

**Muskingum County Arts Council
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
Chamber of Commerce
March 9, 2026**

Present: Allison Weeks, Brian Wagner, Kelly Ashby, Whitney Joseph, Joshua Prentice, Molly Crooks

Absent: Karla Frye, Kristy Szemetylo, Roberta Lepi Maddy Fraioli, Patsy Ramey McDonald, (all excused) Jennifer Johnston Baker, Faith Cornell, Jillian Von Gunten

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Allison Weeks at **2:04 PM** at the Chamber of Commerce.

Quorum

A quorum was **not present**. With 13 board members currently serving, 7 members are required for quorum. Only 5 members were present. Because a quorum was not met, no formal business could be conducted and no votes were taken.

Approval of Minutes

Approval of the previous meeting minutes was tabled due to lack of quorum.

Financial Report

Brian Wagner provided an informal review of the financials. He reported that the organization appears to be on track financially, with approximately **\$8,500 in income** and **\$7,500 in expenses**. The balance sheet also appears stable.

Discussion followed regarding funds received from the county commissioners and related grant sources. It was clarified that some funds are held in a separate account and were not reflected in the report currently available to Joshua. Brian has requested a **combined financial report** from the accountant so the board can review a more complete financial picture.

Because there was no quorum, the financial report could not be formally accepted and filed. Once the combined report is received, it will be shared with the board and approval may be sought by email.

Executive Director Report

Joshua Prentice gave the Executive Director's report.

He shared that he has submitted two major grant applications:

- **ArtsNext grant** through the Ohio Arts Council in the amount of approximately **\$14,000**
- **National Endowment for the Arts grant** in the amount of approximately **\$13,000**

Joshua noted that results are expected in April. He also reported that the **ArtStart grant** is due at the end of the month and that he is working with the Foundation for Appalachian Ohio on a smaller **financial literacy grant** opportunity.

Joshua reported progress on the **50 of 50 campaign**, which has raised **\$1,025** to date.

He also shared updates on the **cultural asset map and artist registry**, noting that the first phase is largely complete and that the next phase will focus on broader community outreach and engagement throughout the county.

Programming Report

Joshua provided programming updates, noting that four events are planned for the coming year.

The first event, **Sound of Wind and Water**, is scheduled for **March 25, 2026** and is designed for **kindergarten and first grade students**. Registration is free, though advance registration is required. The event has been promoted through the Dresden Buzz, the Chamber of Commerce, tourism channels, Facebook, WHIZ, and local radio.

Joshua also shared that a **3D ceramic printing event** is planned for **June**, pending contract finalization.

Board members discussed the opportunity to use gallery space at **Muskingum University**. Joshua reported that Muskingum has indicated the organization may use the space with advance notice during the academic year and with greater flexibility during the summer months. The board expressed support for continued development of that relationship and for exploring volunteer help in the future.

The board also discussed the importance of strengthening the council's visibility throughout **all of Muskingum County**, not just Zanesville. Suggestions included working with **library branches**, village offices, and community spaces in other parts of the county to reinforce MCAC's countywide mission.

Marketing Report

Whitney shared that Joshua had provided demographics and branding information and offered to meet with him to develop a more defined marketing plan. Discussion included whether efforts should focus on general awareness, specific event promotion, or reinforcing the message that MCAC serves the entire county. Joshua and Whitney agreed to connect and plan next steps.

Finance and Fundraising

Brian noted that while the current fundraising campaign is underway, the organization should begin considering an additional fundraising event later in the year. Joshua, Brian, and Allison agreed to discuss ideas prior to the next meeting and bring suggestions forward.

Nominating and Membership

An update was provided from the nominating committee. Several prospective board members have been approached, with:

- one identified as a **yes**
- one as a **maybe**
- one still under consideration

Discussion clarified that, according to the bylaws, the board may consist of **9 to 15 members**. Based on the current roster and recent transitions, Allison noted that the board likely has **two open seats** rather than three.

Potential candidates were discussed informally. We are trying to obtain a slate of perspective members that can be called upon when needed.

The group agreed that it would be preferable not to wait until the next regular meeting to fill vacancies. If the slate is finalized soon, the board may vote **by email** so new members can be added before the next meeting.

Board Attendance and Communication

Allison raised concerns about attendance, noting that seven members were absent. She shared that some members had informed her in advance they would be unable to attend, while others had not responded.

Discussion followed regarding communication and reminders. Allison will send a follow-up email reminding board members of upcoming meeting dates and emphasizing the importance of attendance.

Updated contact information is still needed for several members.

Old Business

The board briefly revisited ongoing items including:

- board vacancies and recruitment
- committee participation
- the employee handbook revisions

Allison noted that the handbook remains in progress and includes sections related to volunteers, confidentiality, and photo releases for children.

Joshua requested a correction for consistency in future documents, noting that his title should be listed as **Executive Director**, not Arts Director.

Strategic Planning / Governance Discussion

Joshua raised a governance concern regarding the placement of the organization's **mission statement**, noting that it appears to be embedded in policy or procedural language rather than standing alone in a way that allows for future strategic evolution.

The group also discussed the bylaw language related to the **Sunshine Law** and public meetings. Allison noted that the bylaws appear to require open meetings, which is unusual for a 501(c)(3), though it may have been included when the organization was more directly government-funded. Members agreed this language deserves further review, particularly because of the legal and procedural implications.

The board agreed this should be discussed further during strategic planning and reviewed with **Jillian** for legal context and interpretation.

Next Steps / Action Items

- **Brian** will obtain the updated combined financial report from the accountant and share it with the board.
- **Allison** will distribute minutes and send a follow-up email reminding members of meeting dates and attendance expectations.
- **Allison** will gather missing contact information for board members.
- **Joshua and Whitney** will connect to discuss marketing priorities and planning.
- **Joshua, Brian, and Allison** will discuss potential fundraising event ideas before the next meeting.
- **Nominating committee** will continue recruitment efforts and work toward finalizing a slate for possible email vote.
- **Jillian** will be consulted regarding Sunshine Law language in the bylaws and questions related to the mission statement's placement.

Adjournment

Because no formal business could be conducted, the meeting concluded without a formal motion to adjourn.