

MINUTES
Iowa Arts Council
Board Meeting
June 19, 2025
11:00 a.m.
Marshall County Arts + Culture Alliance Offices
126 W Main Street, Marshalltown, Iowa 50158

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

- Gerald Brown
- Jake Brus
- Suzanne Conquest (virtual)
- Amber Danielson, Chair
- Tim Dickmeyer (virtual)
- Donna Dostal, Vice Chair
- Lance Ehmcke (virtual)
- Bruce Miller
- Akwi Nji
- Heather Perry
- Claudia Rivera (virtual)
- Shannon Rodriguez (virtual)
- Adam Spiegel (virtual)
- Frank Sposeto

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

- | | | |
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| Elizabeth Ferreira | Brooke Rogers (virtual) | Chris West (virtual) |
| Rick Peterson | David Schmitz | |

OTHERS PRESENT:

- | | |
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| Lindsay Bauer – Fairfield Arts and Convention Center and
Iowa Cultural Coalition (virtual) | Katie Hughes - NASAA (virtual) |
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CALL TO ORDER

- Welcome
Iowa Arts Council (IAC) Board Chair Amber Danielson called to order the meeting of the IAC Board at 11:05 a.m.
- Roll Call
A quorum of the IEDA Board was established with the following Board members present: Gerald Brown, Jake Brus, Suzanne Conquest, Amber Danielson, Tim Dickmeyer, Donna Dostal, Lance Ehmcke, Akwi Nji, Heather Perry, Claudia Rivera, Shannon Rodriguez, Adam Spiegel, and Frank Sposeto.

Bruce Miller joined the meeting after lunch, at 1:38 p.m.

Approval of Minutes – April 3, 2025 IAC Meeting

MOTION: Donna Dostal moved that the IAC Board approve the minutes of the April 3, 2025 IAC Board meeting, seconded by Frank Sposeto. Motion carried unanimously.

CONSENT AGENDA

Chair Amber Danielson encouraged IAC Board members to review the Consent Agenda items and reach out to Iowa Arts Council staff with questions.

REPORT FROM CHAIR

Chair Amber Danielson welcomed the group to Marshalltown and the Marshall County Arts + Culture Alliance offices.

Danielson thanked Board members for their recent engagement through Board task forces, grant application review panels, the Regional Arts Forums, the Governor's Arts Awards ceremony, the Iowa Creative Places Exchange, and the Iowa Fine Arts Education Summit.

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF STATE ARTS AGENCIES (NASAA) VIRTUAL UPDATE

Katie Hughes of the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (NASAA) shared an overview of NASAA's roles, providing knowledge, representation, and community for State Arts Agencies. She also shared some of NASAA's key resources, including those for State Arts Agency Board Members.

Hughes noted several ways the Iowa Arts Council engages with NASAA, including IAC programs featured in NASAA's recent publications, IAC staff service on NASAA committees, and partnering with NASAA to host the upcoming Arts Education Manager Professional Development Institute (PDI) in Des Moines, September 16-18 of this year.

ARTS COUNCIL DIRECTOR'S REPORT

David Schmitz shared recent program highlights, including brief recaps of the Iowa Creative Places Exchange, the Iowa Fine Arts Education Summit, and the Iowa Arts Council's capacity building programs.

Schmitz then provided an overview of Legislative and Code updates, focusing on the recently passed IEDA Technical Bill (SF1106). This bill includes several updates to Code for the Iowa Arts Council, including the establishment of one, all-encompassing Arts and Culture Enhancement Fund and elimination of multiple, smaller funding lines and 'legacy' programs. The changes also update governing requirements for the IAC Board of Directors. Schmitz noted the goals of these updates were to maximize the impact of Arts Council grant funding by streamlining programs and increasing average award size, while also strengthening access to IAC resources through regional partnerships.

Schmitz also highlighted the upcoming Rules review, which was driven by an Executive Order from the Governor aimed at reducing "red tape" within the State government. This review will occur over the next several months and will include a period for public comment.

Schmitz then shared a brief recap of this spring's Regional Arts Forums and highlighted their role as precursors to the Statewide Arts Caucus, which will take place Friday, August 8th at the IEDA offices in Des Moines. The Statewide Arts Caucus will bring together representatives from each regional forum to report on priorities from their regions and make recommendations to the IAC and IEDA on the agencies' priorities for arts and culture in the state. Schmitz highlighted several anticipated topics for the Arts Caucus, such as the IAC partnering with other IEDA departments and the Iowa Cultural Coalition to address needs and moving from IAC-produced statewide arts convenings to more focused and curated gatherings and IAC staff presenting at other conferences.

