isenhart, and Vernaci were present. Trustee Scott Taylor was absent. It was determined that there was a quorum.

Also in attendance were Executive Director Jill Paulsen and CAC staff.

President Isenhart recognized the positive outcome of Issue 55. She thanked the voters who supported the Issue which passed at 72%, passing in every city and nearly every precinct in Cuyahoga County. She thanked County Executive Chris Ronayne, Council President Pernel Jones, Jr., all County council members and other elected officials, all nonprofits, all community leaders who stepped up to make this possible. Thanks to Assembly for Action and R Strategy Group for directing the campaign. She thanked the grantees who demonstrated how CAC funding benefits the residents of our community.

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Action: To approve the minutes of the September 11, 2024 Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees.

Motion by – Trustee Vernaci

Seconded by – Trustee Blakemore

Vote to approve the minutes from the September 11, 2024 meeting.

Ayes: all ayes

The motion carried.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT ON MEETING AGENDA ITEMS

There was no public comment on the meeting agenda.

3. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Director Paulsen thanked everyone for joining her and the Board. Ms. Paulsen's remarks can be found in the Board materials.

4. FINANCE AND GENERAL BUSINESS

Finance Report

Ms. Harris stated that tax revenue through October 31 was \$7,387,394. This is \$338,482 (4.4%) below forecast and \$1,076,620 (12.7%) less than the same period in 2023. Interest revenue through October was \$398,144 which is \$3,411 above forecast. She stated that expenditures for non-grant expenses through October were \$815,093 and are tracking \$66,113 below budget, primarily due to timing of payments.

Approval of Grant from The Cleveland Foundation

Action: To accept a grant in the amount of \$26,000, for general operating support, from The Cleveland Foundation on behalf of the Educational Foundation of America (EFA).

Motion by – Trustee DiCosimo

Seconded by – Trustee Blakemore

Vote to accept a grant in the amount of \$26,000, for general operating support, from The Cleveland Foundation on behalf of the Educational Foundation of America (EFA).

Ayes: all ayes

The motion carried.

Approval of 2024 Board Meeting Schedule

Action: To approve the 2025 board meeting schedule.

Motion by – Trustee Vernaci

Seconded by – Trustee Blakemore

Discussion: Trustee Vernaci asked to change the February meeting date as she cannot attend a Feb. 12 meeting.

Vote: to approve the 2025 board meeting schedule with the option to alter the February meeting date.

Vote – all Ayes.

The motion carried.

5. BOARD ACTION

Mr. Sinatra, CAC director of grantmaking strategy and communications, provided an overview of the 2025 grant application and panel review process, including the recommendations for 2025 grantmaking totaling \$10,750,847 for 300 organizations. Mr. Sinatra provided summary comments which were included in the grants memo in the Board materials, provided to the Board in advance of the meeting.

Approval of General Operating Support 2025 Grant Amounts

Mr. Sinatra presented the Board with the slate of 2025 General Operating Support grantees and highlighted 70 organizations recommended for funding.

The following actions were taken:

Motion by Trustee DiCosimo, seconded by Trustee Vernaci, to approve the 2025 General Operating Support grants (below).

Vote – Ayes: DiCosimo, Isenhardt, Vernaci
Abstain: Blakemore

The motion carried.

Organization	Grant Amount
Children's Museum of Cleveland	\$ 91,210
Karamu House [†]	\$ 113,918
Roots of American Music	\$ 21,447
Western Reserve Historical Society	\$ 202,424

Motion by Trustee Vernaci, seconded by Trustee Blakemore, to approve the 2025 General Operating Support grants (below).

Vote – Ayes. Blakemore, Isenhardt, Vernaci
Abstain: DiCosimo

The motion carried.

Organization	Grant Amount
Cleveland Institute of Music	\$ 472,791
Cleveland Jazz Orchestra	\$ 17,263
Cleveland Play House	\$ 264,669
Great Lakes Theater	\$ 139,572
The Cleveland Orchestra	\$ 863,659

Motion by Trustee Blakemore, seconded by Trustee Isenhart, to approve the 2025 General Operating Support grants (below).

