

# IOWA DEPARTMENT OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS

IOWA ARTS COUNCIL    PRODUCE IOWA    STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF IOWA

CHRIS KRAMER, DIRECTOR

KIM REYNOLDS, GOVERNOR  
ADAM GREGG, LT. GOVERNOR

DocuSigned by:  
*Barbara Determan*  
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3/13/2023

## **Iowa Great Places Citizen Advisory Board Meeting**

December 2, 2022 - 1:00 p.m.

**Board Members Present via Zoom:** Aaron Burnett (arrived late), Barbara Determan, Alexis Fleener (left early), Duane Hagerty, Darryl High, Mark Jackson (arrived late), Danna Kehm, Jacque Rahe, Angel Wallace

**Board Members Absent:** Joe Hrdlicka, Tammy McCoy

**Public Present:** None

**Staff Present via Zoom:** DCA Director Chris Kramer, Administrator David Schmitz, Arts in Community Development Program Manager Jon Berg, and Board Administrator Sarah Florian.

### **Call to Order**

Determan called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m.

### **Welcome**

Determan welcomed board members to the meeting.

### **Roll Call**

Florian called the roll and deemed a quorum present.

### **Approval of Minutes**

Hagerty moved to approve the September 28, 2022 Minutes. Wallace seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

### **Report from Chair**

Determan asked for robust discussion following the application review by the panel and stressed the importance of this funding decision process.

Determan shared that the March board meeting schedule options will be coming soon and Berg added this will be based on the recently released designation schedule.

Determan shared that Wallace is interested in serving as the Vice Chair of the Iowa Great Places Citizen Advisory Board. Rahe made a motion to nominate Wallace as Vice Chair of the board. High seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Determan closed her report by encouraging board engagement in the coming months.

### **Program Updates**

Schmitz highlighted the most recent round of quarterly grants, which had a deadline in November and included awarding more than 40 grants across multiple grant programs. Those will be announced in the upcoming Iowa Arts Council newsletter.

Schmitz noted the Humanities Collaboration Grant deadline to apply was yesterday and we had more than 20 applicants for that program.

The Governor's Arts Awards nominations closed earlier in November and we are working through the award recipient determination process now. The timeline is to announce those award recipients in the new year and honor them at an event at the State Historical Building in March.

Schmitz shared there will be an announcement soon about supported Folk Arts projects.

Schmitz closed his report by highlighting continued collaborations across divisions within the Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs. The Iowa Arts Council continues to work with Produce Iowa on the Film Lounge as well as Greenlight Grants. The Annals of Iowa collaboration continues between the State Historical Society of Iowa and the Iowa Arts Council by featuring Iowa artists within the pages of the journal as well as on the cover.

### **DCA Director's Report**

Kramer shared that Iowa is the only state with a combination of history, historic preservation, humanities, art and film within one department, which has helped establish collaboration and makes it easy for constituents. Kramer continued by highlighting the Iowa Cultural Leadership Cohort which is currently providing training and professional development for eleven arts and culture organizations. We look forward to seeing the lasting effects of this investment in leadership, as well as other programs, in communities across the state.

Kramer shared she has been serving on the Destination Iowa committee. The conversation is continuing about the appropriate funding sources for various projects that are coming up. Kramer noted more arts and culture organizations were in the most recent round of Destination Iowa applications and there should be an announcement about these projects coming out soon.

Kramer noted we continue to collaborate with the State Historic Preservation Office through more than 500 historic districts that are also arts districts. The department continues to make strides in customer service and community outreach in this area to assist constituents.

Kramer noted the Celebrate Iowa Gala is a week from today, which is a fundraiser for the Iowa Historical Foundation. Kramer shared an overview of the various programs supported by these efforts. The event will feature Iowa artists, food, beverages, etc. If you have any questions, please reach out to Kramer, Meg Witt or Florian. Kramer closed this section by sharing an overview of who has joined us in the past for this event and who will be there at this year's event.

