

**Minutes  
Council Meeting  
October 5, 2023  
9:00 a.m.  
Virtual Meeting  
via Microsoft TEAMS**

**COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS:** Chair Parks, Mr. Alaquiva, Mr. Astorino, Senator Bartolotta, Mr. Gabel, Ms. Goldberg, Ms. Gunderson, Judge Morgan, Mr. Stull

**COUNCIL MEMBERS NOT PRESENT:** Representative Ciresi, Representative Labs, Ms. Vilayphonh, Mr. Warfield, Ms. Zaborney

**STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:** Karl Blischke, Executive Director; Heather Doughty, Deputy Executive Director; Christopher Duerr, Program Coordinator & Grants Specialist; Jamie Dunlap, Chief of Creative Catalysts & Lifelong Learning; Amy Gabriele, Chief of Finance & Administration; Norah Johnson, Director of Public Awareness & External Affairs; Laura Kline, Executive Assistant; Amanda Lovell, Director of Access to the Creative Sector; Sarah Merritt, Director of Creative Communities; Dana Payne, Director of DEI Initiatives, Diverse Cultures & Heritage; Seth Poppy, Director of Data Systems & Creative Services; and Ian Rosario, Director of Arts Organizations & Arts Programs & Grants Liaison

**GUESTS PRESENT:** Amber Sizemore, Chief Counsel; Samit Malik, the Executive Director of the South Asian American Digital Archive

**ITEM 1: CALL TO ORDER:** Karl Blischke welcomed those in attendance and informed them that the meeting would be recorded for the administrative purpose of minute taking. Mr. Blischke then turned the meeting over to Chair Parks.

**ROLL CALL:**

*Karl Blischke, Executive Director*

Mr. Blischke called the roll. A quorum was established.

**ITEM 2: REQUESTS FOR PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

Chair Parks asked if the PCA received any requests for public comments. There were no requests for public comment.

**CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

*Jeff Parks, Chair*

Chair Parks reminded the Council of the PCA's conflict of interest policy.

**ITEM 3 APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Chair Parks asked for a motion to approve the July 13, 2023, Council Meeting Minutes.

Judge Morgan made a motion to approve the minutes. Ms. Gunderson seconded the motion. Motion carried, none abstained or opposed.

Chair Parks asked for a motion to approve the minutes of September 23, 2023, Emergency Council Session. Parks explained that the meeting was to receive legal advice about litigation

and a public session for which there was one agenda item regarding litigation related to the use of PCA intellectual property.

Mr. Gabel made a motion to approve the minutes. Judge Morgan seconded the motion. Motion carried, none abstained or opposed.

**ITEM 4: Recommendations for Creative Catalyst Grants**

*Jamie Dunlap, Chief of Creative Catalysts & Lifelong Learning*

Chair Parks stated that he is aware of the following conflict of interest: Senator Bartolotta for the Greater Pittsburgh Office of Promotion dba Pittsburgh Film Office – Allegheny County.

Ms. Dunlap provided the following PCA staff recommendations for Creative Catalyst support:

**Applicant:** Lehigh University Zoellner Arts Center – Northampton County      **Proposal:** 2023 Pennsylvania Arts and Humanities Statewide Convening

Ms. Dunlap stated that this organization is requesting support for the 2023 Pennsylvania Arts and Humanities statewide convening, which will be taking place at Lehigh University on November 1st. Dunlap explained that this is an event that is being organized by the Zoellner Arts Center, but hosted by Senator Bob Casey, and added that it is about convening arts and humanities organizations, leaders, artists from across the state to discuss issues of importance and relevance related to the arts sector.

Ms. Dunlap stated that this will be a one-day event, and they are hoping to have 300 to 400 people in attendance and that registration for this event is totally free.

Ms. Dunlap stated that the organization has made a request for \$7,500 and the PCA staff recommendation is \$7,500.

**Applicant:** Prima Arts Inc. – Lancaster County      **Proposal:** The Great List

Ms. Dunlap stated that Prima Arts, located in Lancaster County, is a performing arts organization and theater group that is requesting support for a project called the “Great List.”