Vote – Ayes. Blakemore, Isenhart
 Abstain: DiCosimo and Vernaci

The motion carried.

Organization	Grant Amount
Cleveland Pops Orchestra	\$ 51,196
Playhouse Square	\$ 872,438

Motion by Trustee DiCosimo, seconded by Trustee Blakemore, to approve the 2025 General Operating Support grants (below).

Vote – Ayes. Blakemore, DiCosimo
 Abstain: Isenhart and Vernaci

The motion carried.

Organization	Grant Amount
Beck Center for the Arts	\$ 115,525

Motion by Trustee DiCosimo, seconded by Trustee Vernaci, to approve the 2025 General Operating Support grants (below).

Vote – Ayes. Blakemore, DiCosimo, Isenhart, Vernaci

The motion carried.

Organization	Grant Amount
Apollo's Fire Baroque Orchestra	\$ 102,914
Art House	\$ 25,225
Art Therapy Studio	\$ 44,753
Artists Archives of the Western Reserve	\$ 23,028
Arts Impact	\$ 42,668
Assembly for the Arts [†]	\$ 42,649
BAYarts	\$ 42,579
Broadway School of Music and the Arts	\$ 24,967
Center for Arts-Inspired Learning	\$ 83,621
Chagrin Documentary Film Festival	\$ 31,383
Chagrin Valley Little Theater	\$ 25,182
Cleveland Botanical Garden	\$ 149,843
Cleveland Classical Guitar Society	\$ 32,816
Cleveland Institute of Art	\$ 486,867
Cleveland International Film Festival	\$ 106,206

Cleveland Museum of Natural History	\$ 437,584
Cleveland Print Room	\$ 36,742
Cleveland Public Theatre†	\$ 86,632
Cleveland Restoration Society	\$ 75,733
Collective Arts Network	\$ 23,551
Contemporary Youth Orchestra	\$ 23,704
DANCECleveland	\$ 38,611
Dancing Wheels	\$ 39,212
Doan Brook Watershed Partnership	\$ 33,053
Dobama Theatre	\$ 39,797
Dunham Tavern Museum & Gardens	\$ 15,670
Ensemble Theatre	\$ 15,226
Great Lakes Science Center	\$ 216,921
Heights Arts	\$ 23,572
ICA - Art Conservation	\$ 63,512
Ideastream Public Media	\$ 537,116
Ingenuity	\$ 34,724
Inlet Dance Theatre	\$ 26,025
Lake Erie Ink	\$ 26,583
Lake Erie Nature & Science Center	\$ 63,683
LAND studio	\$ 152,738
Literary Cleveland	\$ 23,208
Maltz Museum	\$ 109,938
Morgan Conservatory	\$ 30,665
Museum of Contemporary Art Cleveland	\$ 104,387
Musical Theater Project	\$ 34,744
Nature Center at Shaker Lakes	\$ 73,516
Near West Theatre	\$ 47,702
North Coast Men's Chorus	\$ 19,884
Ohio Contemporary Ballet	\$ 35,516
Piano Cleveland	\$ 58,031
Rainey Institute	\$ 70,645
Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum	\$ 670,975
Sculpture Center	\$ 15,384
Shaker Historical Society	\$ 13,381
Singing Angels	\$ 16,505
SPACES	\$ 34,003
The Cleveland Museum of Art	\$ 869,265
The Cleveland Opera	\$ 11,760
The Music Settlement	\$ 177,229
Ukrainian Museum Archives	\$ 16,047
Valley Art Center	\$ 28,499
Zygote Press	\$ 21,239

Approval of Cultural Heritage 2025 Grants

Mr. Sinatra stated that the Board would be asked to approve the grant amounts for the 13 Cultural Heritage organizations recommended for funding.

Motion by Trustee DiCosimo, seconded by Trustee Vernaci, to approve the Cultural Heritage grants (below).

Vote – Ayes: Blakemore, DiCosimo, Isenhardt, Vernaci

The motion carried.