Kramer provided an overview of the state budgeting process, where we typically enter a status quo budget request for the Iowa Arts Council, State Historical Society of Iowa, Produce Iowa, etc. We requested continued funding at \$1 million for Iowa Great Places. Kramer also noted that there is an opportunity to request additional funds, which are reviewed by the Office of the Governor. Kramer noted the proposed state budget is typically presented the day after the legislative session begins. Kramer shared that she did request a total of \$2 million for Iowa Great Places in the coming fiscal year to better serve our communities, which is part of the Rebuild Iowa Infrastructure Fund, as well as an increase in Iowa Arts Council funding totaling \$3,156,000, an additional request for Greenlight Grants again this year, and funding for continued renovations to the State Historical Building.

Kramer closed her report by sharing her gratitude to Mason City, Aaron Burnett, and Robin Anderson for hosting the Iowa Arts Council earlier this month. Burnett shared his gratitude for the opportunity.

Determan shared her gratitude for the staff's support of and presence in communities. Burnett echoed this sentiment.

### **Program Updates**

Berg shared that we will be reaching out to committees soon about redesignation. Ten communities will be eligible for redesignation going into the new year, so we will have a robust round of redesignations. Berg noted we are going to push the deadline back for designation for capacity considerations along with creating more time for project funding applications. Berg shared that the project funding round should have a typical timeline in the fall, but the new deadline for redesignation will be February 17 and March 10 for new designations. Berg has been working to send communications out about this and check in with communities. Berg highlighted that we will be looking for board members to be engaged in a variety of opportunities in the spring, so look for more information to come on site visits, application review, etc.

Berg also shared that the Iowa Great Places annual meeting will be relaunched this year in person and staff is currently working with leaders across the state to confirm a date in April or September. Berg will send out more information once that is confirmed.

Berg closed his report by thanking the board for all their work in reviewing applications, site visits and more.

### **Board Discussion**

Determan and Berg started the conversation about project applications. Berg shared an overview of the process for today's funding discussion. Berg also shared that there are six communities that submitted full applications with a \$149,675 average grant request ranging from \$47,000 to \$328,000 per project. Berg gave a summary of the technical assistance provided to eligible communities as well.

#### Cedar County - Hardacre Theater

Berg shared an overview which included highlights from the vision plan, project overview, recent updates, as well as a recap of the Board's pre-application feedback. Wallace shared that this is one of the top scoring projects and we were impressed with the work already being done. Wallace noted they've hired FEH Design for their design firm to do preliminary design and identify opportunities for the community. Wallace also stated this is a transformative project for the community and will benefit the community and the state overall. Wallace closed her thoughts by sharing the funding request was justifiable for the project. High added that the stakeholders were clearly invested in the project. Burnett shared his concern that this is in the planning stage currently, but noted some of the unique aspects of this project. Burnett also shared there was conversation around a challenge grant with this project. Berg closed by noting that the pre-application request was for \$177,132 for implementation, but the full application grant request was \$77,850. He also shared the average panel score was 36.6 and the project ranked 4th. Kramer noted that we encouraged them to go back and do the planning component, which includes working with the historic preservation and architectural team to make sure they are going to meet code and have a full plan as well as accurate costs to reflect in their fundraising efforts. Kramer noted staff is working closely with this applicant so they can put their best foot forward in this process.

#### Fairfield

Berg shared an overview which included highlights from the vision plan, project overview, recent updates, as well as a recap of the Board's pre-application feedback. High noted that this application scored in the middle of the pack; this is taken from the vision plan and to assist the music facility in the area. High shared this scored well in some areas, but was lacking in the maintenance type of request and state impact. Burnett said it didn't really meet the standard for Iowa Great Places funding and didn't capture the strengths or unique qualities of Fairfield specifically. Wallace shared that this project didn't have significant impact nor does she see it as aligning as a grant-worthy project. Berg closed by noting the changes in the funding request breakdown for this project compared to the pre-application. He also noted that this application had an average score of 28.3 and ranked sixth.

#### Indianola

Berg shared an overview which included highlights from the vision plan, project overview, recent updates, as well as a recap of the Board's pre-application feedback. Burnett shared that the request is similar to Fairfield's request, but what was interesting was the application identifies what makes Indianola unique and creative placemaking is embraced; it's beautification, but with the specific place in mind; well thought out application. Wallace agreed with Burnett and also shared that this project creates a story that will highlight what makes the community unique; solid partnerships with a significant role in the storytelling, resulting in a cohesive collaboration. High noted the application was special and did a nice job connecting Simpson College to the story. Berg closed by sharing this application had an average score of 38 and ranked third. Berg also shared additional details about the updates to the funding request compared to the pre-application.