Ms. Dunlap explained that the Great List is a program that is focused on dismantling barriers to access to the performing arts. Ms. Dunlap stated that this idea is inspired by some work that's happening at the Massachusetts Arts Council and is about leveraging their partnership with local human service organizations to directly engage underserved groups in the region that they serve.

Ms. Dunlap stated that the organization has made a request for \$10,000 and the PCA staff recommendation is \$10,000.

**Applicant:** Greater Pittsburgh Office of Promotion dba Pittsburgh Film Office – Allegheny County      **Proposal:** CREATE PA: Marketing Program

Ms. Dunlap stated that the Greater Pittsburgh Office of Promotion, doing business as the Pittsburgh Film Office, has proposed a new initiative in the Pittsburgh region called CREATE PA.

Dunlap explained that CREATE PA is a partnership between the Pittsburgh Film Office and the Pittsburgh Public Theater, and is about attracting, developing, and retaining talent in the film and theater industry in the Pittsburgh region. Ms. Dunlap added that its focus is about the behind-the-scenes jobs that are related to theater and film, such as carpenters, grips, hair, and makeup.

Dunlap stated that currently, this program is not yet statewide; however, there is a hope for it to become statewide. Ms. Dunlap explained that currently, the program is focused on the Southwest region and that this organization is requesting support for marketing and promotion for that region of the state, which includes 10 counties that are served by Pittsburgh.

Ms. Dunlap reported that the request is for a marketing campaign for Create PA. She explained that there would be a website developed that would serve as the home for data relating to the initiative and it would be shared and promoted throughout the Southwest region with the intent to take it statewide over the next few years.

Ms. Dunlap stated that the organization has made a request for \$50,000 and the PCA staff recommendation is \$30,000.

Ms. Gunderson asked if the Pittsburgh Film Office has been made aware of the lower grant amount. Ms. Dunlap stated that they are aware and added that they are still able to advance the project with the reduced amount.

**Applicant:** Bloomfield Garfield Corp. **Proposal:** Artists Taking Care of Artists (BOOM Concepts) – Allegheny County

Ms. Dunlap stated that Bloomfield Garfield Court, doing business as Boom Concepts, is an organization from Allegheny County that is requesting support for a project called Artists Taking Care of Artists (ATCA).

Ms. Dunlap stated that this program is already established as Boom Concepts, and the organization wants to expand beyond the Garfield neighborhood in Pittsburgh (Allegheny County) to five counties in Southwestern PA.

Ms. Dunlap explained that this is a program about connecting peer-to-peer mentorship for artists, where there is an environment created and experiences and training about fostering learning and collaboration among the artists.

Ms. Dunlap stated that this organization is looking to do this through regional partnerships that they have established with groups such as the Greater Pittsburgh Arts Council, the Office of Public Art, and the Arts Education Collaborative. Dunlap stated that the

organization plans to use those relationships to connect with artists and practitioners from across a five-county region.

Ms. Dunlap stated that this program will be offered digitally and in person and explained that there will be options for both. She added that all sessions will also be recorded and shared. The program will run in March, May, July, and September of 2024.

Ms. Dunlap stated that the organization has made a request for \$5,000 and the PCA staff recommendation is \$5,000.

Judge Morgan asked how many people are involved in the Artists Taking Care of Artists program.

Ms. Dunlap stated that she thinks it will be a larger number than they currently are serving, especially because they are going to be providing options of virtual or in person.

Chair Parks indicated that there will be two votes taken for this action item.

Parks asked for a motion to approve all of the Creative Catalyst recommendations, excluding the Greater Pittsburgh Office of Promotion, which will be the second vote.

Ms. Goldberg made a motion to approve the recommendations. Senator Bartolotta seconded the motion. Motion carried, none abstained or opposed.

Chair Parks then asked for a motion to approve the recommendation for the grant with which Senator Bartolotta has a conflict of interest. Parks asked to let the record show that Senator Bartolotta did not make this motion, second this motion, participate in any discussion on this motion or vote on this motion.