Organization	Grant Amount
AfricaHouse International [†]	\$ 19,780
Buck Out Foundation [†]	\$ 15,075
Cleveland Association of Black Storytellers [†]	\$ 5,000
CollectivExpress [†]	\$ 8,542
Djapo Cultural Arts Institute [†]	\$ 19,389
DuffyLit [†]	\$ 15,711
Foluke Cultural Arts [†]	\$ 30,000
Greater Cleveland Urban Film Festival [†]	\$ 30,000
Julia De Burgos Cultural Arts Center [†]	\$ 30,000
LatinUs Theater Company [†]	\$ 23,828
Mojuba! Dance Collective [†]	\$ 8,820
Sankofa [†]	\$ 7,714
Slovenian Museum and Archives	\$ 6,583

Approval of Project Support 2025 Grants

Mr. Sinatra stated that the Board would be asked to approve the grant amounts and scores for the 217 Project Support grants.

Motion by Trustee DiCosimo, seconded by Trustee Vernaci, to approve the 2025 Project Support grants (below).

Vote – Ayes: DiCosimo, Isenhardt, Vernaci

Abstain: Blakemore

The motion carried.

Organization	Score	Grant Amount
Canalway Partners	Yes	\$ 4,700
Cuyahoga Valley Scenic Railroad	Yes	\$ 3,760
Mandel Jewish Community Center of Cleveland	78.8	\$ 14,805
Museum of Creative Human Art [†]	Yes	\$ 3,760

Motion by Trustee Vernaci, seconded by Trustee Blakemore, to approve the 2025 Project Support grants (below).

Vote – Ayes Blakemore, Isenhardt, Vernaci
 Abstain: DiCosimo

The motion carried.

Organization	Score	Grant Amount
BlueWater Chamber Orchestra	91.25	\$ 17,145
Cleveland Ballet	82.5	\$ 15,500
Cleveland Chamber Symphony		\$ 6,485
Local 4 Music Fund	95.2	\$ 17,885

Motion by Trustee DiCosimo, seconded by Trustee Vernaci, to approve the 2025 Project Support grants (below).

Vote – Ayes: Blakemore, DiCosimo, Isenhardt, Vernaci

The motion carried.

Organization	Score	Grant Amount
Abrepaso Flamenco [†]		\$ 4,700
Achievement Centers for Children		\$ 4,700
America Asian Pacific Islander Organization [†]	Yes	\$ 4,700
America SCORES Cleveland	94	\$ 17,660
American Hungarian Friends of Scouting	80.8	\$ 13,315
American Slovenian Polka Foundation	Yes	\$ 3,760
Aradhana Committee [†]		\$ 17,400
Art of Me Productions [†]		\$ 4,700
Arts in Strongsville		\$ 3,760
Arts Without Borders [†]	Yes	\$ 3,760
Association of African American Cultural Garden [†]	Yes	\$ 3,570
Association of Asian Indian Women In Ohio* [†]	Yes	\$ 1,505
Baldwin Wallace University	85.2	\$ 16,010
Baseball Heritage Museum	Yes	\$ 4,700
Bay Village Community Band		\$ 3,005
Beachwood Arts Council		\$ 4,700
Bedford Historical Society		\$ 2,705
Bellaire Puritas Development Corporation	Yes	\$ 4,700
Benjamin Rose Institute on Aging	Yes	\$ 4,700
Berea Arts Fest	88	\$ 13,710
BigHearted Blooms	Yes	\$ 4,700
Blazing River Arts Group INC	Yes	\$ 4,700