#### Turkey River Recreational Corridor

Berg shared an overview which included highlights from the vision plan, project overview, recent updates, as well as a recap of the Board's pre-application feedback. Wallace shared this was her top score; the location was a central focus to this application and will be a real asset to the community and state of Iowa; there is a tourism component as well as creating a sense of place while preserving a piece of history. High shared that the location connected well to their master plan and the pieces fit well together. Burnett appreciated the contemplation of the use of the space moving forward noted in the application; they are utilizing their natural elements; the funding will go a long way for this preservation and outdoor

project. Berg shared this project had an average score of 40 and it ranked first. Berg also shared an update on additional funding secured for this project.

#### Van Buren County

Berg shared an overview which included highlights from the vision plan, project overview, recent updates, as well as a recap of the Board's pre-application feedback. High questioned the purpose as the request centered around maintenance and the bulk is around one structural beam replacement. Burnett was concerned about the questionable status as a museum with the public access component. He also shared that the project seemed like a poor fit for this program with a creative placemaking focus, and the project could maybe be a better fit for other preservation funding sources. Wallace agreed with what had been said. Berg shared this application had an average score of 29.6 and ranked fifth.

#### Webster County/Boone Forks Region

Berg shared an overview which included highlights from the vision plan, project overview, recent updates, as well as a recap of the Board's pre-application feedback. Burnett echoed the large size of the project as well as the uniqueness to the place; strong application with good media with a well laid out vision; this will be an exciting project for the region and statewide; a project worthy of funding. Burnett's concern is the impact of the funding request within the large budget, but well-worth funding from his perspective. High agreed that the funding won't have the same impact as it would on a smaller project; appreciated the educational value and specificity in the request. Wallace echoed that while signage is not transformative, but this is such a large scale project that these elements will only enhance the project; educational signage, design, partnerships are very impressive; application was well put together. Berg shared this application had an average score of 38.3 and ranked second.

Berg then moved to a summary of staff funding recommendations, outlined in the table below. Berg shared that we have \$50,000 remaining from FY22 Iowa Great Places funding. Berg also gave an overview of the process for project endorsement.

Applicant	Project	Request	% of total project	Panel Ranking	Staff Funding Award Rec.
Turkey River	Motor Mill Inn	\$328,086	23%	1	\$328,000
Webster County/Boone Forks Region	Signage & River's Edge Discovery Center Exhibits	\$300,000	1%	2	\$300,000
Indianola	Wonder on Buxton	\$73,300	37%	3	\$72,000
Cedar County	Hardacre Theater	\$77,850	5%	4	\$300,000
Van Buren County	Oddfellows Hall Repairs and Restoration	\$47,818	50%	5	\$0
Fairfield	Wayfinding and Park Enhancements	\$71,000	20%	6	\$0
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$898,054</b>			<b>\$1,000,000</b>

Burnett asked about funding Indianola's full request and if there was a reason the recommendation was reduced from the full request. Berg noted it was in response to fitting within the \$1 million for this fiscal year. Schmitz asked about any ineligible expenses. Berg clarified that the full application did not have any ineligible expenses. Schmitz gave additional context and history of Indianola's project application process. High asked about Cedar County's request amount and how