Judge Morgan made a motion to approve the recommendations. Ms. Gunderson seconded the motion. Motion carried, none abstained or opposed.

**ITEM 5 ACTION: Recommendation for Folk and Traditional Arts Apprenticeship Program**

*Dana Payne, Director of DEI Initiatives, Diverse Cultures & Heritage*

Dana Payne reported that in July, she presented a list of 30 master artist apprentice pairs to Council for funding for the Folk and Traditional Arts Apprenticeship Program.

Ms. Payne stated that Council reviewed and approved those apprenticeship projects and indicated that one apprenticeship project was left off of the recommendation list.

Ms. Payne stated that she is presenting this additional project to Council to review and approve for funding in the amount of \$4,000. Ms. Payne added that this will be an increase in the total apprenticeship recommendation, from \$106,417 to \$110,417.

Chair Parks asked if there were any questions. Hearing none, Chair Parks asked for a motion to approve this recommendation.

Vice Chair Gabel made a motion to approve the recommendation. Ms. Goldberg seconded the motion. Motion carried, none abstained or opposed.

**ITEM 6 ACTION: Recommendations for Preserving Diverse Cultures – Strategies for Success Transitions to Arts Organizations & Arts Programs**

*Dana Payne, Director of DEI Initiatives, Diverse Cultures & Heritage*

Ms. Payne stated this is a recommendation for three organizations that participated in the Preserving Diverse Cultures Division Strategies for Success program to transition to PCA's Arts Organization and Arts Partners (AOAP) program.

Ms. Payne explained that Strategies for Success is a multi-year, multi-level capacity building program and added that it is a participatory program where organizations go through the different levels and can remain in that program to receive funding, consultancy and other types of resources and support for up to 11 years.

Ms. Payne stated that a primary goal of the program is that participating organizations progress and achieve a level of sustainability that positions them competitively in higher-level regional and national funding arenas. Ms. Payne reported that this year, PCA has three organizations that are being presenting to Council to transition to AOAP: the Spanish American Civic Association for Equality in Lancaster, the South Asian American Digital Archive in Philadelphia, and 12 Gates Arts in Philadelphia.

Ms. Payne reported that the recommendation is that the Council approve the transition of these three organizations to AOAP.

Chair Parks asked the Council for any additional questions. Hearing none, Chair Parks asked for a motion to approve the recommendation.

Vice Chair Gabel made a motion to approve the recommendations. Mr. Alaquiva seconded the motion. Motion carried, none abstained or opposed.

**ITEM 7 INFORMATION: Presentation by The South Asian American Digital Archives (SAADA)**

Ms. Payne introduced Samit Malik, the Executive Director of the South Asian American Digital Archive, and stated that this organization is one of the organizations that has participated in Strategies for Success. Ms. Payne explained that during PCA's last Council meeting, Vice Chair Gabel asked for an example of a successful organization that participates in the program.

Ms. Malik introduced himself to Council and stated that he is the cofounder and Executive Director of the South Asian American Digital Archive (SAADA), based in Philadelphia. Mr. Malik provided a presentation about the organization and explained how important the Strategies for Success program has been in providing support for their work over the past 15 years as an organization.

Mr. Malik provided an overview of the organization and explained that they currently have an annual revenue of more than \$1,000,000 per year as an organization, a full-time staff of 6 and thousands of supporters across the state, and even more across the country.

Mr. Malik explained that when SAADA was started 15 years ago, it was an entirely volunteer run organization and added that early on, its budget was basically \$300 a year, which was contributed by each of its founding board members.

Mr. Malik reported that as SAADA began growing, they came across the PCA and Ms. Payne, through an information session that she presented in Philadelphia many years ago. Malik stated that he met with Ms. Payne and applied for support from the Strategies for Success program, initially in the intermediate stream and eventually moving into the advanced stream.

Mr. Malik stated that the support from PCA has been instrumental and important to the trajectory of SAADA and explained that the Strategies for Success program allowed their organization to advance from an all-volunteer organization to a fully staffed organization. Mr. Malik explained that because of support from strategies for Success, SAADA has also now been able to secure investments from other foundations such as the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, which made a \$1 million investment. He added that last year, SAADA was named a Philadelphia Cultural Treasure by the Ford Foundation through the America's Cultural Treasures program.

