

MINUTES

Wisconsin Arts Board Quarterly Meeting

Friday, December 12, 2025

Noon to 4:00 pm

Meeting Location | Via Zoom and In Person

Sensenbrenner Hall, Eisenberg Room, Marquette University

1103 W. Wisconsin Ave., Milwaukee, WI 53233

Board Members Present

Brian Kelsey
Lynn Richie
Dinorah Márquez Abadiano
Marcela “Xela” Garcia
Karen Ann Hoffman
John W. Johnson
Susan Lipp
William Mitchell
John Potter
Tyler Marchant
Jennifer Schwarzkopf
Mari Lindsay Schneider
LaShawndra Vernon
Matthew Wallock

Staff Members Present

George Tzougros
Karen Goeschko
Dale Johnson
Vivienne Timchenko

Guests

State Assemblyperson Prado
Ra Joy, Bronzeville Center for the Arts

Board Members Excused

Jayne Herring

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Pre-Board Meeting from Noon to 2pm:

WI Arts Board and Staff had lunch and a presentation/conversation with State Assemblyperson Prado and Bronzeville Center for the Arts Executive Director Joy. They then took a tour of the Haggerty Museum of Art.

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Board Meeting:

Welcome and Introductions _____ **Kelsey**
Chair Kelsey called the meeting to order at 2:20 pm.

Approval of the Agenda _____ **Kelsey**
Richie moved approval of the agenda. Wallock seconded. Motion passed.

Approval of Board Minutes _____ **Kelsey**

Approval of the September 13, 2025 Quarterly board meeting minutes:
Johnson moved approval of the minutes. Potter requested that minor edits be made to pages 8 (repeated reference) and 22 (corrected spelling of panelist's name). Johnson agreed to a motion with those edits. Potter seconded. Motion passed.

Standing Committee Reports

Budget Committee _____ **Potter**

FY26 Year to Date: Potter reported that the WAB budget is tracking well with projections and encouraged the board to read the budget notes on p.19 of the board materials. Tzougros provided more budget details and answered questions.

Federal Update: NEA match; we expect that end-of-year state salary supplements will help make our FY 26 match. There are additional options available should this fall short.

External Relations _____ **Garcia**

Garcia thanked committee members and staff liaison Timchenko for their work, and reported on recent work, including developing a pathway into data visualization for WAB. She also requested that board members share the names of potential ERC members who are not WAB board members, to expand the ERC's skill sets.

Strategic Planning _____ **Johnson**

John Johnson reported that WAB is pausing strategic planning until the current environment becomes a bit more stable.

Accessibility _____ **Mitchell**

Mitchell thanked staff for prioritizing accessibility self-assessments within the Creation and Presentation grant application forms, and for hosting the Open-Door Arts webinar on that organization's accessibility self-assessment tool for WI's arts organizations in October. He also noted that the Access Committee will work on ways to educate grantees on the benefits of actually doing the survey, beyond simply fulfilling the WAB's and National Endowment for the Arts' requirements. Potter also encouraged the Committee to recommend a timeline/cycle for assessing the accessibility of the WAB's website.

FY26 Creation and Presentation Grant Recommendations

Full Year Applicants – Music _____ **Lipp/Vernon/Goeschko**

Lipp and Vernon shared the chairing of this two-day grant application review panel. Both reported on their experience and the trends that they noticed among the applications. Staff will stress the importance of including strong work samples and organizational plans with next year's applicants. The board had previously identified their conflicts of interest.

Kelsey asked for a motion to approve funding for all grant recommendations excluding: Festival Choir of Madison, Madison Symphony Orchestra, Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra, Wisconsin Youth Symphony Orchestra, Aperi Animam, Civic Music Association of Milwaukee, Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra, and Milwaukee Youth Symphony Orchestra. Schwarzkopf moved, Hoffman seconded. Motion carried.

Johnson and Lipp left the room. Richie moved and Garcia seconded approval of the Wisconsin Youth Symphony Orchestra. Motion carried. Johnson returned.

Vernon moved and Hoffman seconded approval of the Festival Choir and the Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra. Motion carried. Lipp returned.

Marquez and Vernon left the room. Johnson moved and Marchant seconded approval of the Civic Music Association of Milwaukee and the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra. Motion carried. Vernon returned.

Hoffman moved and Mitchell seconded approval of the Madison Symphony Orchestra. Motion carried. Marquez returned.

Vernon left the room. Garcia moved and Wallock seconded approval of Aperi Animam and the Milwaukee Youth Symphony Orchestra. Motion carried. Vernon returned.

New Applicants _____ Vernon/Goeschko

Vernon reported on her experience chairing this panel, noting that one panelist had to drop out at the last minute but that the remaining two panelists were very strong and did a great job. The board had previously identified their conflicts of interest.

Kelsey asked for a motion to approve funding for all grant recommendations excluding: Sculpture Milwaukee, Signature Dance Company, TBEY, and the UW-Madison Union Theater. Vernon moved, Johnson seconded. Motion carried.