Bodwin Theatre Company	Yes	\$ 3,760
BorderLight	85.4	\$ 16,045
Brecksville Theatre	89.5	\$ 16,815
Brite Cleveland	86.2	\$ 16,195
Brooklyn Heights Service Clubs	Yes	\$ 3,760
Carolyn L. Farrell Foundation	85.2	\$ 16,010
Case Western Reserve University	Yes	\$ 4,700
Cassidy Theatre		\$ 15,860
Catholic Charities Diocese of Cleveland	Yes	\$ 3,760
Cedar Fairmount Special Improvement District	Yes	\$ 3,760
Center for Employment Opportunities [†]		\$ 4,700
Cesear's Forum	Yes	\$ 3,760
Chagrin Arts		\$ 16,910
ChamberFest Cleveland		\$ 15,895
Choral Arts Cleveland		\$ 3,760
City Ballet of Cleveland		\$ 10,990
City Club of Cleveland	95.75	\$ 17,990
CityMusic Cleveland	84.8	\$ 15,935
Cleveland Arts Education Consortium*	Yes	\$ 4,700
Cleveland Arts Prize	89.5	\$ 9,670
Cleveland Chamber Choir	93.25	\$ 10,600
Cleveland Chamber Collective	Yes	\$ 3,760
Cleveland Chamber Music Society	91.25	\$ 17,145
Cleveland Composers Guild	Yes	\$ 4,700
Cleveland Contemporary Chinese Culture Association [†]		\$ 10,340
Cleveland Cultural Gardens	96	\$ 18,040
Cleveland Dance Project Company	Yes	\$ 4,700
Cleveland Inner City Ballet [†]	Yes	\$ 3,760
Cleveland Leadership Center	Yes	\$ 4,700
Cleveland Philharmonic Orchestra	Yes	\$ 3,760
Cleveland Photographic Workshop		\$ 4,700
Cleveland Rape Crisis Center	Yes	\$ 4,700
Cleveland Repertory Orchestra	Yes	\$ 4,700
Cleveland Rocks: Past Present and Future	93.75	\$ 17,615
Cleveland School of the Arts Board of Trustees	84	\$ 15,785
Cleveland Seed Bank	Yes	\$ 4,700
Cleveland Shakespeare Festival	Yes	\$ 3,760
Cleveland Silent Film Festival and Colloquium	Yes	\$ 4,230
Cleveland TOPS Swingband	Yes	\$ 3,760
Cleveland Treatment Center [†]	Yes	\$ 4,700
Cleveland Uncommon Sound Project	Yes	\$ 4,700
Cleveland Winds	Yes	\$ 3,760
Cleveland Women's Orchestra	Yes	\$ 3,760

Colors+ Youth Center	Yes	\$ 3,760
Comité Mexicano†	Yes	\$ 3,760
Community Cup Classic Foundation	Yes	\$ 3,760
Community Life Collaborative*	Yes	\$ 4,700
Connecting for Kids	Yes	\$ 4,700
convergence-continuum	86.4	\$ 16,235
Coventry PEACE Campus	Yes	\$ 3,760
Coventry Village Special Improvement District	Yes	\$ 4,700
Dance Evert	Yes	\$ 3,760
Dancing Classrooms Northeast Ohio		\$ 3,235
Darl Center for the Arts*	Yes	\$ 3,760
Deutscher Musik Verein	Yes	\$ 2,255
Diversity Center of Northeast Ohio	Yes	\$ 3,760
East Cleveland Farmers' Market Preservation Society	Yes	\$ 1,880
Edward E. Parker Museum of Art†	Yes	\$ 3,005
Empowering Epilepsy	Yes	\$ 4,700
Euclid Symphony Orchestra*	Yes	\$ 4,700
Far West Center	Yes	\$ 4,700
Fashion Talks Foundation*†	Yes	\$ 3,760
Folknet		\$ 3,760
Food Strong	Yes	\$ 4,700
Fostering Hope	Yes	\$ 4,700
Friends of the East Cleveland Public Library†	Yes	\$ 3,005
Friends of the McGaffin Carillon	85.75	\$ 8,760
From Me 2 U, Inc†	Yes	\$ 4,700
Front Steps Housing and Services	Yes	\$ 4,700
FrontLine Service	Yes	\$ 4,700
FutureHeights	Yes	\$ 4,700
Gardening in the District†	Yes	\$ 3,760
German Central	Yes	\$ 3,760
Golden Ciphers Youth Development & Cultural Arts Center†	Yes	\$ 3,760
Good Company A Vocal Ensemble		\$ 4,700
Graffiti HeArt Corporation		\$ 3,760
Greater Cleveland Film Commission		\$ 4,700
Greater Cleveland Neighborhood Centers Association	82.2	\$ 15,445
Harvard Community Services Center†	Yes	\$ 4,700
Haus of Transcendent*†	Yes	\$ 4,700
Heights Youth Theatre	81.6	\$ 15,330
Henry Johnson Center†	Yes	\$ 3,760
Hispanic Police Officers Association†	Yes	\$ 4,700
Historic Gateway Neighborhood Corporation	75.2	\$ 10,455
Hospice of the Western Reserve	92.4	\$ 15,915
In Harmony Therapeutic Services	84	\$ 15,785