Mr. Malik then shared an example of one of the programs that PCA supports, which is called Revolution Remix, a walking tour of Philadelphia through the lens of South Asian American history. Mr. Malik explained that this is a tour that starts at the Liberty Bell and winds its way around Old City and shares stories of South Asian Americans in those spaces from the 1780s all the way up to the present day.

Mr. Malik concluded his presentation by thanking PCA for believing in the work that SAADA does and Ms. Payne personally for being such an incredible ally for SAADA and for its work over the past many years.

Mr. Gabel thanked Mr. Malik for the presentation. He asked Mr. Malik to share more about the strategic artistic partnerships that SAADA might have in the Philadelphia and beyond area.

Mr. Malik explained that as an organization, SAADA's work is fairly multifaceted, and they work predominantly through collaborations with artists, scholars, filmmakers, journalists and individual artists.

As an example, Malik stated that for the Revolution Remix walking tour, SAADA actually partnered with five South Asian American musicians to create a soundtrack for the tour. He explained that now, participants on the tour also listen to original compositions that have been composed and recorded in response to the stories on the tours.

Mr. Malik reported that SAADA also received Creative Catalyst support recently for another project, the First Day's Project, where SAADA collects and shares stories from immigrants and refugees about their very first experiences in the United States. Mr. Malik added that SAADA will be taking the First Day's project now with Creative Catalyst support across the state.

Vice Chair Gabel congratulated SAADA on its growth and stability.

Chair Parks stated that there is a very robust South Asian community in the Lehigh Valley, and they have contributed much to our culture and our economy.

### **ITEM 8: Discussion Regarding Current Landscape and Trends in the Arts in Preparation for Strategic Planning**

*Karl Blischke, Executive Director & Heather Doughty, Deputy Executive Director*

Mr. Blischke reported that Council will be heading into the last year of its strategic plan and will have the opportunity to evaluate what happened in the current strategic plan. Blischke added that today's discussion is an opportunity to lay early groundwork as Council moves into 2024.

Mr. Blischke stated that the first item to cover is the current creative sector landscape.

Mr. Blischke stated that PCA staff are seeing mixed reports and mixed data from media, surveys, and individual conversations about the state of creative sector.

Mr. Blischke listed some of the major themes that are being seen in this landscape:

1. Audience Behavior: Mr. Blischke said that on average audience participation has yet to fully recover to 2019 levels.
2. Relevancy of the work in the arts and the artistic products: Mr. Blischke stated that a lot of organizations are asking themselves if what has always been done is still relevant and he wonders how the creative sector can be most relevant and engaging to an audience.
3. Increased cost: Mr. Blischke stated that inflation is a big factor and the cost of everything including producing, staffing, operating is way up. He added that in reaction to that, PCA staff are seeing a reduction in the number of events that that are taking place.
4. Changes in funding priorities of major foundations and other grant-makers: Mr. Blischke reported that many funders are prioritizing community stability and well-being.
5. The Funding Cliff: Mr. Blischke stated that there was a lot of attention given to live art events during the pandemic. There were substantial interventions, but those interventions are coming to an end. Mr. Blischke reported that he had mentioned changes in funding priorities from foundations and individual donors, and these changes are leading certain organizations to a funding cliff.

Blischke stated that there are interesting things happening in response to some of these themes. Blischke added that there is an effort underway at the federal level to provide funding for nonprofit theaters, which is one area that PCA staff has seen especially impacted in terms of costs and audience behavior. Mr. Blischke stated that there are conversations happening in Southeast Pennsylvania about establishing a regional fund for the creative sector.

Ms. Doughty provided some data points on the funding cliff and also reviewed a variety of arts sector information in order to provide Council with more insight into what is being seen regarding sector health. Doughty reported that there is both good news and bad news. She reported that her focus was going to be on the numbers, so it would tilt the story to the bad news, but PCA staff is watching and has been collecting data as it has gone along.