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the funding recommendation amount was determined. Berg shared that the pre-application request was \$177,132 and the grant request was for \$77,850 for planning; the total estimated budget is \$1,330,000. Berg shared that staff and the applicant are realizing that this estimate will likely increase, so the grant request plus \$223,000 to potentially be used as a challenge grant. Kramer said we know the cost of the planning amount and know that the project will be at least \$1.3 million. Kramer shared that we have done this in the past to ignite a project and leverage private donations; we can structure the grant for both planning and for the project with a match requirement on all of it; we are also encouraging them to work with the historic preservation team on this. Hagerty asked about other historic preservation incentives including the historic tax credit. Hagerty shared his thoughts on how this process should be encouraging applicants to consider a sustainable use for the project and provide financial sustainability in the coming years so the investment is well spent, which is present in some projects. Hagerty also noted that the tax credits process should be considered in this for applicants. Burnett asked about the remaining \$50,000 paired with a request for additional funding. Schmitz shared the intent of the \$50,000 was for planning grants. Rahe asked about the precedent set with the implementation component of Webster County/Boone Forks Region compared to other applicants. Schmitz noted a previous similar experience with the 6th Avenue Corridor in respect to a challenge grant for infrastructure that catalyzes other funders; staff sees a similar potential in this project. Burnett shared an example of a successful challenge grant experience in Keokuk, but did note it is important to have guardrails in these situations. Determan shared that she was not convinced in the Iowa Great Places previous challenge grant experience, but funding as well community buy-in did come through; she also shared the importance for guardrails. Hagerty asked about the timeframe to come up with the match for this project. Kramer shared it would be in alignment with the use of the funding which has a three year time limit, so they would have to meet the challenge and execute the project within the three year window. Kramer also noted that the goal is that these projects come to fruition; she also shared gratitude to Berg for working with this applicant throughout this process. Hagerty clarified that the applicant would have three years to do the project, but we could consider setting an earlier deadline to confirm that the match has been secured. Kramer confirmed that is a possible option. Burnett asked if one year was enough time to do planning for this project. Kramer thought this could go in parallel. Berg and Wallace shared insight on the planning timeline noted in the materials; Berg concluded that the proposed planning timeline is between six and eight months. Berg also shared that we will need to clarify some expenses, but that would be nominal. Schmitz noted that the space is in rough shape, but has a lot of potential; Schmitz noted that he isn't as concerned about the infrastructure side given the current state of the building. Kramer noted we are encouraging them to use the resources available while working with an experienced project team in historic preservation.

Determan clarified a couple of logistical questions prior to entertaining motions.

Motion #1: Rahe made a motion to grant funds to Webster County River's Edge project. Burnett seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Motion #2: Burnett made a motion to grant funds to Indianola at full request amount \$73,300. Rahe seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Motion #3: Hagerty made a motion to grant funds to Cedar County Hardacre Theatre at the recommended \$300,000 with caveat of a 2:1 match and proof of match by November 30, 2023. High seconded the motion. Burnett asked a question about roughly \$48,000 that will remain unspent based on recommendations. Rahe asked about the possibility of going to another community with this opportunity. Burnett echoed this question and asked if there was another community that could use this funding. Kramer noted that was the goal last year and projects were more defined this round than they have been in the past; she noted that we intend to see all new projects in the coming year and shared an update on the most recent round of Destination Iowa funding. She also gave the example of where Oskaloosa is with their project planning and in general where things are right now. Burnett shared that the grant environment right now is extensive. High asked a question about the timeline for this funding and is it possible to grant funds at a different time. Schmitz clarified RIFF funding guidelines and noted that Cedar County fits within these specific guidelines. Hagerty mentioned the scope of this project and the need, and also asked if the Turkey River project may be a good fit for additional funding. Berg noted that it is something to consider, but Turkey River may have a challenge with the match based on information known at the time the full application was due. Kramer noted that we are trying to stay informed about project statuses and funding across the state to the extent that we can. Burnett proposed an amendment for \$348,700 with a 2:1 match requirement on the component that is not part of the original request. Wallace seconded the amendment. Barb added proof of match by November 30, 2023 when restating the amendment for voting. The amendment passed unanimously. Barb stated the amended motion of funding Cedar County Hardacre Theatre at \$348,700 with a 2:1 match and proof of match by November 30, 2023. Wallace seconded the amended motion. The motion passed unanimously.

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Motion #4: Rahe made a motion to grant funds to Turkey River at staff recommendation. High seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Rahe left before endorsement votes. Florian confirmed the quorum without Rahe.

Motion #5: Burnett motioned to endorse all projects except the Fairfield project. Jackson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**Public Comment**

Determan asked for public comment. No members of the public were present to comment.

Determan shared that the next board meeting date will be announced once the new schedule is confirmed.

**Adjournment**

Wallace motioned to adjourn the meeting. Jackson seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned at 2:59 p.m.