India Fest USA [†]	Yes	\$ 3,760
InMotion	Yes	\$ 3,935
International Community Council-Worldwide Intercultural Network (ICC-WIN)	Yes	\$ 3,760
International Women's Air & Space Museum	Yes	\$ 3,005
Italian Cultural Garden	Yes	\$ 3,760
Jennings Center for Older Adults	82	\$ 15,405
Jewish Family Service Association of Cleveland Ohio	Yes	\$ 4,700
Jewish Federation of Cleveland	90.2	\$ 16,950
Jones Road Family Development Corporation [†]	88.5	\$ 16,630
Kings & Queens of Art [†]		\$ 3,760
Lakewood Young Filmmakers Academy	93.5	\$ 17,570
LakewoodAlive	Yes	\$ 4,700
Larchmere PorchFest	Yes	\$ 3,760
Les Délices	85.4	\$ 16,045
LGBT Community Center Greater Cleveland [†]	Yes	\$ 4,700
Little Italy Redevelopment Corporation	Yes	\$ 3,760
Little Lumpy's Center for Educational Initiatives [†]	85.8	\$ 16,120
M.U.S.i.C.		\$ 11,760
Maelstrom Collaborative Arts	88.75	\$ 15,010
Malachi Center	Yes	\$ 4,700
May Dugan Center	Yes	\$ 3,760
Midnight Art Club*	Yes	\$ 3,760
MidTown Cleveland		\$ 4,700
Music and Art at Trinity Cathedral	75.6	\$ 9,290
Naach Di Cleveland [†]		\$ 3,760
NAMI Greater Cleveland		\$ 4,700
Negative Space Gallery	Yes	\$ 4,700
New Avenues to Independence	Yes	\$ 3,190
No Exit	Yes	\$ 3,760
North Pointe Ballet		\$ 4,700
North Union Farmers Market	Yes	\$ 3,760
Northeast Ohio Hispanic Center for Economic Development [†]	80.8	\$ 6,790
Northeast Ohio Marathi Mandal* [†]	Yes	\$ 3,760
Northeast Ohio Musical Heritage Association	Yes	\$ 4,700
OCA Cleveland [†]	Yes	\$ 4,700
Oh Sew Powerful [†]	83.8	\$ 10,395
Ohio City Inc		\$ 4,700
Ohio Selfie World Foundation* [†]	Yes	\$ 3,760
Old Brooklyn Community Development Corporation		\$ 4,700
One South Euclid		\$ 4,700
Open Doors Academy	93.4	\$ 17,550
Open Tone Music [†]	88.6	\$ 16,645

Pakistani Cultural Garden [†]	Yes	\$ 3,760
PALS for Healing	85.75	\$ 16,110
Parma Area Fine Arts Council		\$ 3,760
Parma Symphony Orchestra*	Yes	\$ 3,760
Polish Village Parma		\$ 3,760
Praxis Fiber Workshop		\$ 16,835
Radio on the Lake Theatre		\$ 3,760
Re: Source Cleveland		\$ 15,555
Reaching Heights	Yes	\$ 3,760
Refresh Collective	88.6	\$ 16,645
Renovare Music	97.75	\$ 13,800
Restore Cleveland Hope Inc.	Yes	\$ 3,760
RhythmiCLE Sound Tap Company*	Yes	\$ 3,760
Ridna Shkola Cleveland		\$ 4,700
Roberto Ocasio Foundation	Yes	\$ 4,700
Rollin' Buckeye ^z [†]	Yes	\$ 4,700
Seat of the Pants*	Yes	\$ 4,700
Shaker Arts Council		\$ 3,760
Shore Cultural Centre		\$ 3,760
Slavic Village Development	Yes	\$ 4,700
SOS: Strengthening Our Students [†]	Yes	\$ 3,760
Spread the Love Foundation* [†]	Yes	\$ 4,700
Stellar Acrobatic Dance Academy [†]	Yes	\$ 4,700
Studio Institute	Yes	\$ 4,700
STV Bavaria		\$ 4,700
Suburban Symphony Orchestra	Yes	\$ 4,700
Talespinner Children's Theatre	93.2	\$ 17,510
Tender Hearts Crusades [†]	Yes	\$ 4,700
The Foundry		\$ 4,700
The Gathering Place	Yes	\$ 3,760
The Harvard Square Center [†]	Yes	\$ 3,760
The Land [†]	83.8	\$ 15,745
The Meeting Place Learning Center*	Yes	\$ 3,760
The Movement Project	86	\$ 16,160
Thea Bowman Center [†]	Yes	\$ 4,700
Tremont West Development Corporation	86.4	\$ 8,525
Trobár Medieval	Yes	\$ 4,700
Ukrainian Cultural Arts Association of Greater Cleveland	Yes	\$ 4,700
Union Miles Development Corporation [†]	Yes	\$ 3,005
University Circle Inc.	91.2	\$ 17,135
Upcycle Parts Shop		\$ 4,700
UpStage Players	Yes	\$ 4,700
Ursuline College		\$ 4,700