Board Discussion focused on the perceived contraction of IAC programming and the desire to maintain accessibility to IAC programs within the constraints of capacity and resources. Regional partners were highlighted as a potential solution, with further discussion planned after the lunch break.

Last, Schmitz highlighted recently passed Legislation establishing a pilot film rebate program with a cap of \$4 million. Details of this new program are still being developed, and more information will be shared at the next Board meeting in September.

LUNCH BREAK

The Board took a break for lunch at 12:08 a.m. and resumed work at 1:38 p.m.

Board member Bruce Miller and IAC staff member Brooke Rogers joined the meeting after lunch.

Board members Suzanne Conquest, Shannon Rodriguez, and Adam Spiegel and IEDA staff member Rick Peterson and did not rejoin the meeting following the lunch break.

BOARD TASK FORCE UPDATES

Board member Gerald Brown and IAC Arts Program Coordinator Brooke Rogers provided an update from the Folk and Traditional Arts Task Force, including an overview of the spring round of grant applications for the newly relaunched Folk and Traditional Arts Apprenticeship Program, from which eight applicants were recommended for funding. They also noted strategies to engage more folk and traditional artists through regional partners and highlighted the ongoing need for grant application support and training to expand accessibility for this program and many other IAC programs with new and infrequent applicants.

Board members Donna Dostal, Frank Sposeto, and Akwi Nji provided an update from the Creative Economy Task Force, which focuses on the intersection of the arts and culture and economic development. They highlighted the potential to leverage connections, building on points of value alignment with industry leaders and local communities. They also noted the important role of regional cultural ambassadors and the need to tailor language and messaging to the goals and values of target audiences.

IOWA ARTS CAUCUS PREVIEW & BOARD DISCUSSION

David Schmitz provided an overview of the IAC's FY2026 budget and proposed funding allocations across existing program areas including Creative Community Development and Art Project Grants. Schmitz highlighted special federal funding for projects related to Arts and Wellness and America250.

Schmitz then outlined a new initiative to increase access to IAC funding across the state through regional arts partners, which is in very early stages of development. Board discussion around the pros and cons of the regional strategy noted the potential for stronger local awareness and engagement, offset by the need to avoid biases and blind spots. Several different types of regional partners were proposed, including both arts and non-arts focused organizations.

STRATEGIC STATE ARTS PLAN REVIEW AND KICKOFF TO UPDATING PLAN

David Schmitz reviewed the purpose of the Strategic State Arts Plan and shared an update on progress toward the goals of the current, 2022-2026 Strategic Plan, including Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). Schmitz also highlighted the recently published Iowa Tourism Office and Iowa Arts Council 2024 Joint Annual Report.

Schmitz then outlined the process for developing the next (2027-2030) Strategic State Arts Plan with a target delivery date of March 2026. To meet this goal, the Board Strategic Planning Task Force will be convened in August and will engage the expertise of our partners at NASAA while also leveraging recent public input including legislative direction and input collected through the Regional Arts Forums, Create in Iowa Report, and several other statewide surveys.

Chair Amber Danielson proposed three key questions to the Board:

1. What do you hope we learn from this process? *What should we know that we don't know currently?* (Learning)
2. How would you like to see our organization grow over the next three years? (Growth)
3. What does success look like to you? (Outcomes)

Board discussion took place around several topics, including:

- The key role of partnerships, leveraging existing work being done at other state agencies while maintaining the distinct identity of the IAC.
- The importance of language as a tool to make art more accessible and inclusive; helping communities tell the story of what they value and how they want to be represented, while celebrating/amplifying what is already there.
- Alignment with Legislative priorities.
- Strategies to reach different audiences; understanding where they are getting information.
- The need to focus and prioritize to align goals with resources, keeping the best of existing programs while taking advantage of the opportunity to innovate for the future.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

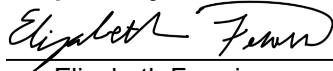
No comments were made.

OTHER BUSINESS

The next IAC Board meeting will be held on Thursday, September 18, 2025 at 10:00 a.m. at the IEDA Offices in Des Moines.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the IAC, the chair adjourned the meeting at 3:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Elizabeth Ferreira
Board Administrator

Approved as to form:

Amber Danielson (Sep 18, 2025 15:54:17 CDT)

Amber Danielson
Chair