Ms. Doughty explained the data points and observations came from a wide range of sources including GivingUSA, SMU DataArts, the American Alliance of Museums (AAM), Theatre Communications Group (TCG), and others and stated that some of these were studies, some were surveys.

Ms. Doughty indicated the variety of sources and some differences in the fiscal years being reviewed meant the numbers were not always going to line up.

She grouped the information under four headlines and provided an overview of each of these areas:

1. **Dwindling Audiences & Earned Revenue:** Ms. Doughty stated that AAM reports that one-third of 300 responding museums have rebounded to pre-pandemic audience levels. She reported that 2/3 continue to experience reduced attendance, averaging 71%. She indicated that a recent study of performing arts recovery (US, UK & Canada) organized by genre (ballet, performing arts centers (PACs), classical music, theatre), found ballet and PACs had done best, theatre worst, and classical music in between. She indicated that the biggest reality was the sooner organizations could resume live performances and encourage customers to return, the sooner revenues and behaviors rebounded.

Ms. Doughty stated that a new study of the arts in Chicago (urban) by SMU DataArts showed in-person attendance down, depending on the type of organization -- 60% for performing arts, 73% for other arts and cultural (includes arts education, community-based arts, media), 14% for museums. As a result, Ms. Doughty stated that earned revenue was 46% lower overall. (Doughty added that PCA staff has heard informally from suburban theatres in the Greater Philadelphia region, that they're doing better than those in the city.)

Ms. Doughty indicated that many grantees are trying out new models for pricing, packaging, programmatic offerings, and location of programming (often new locations are outdoors – and PCA staff has seen a few grantees build permanent outdoor venues). Doughty stated that others, such as Pittsburgh Symphony (PSO), have created unique event atmospheres and encouraged casual dress (including their musicians). She explained that “PSO Disrupt” has done all this and more, resulting in younger audiences and ending the season with 20 straight concerts at 80% or more of its 2,676 seats, after raising ticket prices for the first time in 7 years.

2. **Increasing Costs:** Ms. Doughty reported that dramatically rising costs and less buying power due to inflation have depleted cash reserves and led to organizational resets. Doughty indicated that Opera Philadelphia announced the reduction of their

next season's budget by 20% and the postponement of an announced production until the next season. She added that in each of their last 2 fiscal years they incurred operating deficits of more than \$800,000.

Ms. Doughty stated that across the board, numbers of long-term subscribers and museum members are down – some attribute this to age or changed habits. This loss of relational audiences who pre-buy tickets and commit to performance dates has delayed upfront available funds and increased costs for marketing (to fill seats).

Doughty indicated that in Chicago, in response to increased costs and decreased revenues, budget reductions were mainly achieved through cutbacks in the scale and number of programmatic offerings. This translated into nearly 2/3 fewer programs than before pandemic.

3. **Workforce & Leadership Change:** Ms. Doughty reported that nationally, 26% of museums have not recovered to pre-pandemic staffing levels. Of museums recruiting for job openings, 60% report trouble filling open positions, primarily in front line roles.

Ms. Doughty indicated that this has led to museums improving staff compensation packages and working conditions, including half of respondents who have shrunk the gap between their institution's highest and lowest salaries, 50% have launched new programs to enhance staff wellness.

Doughty explained that for context U.S. L&I – figures show average weekly earnings for museum sector employees are almost 20% lower than the average U.S. worker. Performing arts company employees trail by 33%.

Ms. Doughty stated that a number of PCA grantees have reported challenges in hiring and retaining staff (especially development/fundraising staff). Staff turnover in our decentralized partnerships has been high and learning curves steep.

Doughty added that many organizations statewide have gone through recent leadership changes – some in the natural course of things and not pandemic-related. In Pittsburgh they have new leaders at Pittsburgh Ballet, Pittsburgh Cultural Trust, GPAC, Kelly-Strayhorn, Silver Eye Center for Photography, Pittsburgh Public Theater, and still others have announced upcoming departures of longtime leaders). She stated that the new leaders are experienced, young, and diverse, bringing new perspectives to the challenges.