Garcia left the room. Richie moved and Schneider seconded approval of Sculpture Milwaukee. Motion carried. Garcia returned.

Vernon left the room. Schwarzkopf moved and Lipp seconded approval for Signature Dance Company and TBEY. Motion carried. Vernon returned.

Lipp left the room. Garcia moved and Johnson seconded approval for UW-Madison Union Theater. Lipp returned.

Interim Year Applicants _____ Goeschko

Folk Arts and Literary Arts: Marquez moved and Schneider seconded approval for Folklore Village and Woodland Pattern. Motion carried.

Dance: Vernon left the room. Richie moved and Schwarzkopf seconded approval for Ko-Thi Dance Company, Danceworks, and the Milwaukee Ballet. Motion carried. Vernon returned.

Marchant moved and Mitchell seconded approval for all other organizations in the Dance category. Motion carried.

Multi-Disciplinary Arts: Hoffman moved and Johnson seconded approval for all organizations excluding Arts for All; Joy Engine; Latino Arts; Lynden Inc., and Shake Rag Alley. Motion carried.

Garcia left the room. Hoffman moved and Schneider seconded approval of Joy Engine and Lynden, Inc. Motion carried. Garcia returned.

Johnson left the room. Richie moved and Mitchell seconded approval of Arts for All, Wisconsin. Motion carried. Johnson returned.

Marquez left the room. Garcia moved and Hoffman seconded approval of Latino Arts. Motion carried. Marquez returned.

Mitchell left the room. Schwarzkopf moved and Johnson seconded approval of Shake Rag Alley. Motion carried. Mitchell returned.

Opera/Musical Theater: Wallock moved and Marchant seconded approval for all but Capital City Theater and Madison Opera. Motion carried.

Lipp left the room. Richie moved and Johnson seconded approval for Capital City Theater and Madison Opera. Motion carried.

Presenting: Richie moved and Wallock seconded approval for all, excluding the Marcus Center for the Performing Arts, the Overture Center, and the Sharon Lynn Wilson Center for the Performing Arts. Motion carried.

Marquez left the room. Hoffman moved and Garcia seconded approval for the Marcus Center for the Performing Arts, the Overture Center, and the Sharon Lynn Wilson Center for the Performing Arts. Motion carried.

Theater: Lipp moved and Vernon seconded approval for all excluding First Stage Milwaukee, Forward Theater, Milwaukee Repertory Theater, Peninsula Players Theater, and Renaissance Theaterworks. Motion carried.

Lipp left the room. Richie moved and Johnson seconded approval for Forward Theater. Motion carried. Lipp returned.

Marquez and Vernon left the room. Lipp moved and Hoffman seconded approval for First Stage Milwaukee and Renaissance Theaterworks. Motion carried. Marquez returned.

Johnson moved and Mitchell seconded approval for the Milwaukee Repertory Theater. Motion carried. Vernon returned.

Kelsey left the room. Richie called for a motion for approval of Peninsula Players Theater. Marquez moved and Hoffman seconded. Motion carried. Kelsey returned.

Visual Arts: Johnson moved and Vernon seconded approval for all, excluding Land O Lakes Area Artisans, La Familia del Arte, Marquette University, Milwaukee Art Museum, the Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Arts and Letters, and the Wisconsin Museum of Quilts and Fibers.

Richie left the room. Marquez moved and Hoffman seconded approval of LOLA. Motion carried. Richie returned.

Vernon left the room. Hoffman moved and Garcia seconded approval of La Familia del Arte. Motion carried.

Marquez left the room. Wallock moved and Marchant seconded approval of Marquette University. Motion carried.

Hoffman left the room. Johnson moved and Garcia seconded approval of Milwaukee Art Museum. Motion carried. Marquez and Vernon returned.

Mitchell moved and Johnson seconded approval for the Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Arts and Letters. Motion carried. Hoffman returned.

Vernon left the room. Wallock moved and Marchant seconded approval for the Wisconsin Museum of Quilts and Fibers. Motion carried. Vernon returned.

Arts Board Member Regional Updates _____ Kelsey

Each board member contributed information about arts-related project status or happenings in their area, including visual arts shows, performances, and holiday-related presentations.

Old Business

Chairman's report _____ Kelsey

Kelsey expressed gratitude for the kind words from various board members and staff and yielded his remaining time to Tzougros.

Executive Director's Report _____ Tzougros

Tzougros reported on the large grant that Arts Midwest just received and on the National Assembly of State Arts Agency conference for SAA Executive and Deputy Directors. He noted that Social Rx funding has been raised and so Social Prescription and Art Pharmacy will be coming to Wisconsin in 2026.

New Business _____ Kelsey

No new business was reported.

Adjournment

Vernon moved that the meeting be adjourned. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 3:55 p.m.

Calendar 2026 Meetings

March 17	Milwaukee (during the Wisconsin Governor's Conference on Tourism)
May 15	Madison (includes Annual Meeting)
September 24 - 26	Eau Claire / West Central Wisconsin
December 11	Milwaukee