VIVA Bavaria	Yes	\$ 4,700
Waterloo Arts		\$ 17,210
West Park Kamm's Neighborhood Development	Yes	\$ 4,230
West Shore Chorale	81.4	\$ 8,655
West Side Catholic Center	Yes	\$ 4,700
West Side Community House [†]		\$ 16,960
Western Reserve Chorale	Yes	\$ 4,700
Western Reserve Fire Museum & Education Center	Yes	\$ 4,700
Western Reserve Land Conservancy	Yes	\$ 3,760
Westlake Chinese School [†]		\$ 3,760
Westown Community Development Corporation	Yes	\$ 3,760
Windsong, Cleveland's Feminist Chorus	Yes	\$ 4,700
Woodland Cemetery Foundation of Cleveland	Yes	\$ 3,760
Writers in Residence	93.2	\$ 8,755
YMCA of Greater Cleveland	Yes	\$ 4,700
Youth Challenge	Yes	\$ 4,700

[†] Indicates that the nonprofit self-identifies as a BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color)-led and serving organization

* Indicates a first-time Project Support grant recipient

6. GRANTEE CONNECT UPDATE

Director Paulsen and Mr. Sinatra provided updates on the continued progress to plan for CAC's future grantmaking, building off the summer Grantee Connect Series results (survey and grantee roundtables) which were presented at the September meeting. Progress over the last two months includes:

- **Issue 55 Passed:** Preliminary planning is bolstered by win, future of CAC funding secured through 2035.
- **Team Retreat:** Staff-led day of planning, team building, mapping out CAC's 2026 grant cycle.
- **Continued Listening:** Planning for continued grantee meetups, expanded site visits in 2025; 100+ site visits year-to-day conducted by team.
- **National Funder Scan Near Completion:** Conversations/data gathering with 10+ peer organizations nationwide, helping CAC learn and inform future planning.
- **Sharing Ideas for Discussion:** Building process summaries and discussion guides for Board and public, sharing what we learned and providing ideas for the new levy cycle.

Director Paulsen was asked what two key takeaways from this work are from the listening work, to date:

- There is confusion about CAC's role, which is to steward secured funds vs. securing additional funding.
- Nonprofits value and made clear the importance of ongoing and consistent operating support funding.

Board members also asked to spend time over the next year continuing to review key findings from the grantee survey and funder scan so that CAC can better understand national trends in community

engagement, innovative ideas, and determine ways CAC can engage nonprofits in planning for future grantmaking.

7. CONNECT WITH CULTURE

Project Support grant recipient Refresh Collective presented their work to the Board.

8. PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment.

The next meeting will be held at 3:30 pm on Wednesday, December 18, 2024.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Action: To adjourn the meeting:

Motion by – Trustee Vernaci

Seconded by – Trustee Blakemore

Vote to adjourn the meeting.

Ayes: all ayes

The meeting was adjourned at 5:05 pm.

Attest:

Leonard DiCosimo, Secretary, Board of Trustees