4. **Private and Public Funding and the Funding Cliff:** Ms. Doughty reported that on average, foundation support diminished by 20% (not including the end of relief funding programs). Doughty stated that the big question will be where foundation support will be focused in going forward. She observed that Federal relief programs kept many organizations afloat during the pandemic and saved jobs in the arts, fulfilling their intended purpose.

Ms. Doughty stated that a TCG survey reported 97% of responding theaters applied for and received at least one form of federal relief funds such as: Payroll Protection Program (PPP), Employee Retention Tax Credits, CARES Act, American Rescue Plan, Economic Injury Disaster Loan Program, and the \$15 billion Shuttered Venue Operators Grants (SVOG).

Doughty reported that 88% of museums received a PPP loan, citing it as “very important/they would not have survived without it”. Doughty explained that the vast majority of relief funds – both foundation and federal – have now run out. “The Funding Cliff.”

Ms. Doughty stated that it has been observed by members of the sector that the duration of relief funds has not matched the slower rebuild and return experienced by most arts organizations, particularly theatres. She added that the story of the challenges being faced by theatres made national news in July and August – the NYT, Washington Post, The Guardian (UK) and American Theatre Magazine, all covered it in depth. Op Eds and Blog posts describing the situation followed.

Doughty indicated that Mr. Blischke mentioned proposed federal legislation to address the “crisis facing the American theater industry.”

- Lin-Manuel Miranda and Phylicia Rashad joined nonprofit regional theater leaders in Washington last week to advocate for \$500 million in grant assistance annually to nonprofit theaters for five years.
- The proposed legislation is called the Supporting Theater and Generating Economic Activity Act (known as the STAGE Act).

Mr. Blischke thanked Ms. Doughty for her report and stated that follow-up information will be sent to Council following the meeting.

Blischke reported that there are some very exciting programs and organizations that are doing very well, while others are struggling. Blischke stated that the next part of this discussion is to review some of the current trends and what council might consider as PCA goes into 2024 and a planning process.

Mr. Blischke stated that Council is already a bit ahead of the curve in terms of trends focusing on communities and place.

Blischke stated that over the longer term, the creative sector is likely to be a key driver for place and economic growth and this increasingly is causing local governments to think about policy in support of the creative sector.

Mr. Blischke indicated that this trend is the emergence of creative sector strategies for governments of all kinds. He stated that PCA staff has observed that there is a growing global interest in the future of the creative sector and the creative economy.

Mr. Blischke indicated that PCA staff has seen a number of compelling examples where governments have raised creative industries as a target industry and developed significant policy and efforts towards community and economic development through the creative sector. Mr. Blischke stated that in the UK, their measures are very specific, and they are promoting investment in policies in the creative sector in terms of innovative technologies, regional clusters, exports, and creative careers.

Mr. Blischke reported that another example that is very compelling is Calgary in Alberta, Canada, which has embedded the creative sector into their plans.

Mr. Blischke reported that one of the plans he will be providing to Council to start having this conversation is Calgary's plan. He stated that what stands out to him is how it is so embedded in Calgary's idea of place and their strategy going forward.

Mr. Blischke presented a video about Calgary's creative sector as an example of how the creative sector is integrated into a local government's place-based plan.

Mr. Blischke stated that quality of place is a differentiator and where PCA can be helpful to communities. Blischke stressed the importance of supporting the ambitions and the aspirations of Pennsylvania's communities and added that it is something that Council can evaluate and talk more about. He stated that this will be food for thought and early groundwork as the Council thinks about what PCA can be as a state arts agency to lead and to help Pennsylvania be a place where people want to be and to help Pennsylvania be competitive.

Several Council members thanked Mr. Blischke for the presentation and stated that they enjoyed the video. Mr. Alaquiva stated that digital production, film production, design, and fashion is a place where Pennsylvania can be competitive and stated that he thinks that the Calgary video highlighted a quality of place that included those factors. Mr. Alaquiva stated that he would like to have PCA's plan support what he thinks are industry areas that will be growing and that these are ultimately things that benefit the local communities.

