

**REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
MUSCATINE ART CENTER**

March 20, 2025

**Present:** Mark Latta, Aarzoo Baharani, David Meloy, Kathleen Haltmeyer, Mark Seaman, and Vince Lawson

**Present On-Line:** Sara Fitzer-Huston, Ann McCarthy, and Geri Kent

**Absent:**

**Staff:** Pat Carver, Katy Loos, and Virginia Cooper

**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order by Latta at 12:00 PM.

**Visitors Present:** Stephanie Romagnoli, Brian Walter, and Keith Porter.

**Visitors On-line:** Matthew Mardesen

Keith Porter was present to show his support and addressed the group reminding all about Dick and Mary Jo Stanley's long time wishes for this facility. He spoke about support for the architect and community support for the project.

Pat Carver spoke as a community and staff member showing her support of the Muscatine Art Center. She has spent 30 years supporting this institution and her belief in the mission for the future. She fully supports the plans for the future.

Virginia Cooper spoke about her 37 years at the Muscatine Art Center and this is the third time trying this project only to see it stopped by outside factors. She would like to see it move forward.

Brian Walter was present to show his support of the Muscatine Art Center and the building project.

**Minutes:** Minutes of the February 20, 2025, Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees were reviewed and discussed. Moved/seconded (Baharani/Haltmeyer) to approve the minutes. Motion carried.

Minutes of the January 29, 2025, Special Meeting of the Board of Trustees were reviewed and discussed. Moved/seconded (Meloy/Haltmeyer) to approve the minutes. Motion carried.

**Bills for Approval:** Bills in the amount of \$11,542.04 were presented, reviewed, and discussed. Moved/seconded (Kent/Haltmeyer) to approve the bills as presented. Motion carried.

**Credit Card for Approval:** A credit card in the amount of \$477.57 was presented, reviewed, and discussed. Moved/seconded (Seaman/Meloy) to approve the bills as presented. Motion carried.

**Credit Card for Approval:** A credit card in the amount of \$726.24 was presented, reviewed, and discussed. Moved/seconded (Seaman/Lawson) to approve the bills as presented. Motion carried.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Long-Range Planning:** There was a motion to table the discussion on the proposed agreement with the architectural firm until after the closed session by Meloy. Motion was seconded by Haltmeyer. Motion carried.

## **Finance & Budget:**

No report

## **Collections:**

Latta read the details of the ongoing transition to PastPerfect,

The Latta's delivered our Grant Wood, "The Bather" to the conservator in Ohio. We should be able to pick it up in September.

## **Building & Grounds:**

Weed removal in the Japanese Garden was discussed.

Haltmeyer commended Alexander on her presentation on the Japanese Garden at the Art of Gardening event at MCC on Saturday.

## **Community Engagement**

Alexander will present on the garden at the "Art of Gardening" at 9:30 a.m. on March 15<sup>th</sup> at Muscatine Community College. The Opening Reception for the "Art Array" Juried Exhibition organized by the Muscatine County Arts Council will be on March 20<sup>th</sup> from 5:00 to 6:30 p.m. CATurday returns on March 29<sup>th</sup>. The Mississippi River Collection will be featured during the April 12<sup>th</sup> Muscatine Symphony Orchestra concert at Wesley United Methodist Church. The concert begins at 7:00 p.m., and the Muscatine Art Center will host a pre-concert event starting at 4:00 p.m. with music by Bill Anson and Co.

This year's Preserve Iowa Summit (Iowa's historic preservation conference) will be held in Muscatine on June 5<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup>. Melanie Alexander will present on the garden at 9:30 a.m. on June 5<sup>th</sup>. The Muscatine Art Center will host the reception on the evening on June 5<sup>th</sup>. In addition to catered food, Ardon Creek Winery and Contrary Brewing will set up sample stations. Arrangements have been made for Contrary Brewing to create a special label beer with a working title of "Jim Burr's Historic Preservation Brew" to be sold in cans. There is also a "hop on, hop off bus" transporting participants from the National Pearl Button Museum to the Old Barn to the Art Center and back downtown from 4:00 to 5:30. The bus will stop in front of the Alexander Clark House and drive by Greenwood Cemetery. Pearl City Players is developing several characters from Muscatine's past to help share our local stories.

## **Personnel:**

Alexander traveled to St. Louis for the "Building Museums" conference and workshop in St. Louis on March 3 – 5, 2025. The full day workshop covered building project timelines, building project planning, establishing the project team, design, financial management, delivery methods for building projects (like CMAR compared to Design-Bid-Build). The workshop organizers have shared the 245 slides presented during the one-day workshop. Relevant slides will be compiled into a document and shared with the board.

Loos attended "Guidelines for Cleaning: Focus on Decorative Arts and Historic House Collections" workshop in Minneapolis on March 6 & 7. The class covered steps to identify the cleaning needs of specific objects and the best practices for cleaning and caring for each type of object, such as glass, silver, iron, textiles, and pottery. There was a focus on learning to identify the types of wear, corrosion, or damage that would typically be found in decorative arts and historic house collections and how to perform preventative measures for the collections.

**Director's Report:** In Packet

**Unfinished Business:**

A motion was made by Meloy to revisit the proposed agreement with BNIM at the end of the meeting. Motion was seconded by Kent. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Haltmeyer to go into a closed session meeting with potential action to follow. Motion was seconded by Lawson. This was followed by a roll call vote Meloy, yes; Lawson, yes; Latta, yes; Baharani, yes; Seaman, yes; Haltmeyer, yes; Fitzer-Huston, yes; McCarthy, yes; Kent, yes. Motion carried.

Closed Session meeting with potential action to follow.

After the closed session there was a motion to terminate the current director by Kent. It was seconded by Fitzer-Huston. This was followed by a roll call vote: Meloy, no; Lawson, no; Latta, no; Baharani, no; Seaman, no; Haltmeyer, no; Fitzer-Huston, yes; McCarthy, yes; Kent, yes. Motion failed.

A motion was made to move forward with the BNIM contract by Haltmeyer. It was seconded by Baharani. Motion carried with three dissenting votes from McCarthy, Kent, and Fitzer-Huston.

**New Business:**

Next Board meeting – April 17, 2025 at 12:00 P.M.

**Adjourn:**

Moved/seconded by (Meloy/Haltmeyer) to adjourn at 2:05 pm. The motion carried and the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Aarzo Baharani  
Secretary  
Muscatine Art Center Board of Trustees