

MINUTES
Iowa Arts Council
Board Meeting
September 18, 2025
10:00 a.m.

1963 Bell Avenue, Suite 200 – Helmick Conference Room

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

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

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

Akwi Nji

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Jon Berg
Elizabeth Ferreira
Molly Lopez
Rick Peterson
David Schmitz
Chris West (virtual)

OTHERS PRESENT:**CALL TO ORDER**

- Welcome
Iowa Arts Council (IAC) Board Chair Amber Danielson called to order the meeting of the IAC Board at 10:02 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, Bruce Miller, Heather Perry, Claudia Rivera, Shannon Rodriguez, Adam Spiegel, and Frank Sposeto.

Approval of Minutes – June 19, 2025 IAC Meeting

MOTION: Donna Dostal moved that the IAC Board approve the minutes of the June 19, 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 thanked the group for visiting Marshalltown for the June Board Retreat and highlighted the strong recent engagement from the Board through task forces, grant panels, and statewide events.



David Schmitz shared that the Iowa Arts Council team will be in Marshalltown again in October for a public event featuring the current Iowa Artist Fellows in parallel with the two-day Iowa Artist Career Development Retreat.

ARTS COUNCIL DIRECTOR'S REPORT

David Schmitz noted recent program highlights, including the NASAA Arts Education Professional Development Institute, taking place in Des Moines this week. He also shared brief updates on FY2026 grants and programs and a recap of the Statewide Arts Caucus which brought 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.

BOARD TASK FORCE UPDATES

Board member Donna Dostal provided an update from the Creative Economy Task Force, which focuses on the intersection of the arts and culture and economic development. She highlighted the group's three priorities: leverage connections with professionals in non-arts industries, ensure communities are able to articulate the value of arts and culture to their economic development leaders, and increase awareness of existing resources. The team is working with partners such as the Iowa Cultural Coalition, the Iowa League of Cities, the Iowa Chamber Association, the Iowa Presenters' Network, and the Iowa Museum Association. Dostal also shared that Schmitz will attend the Southwest Iowa Rural Development Summit to present on the value of the creative economy. Schmitz further highlighted ongoing engagement and partnership with the Iowa Rural Development Council and the Empower Rural Iowa team within IEDA. Jake Brus shared that he's been engaging with local journalists and media outlets to help share the task force's key messages.

Chair Amber Danielson provided an update from the Strategic Planning Task Force, which is developing the next (2027-2030) Strategic State Arts Plan with a target delivery date of March 2026. She shared that the group is working with our partners at NASAA to prepare a statewide survey, which will be used alongside other key inputs to the plan, including legislative direction and input collected through the Regional Arts Forums, Create in Iowa Report, and several other statewide surveys. The draft survey has been shared with Board Members through the Team Papers application, and feedback is encouraged. When the survey is ready, Board Members will also be key partners to help with distribution.

FY27 GRANTS UPDATE & BOARD DISCUSSION

David Schmitz provided an update on FY27 grants and programs, within the context of the Arts Council's mission and the limitations of state and federal funding and team capacity. Schmitz shared several internal staff updates and changes to grants and programs in alignment with the Arts Council's goals and priorities. Key points included consolidating organizational funding into two key grant programs, a focus on community arts access for rural and underserved communities that will leverage local partnerships, an update on the new Film Rebate program, and several programs the team will sunset or seek outside partnerships to support going forward.

Board discussion took place around the need to maintain momentum in Folk and Traditional Arts by seeking a partner to support ongoing programming. Potential partners include statewide cultural organizations and universities. Schmitz noted that he will follow up with the members of the Board's Folk and Traditional Arts Task Force about this opportunity.

Danielson raised the concern that programming changes are happening while the Strategic State Arts Plan is under development. The IAC team noted that much of the data for the strategic plan has already been gathered and was considered as part of the proposed changes.

Schmitz highlighted that communication will be key for all the proposed changes - celebrating past successes, sharing what was learned, and talking about what's next.

The state's business community was raised as a potential partner for ongoing professional development for arts and cultural leaders.

The potential for working with an intermediary partner for grants administration was raised. Potential barriers to that approach include the complex requirements of administering federal funding. Schmitz shared that this model is one the team is continuing to explore as a potential solution within the next several years.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

No comments were made.

OTHER BUSINESS

Election of new Iowa Arts Council Board Chair

MOTION: Amber Danielson moved that Donna Dostal be appointed as Iowa Arts Council Board Chair, seconded by Frank Sposeto. Motion carried unanimously.

Dostal expressed her excitement as she moves into the role. Schmitz thanked outgoing chair Amber Danielson for her service. Schmitz noted that our code no longer requires a Vice Chair.

The next IAC Board meeting will be held on Tuesday, December 2, 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 11:34 a.m.

Respectfully submitted:



Elizabeth Ferreira
Board Administrator

Approved as to form:



Donna Dostal
Chair