Senator Bartolotta stated that she created the first film industry caucus in the Senate and has been on the Pittsburgh Film Office Board for quite some time. She indicated that her history is in film and television in the Los Angeles area where she grew up and stated that she has been experiencing difficulty trying to expand the film tax credit in Pennsylvania. She explained that it has been difficult to try to convince legislators that this is not a handout but is an investment in real jobs, real workforce development, real training and an industry that brings in billions of dollars to Pennsylvania. She added that the film tax credit has opened the door for a potential year-round industry.

Chair Parks commented that there has been a huge shift in the digital and electronic arts. Parks stated that PCA should make the residents of Pennsylvania more aware of digital technologies and the arts and creativity that are involved.

## **ITEM 9 Chair's Report**

Chair Parks stated that Lehigh University is hosting the Pennsylvania Arts and Humanities statewide convening on November 1<sup>st</sup> and that if any Council members are

interested in attending, they should reach out to Mr. Blischke.

Chair Parks stated that in mid-October, episodes for season two of PCA's PRISM podcast will be released. Parks indicated that the first two episodes highlight workforce development in the Pop District of Pittsburgh and the development of the Overton district in Chester.

Chair Parks reported that Rock Nation selected Emmai Alaquiva as a collaborator on the 40,000 square foot exhibition dedicated to Jay-Z and his influence on hip hop culture that was displayed in the Brooklyn Public Library.

Mr. Alaquiva stated that the exhibition has been extended until December 4th, which is Jay-Z's birthday. Alaquiva added that it has been outstanding to be able to work with Rock Nation and to be one of their newest cinematographers and directors.

Chair Parks reported that Susan Goldberg and PCA staff member Amy Gabriel recently visited Jefferson Hospital in Philadelphia to see the Music Therapy for Healthcare Workers program that was started at the beginning of the pandemic through the Hospital and Healthcare Association of Pennsylvania. Parks explained that the purpose of the visit was to hear about the impact of the program on staff and to see the music therapists at work.

Ms. Goldberg thanked PCA for the opportunity to visit the special music therapy program for Jefferson's healthcare workers, which is a project that was supported by PCA. Ms. Goldberg explained that this program was of considerable public interest during the COVID pandemic, and that the program addressed the strain and the mental pressure that was experienced by healthcare workers that were serving on the front lines.

Ms. Goldberg provided an overview of what she witnessed at this program and stated that the effect of this program is something that PCA can be proud of.

Chair Parks congratulated Sarah Merritt, who recently completed the Community Economic Development Professional Certificate program from Neighborhood Works America. Parks added that Ms. Merritt is working diligently on PCA's Creative Communities program.

Chair Parks congratulated Ms. Payne on the work she has done. Parks reported that the Commonwealth released a report saying that the expected growth rate for Pennsylvania is 1.6% between now and 2050. Parks stated that one of the things that has not been done in Pennsylvania well enough is to create a welcoming environment for new Americans, wherever they come from. Parks explained that it's really time as we look at helping Pennsylvania in its future community and economic growth understand these opportunities and see what we can do through the arts.

#### **ITEM 10: Executive Director's Report**

Mr. Blischke reported that PCA staff has been busy over the last couple weeks visiting the creative communities that PCA is supporting. Blischke stated that over the last couple weeks PCA staff announced creative communities projects in Kane, PA, North Braddock, PA, Brownsville, PA and Butler, PA. Blischke reported that each event had community turn-out and representation from local government officials who see the long-term commitment by the Council towards the Creative Communities Initiative grants that they have received as

important. Mr. Blischke added that these communities see their place-based strategies involving the arts. Mr. Blischke stated that there will be more community announcements this fall.

Blischke thanked PCA staff and announced that Chris Duerr is integrating into PCA programs and will be helping those that are filing for their grants payments. Mr. Blischke explained that Mr. Duerr will now be helping Mr. Rosario and Ms. Merritt with their programs as well.

Mr. Blischke reported that the Administration has announced that they are creating a state economic development plan, which has not happened for a couple of decades. Blischke stated PCA goals and strategies can be part of this state economic development plan, especially efforts to promote quality of place.

Meeting Adjourned at 10:32 am.