

CLACKAMAS COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Sitting/Acting as (if applicable) Policy Session Worksheet

Presentation Date: December 1, 2020 **Approx. Start Time:** 3 pm **Approx. Length:** 30 mins.

Presentation Title: Clackamas County Arts Alliance Seeks Unified Board

Department: Tourism Division of Administration

Presenters: Samara Phelps, Mt. Hood Territory Executive Director; Will Frank, Arts Alliance Advisory Council Chair; Kevin Yell, Clackamas County Arts Alliance Board President; Dianne Alves, Clackamas County Arts Alliance Interim Executive Director

Other Invitees: Alex Stoehr, Clackamas County Arts Alliance Associate Director

WHAT ACTION ARE YOU REQUESTING FROM THE BOARD? We are requesting that the board reviews the attached history and recommendation and approves our intentions:

1. To formerly dissolve the county's Arts Alliance Advisory Council (Advisory Council), and
2. Establish agreement between the Board of County Commissioners and the Arts Alliance to more effectively serve county commissioners as well as arts and culture interests throughout the county.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: The Clackamas County Arts Alliance Advisory Council is currently appointed by the Clackamas County Board of County Commissioners and tasked with acting as a liaison between county government and the communities and arts and culture organizations across the County.

Historically, the Clackamas County Arts Alliance managed the Advisory Council's activities and set direction for the group, in addition to, under the county's guidelines and guidance, recruited and on-boarded members. Recently, participation and energy within the Advisory Council waned and it became clear that the Advisory Council needed to revisit the strategic goals, the direction of the group, and how to best meet its original objective, which was, "To support, develop and promote access to arts and culture in all our communities through information, resources, and leadership."

This request is the result of over a years' worth of conversations and strategic planning for both the Arts Alliance and the Advisory Council, reflecting how to best work together to serve the Board of County Commissioners as well as the arts and culture practitioners, patrons, and interests throughout the county.

We believe moving to a strengthened and unified board with a network of working committees is the most efficient and effective structure for meeting our joint goals. We respectfully request permission to combine the Advisory Council and Arts Alliance.

If the Board of County Commissioners declines to dissolve the Advisory Council, the Board of County Commissioners needs to establish a clear work plan, with target outcomes in line with Performance Clackamas directives for the body. An Advisory Council member may certainly join one of the new Arts Alliance committees, but organization, recruitment, and management of the group will no longer be assumed by the Alliance.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS (current year and ongoing):

Is this item in your current budget? YES NO

What is the cost? \$0.00

What is the funding source? n/a

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

- How does this item align with your Department's Strategic Business Plan goals? n/a
- How does this item align with the County's Performance Clackamas goals?
 - Build public trust through good government by providing a clear and efficient means for the arts community to be included in County decisions and processes.
 - Grow a vibrant economy by supporting arts and artists in Clackamas County.

LEGAL/POLICY REQUIREMENTS: No

PUBLIC/GOVERNMENTAL PARTICIPATION:

Advisory Council and Arts Alliance Board members are drawn from communities across Clackamas County and represent diverse arts groups. At the December 2019 joint meeting between the Advisory Council and Alliance Board of Directors, members of the Clackamas County Board of Commissioners and staff attended and provided feedback.

OPTIONS: For the aforementioned actions, we see the following two options available to the Board of County Commissioners:

1. Approve the formal dissolution of the county's Arts Alliance Advisory Council and establish a cooperation agreement with the Arts Alliance.
2. Retain the Arts Alliance Advisory Council as-is and redirect management of the Council from the Clackamas County Arts Alliance, who will move forward with the necessary organizational restructuring of its board.

RECOMMENDATION: It is our recommendation that the Board of County Commissioners selects the first option: 1. Approve the formal dissolution of the county's Arts Alliance Advisory Council, and establish a cooperation agreement with the Arts Alliance.

ATTACHMENTS:

- Advisory Council Background Document
- Arts Alliance – Board of County Commissioners Draft Agreement

SUBMITTED BY:

Division Director/Head Approval _____

Department Director/Head Approval _____

County Administrator Approval _____

For information on this issue or copies of attachments, please contact _____ @ 503-_____



Advisory Council – Background Document

HISTORY: The Clackamas County Arts Alliance Advisory Council is appointed by the Clackamas County Board of County Commissioners and tasked with acting as a liaison between county government and the communities and arts and culture organizations they represent. An Advisory Council member can serve up to two consecutive three-year terms.

The goal of the Council is to keep the arts central to life in Clackamas County by supporting and promoting access to all aspects of art and culture in every community, developing programs to meet needs countywide. Council members collaborate on programs and services.

The Advisory Council traditionally met quarterly under the guidance of the Arts Alliance Executive Director, with their fourth quarter meeting consisting of a joint meeting with the Arts Alliance Board of Directors.

HISTORIC OPPORTUNITIES FOR MEMBER INVOLVEMENT: Per the bylaws, the mission and purpose of the Advisory Council is to serve as the county's designated arts and culture advocate, advisor and ambassador. Specifically, Advisory Council members serve as an arts and culture resource to the Board of County Commissioners. Advisory Council members also monitor local arts and culture issues and serve as information conduits, offering resources to guide Arts Alliance policy and program decisions.

Outside of regular meetings, Advisory Council members participate in public art projects, advocate within their communities on behalf of the Arts Alliance and also for their communities to the Arts Alliance, leading to the development of city arts councils and other tangible improvements for local arts and culture. One primary vehicle for this two-way advocacy was the “State of Arts & Culture” meetings, which were held in a different locale in the county twice per year. Citizens involved in that area’s local arts, culture, and government were invited to participate in a conversation regarding the current climate for arts and culture in their community, as well as areas for improvement.

Opportunities for Advisory Council Involvement (as Outlined in the By-Laws)

1. *Committee Service*
 - a. Public Art Steering Committee
 - b. Public Art Project Stakeholder Committee(s)
 - c. Arts Education/Arts Partners
 - d. Clackamas County Cultural Coalition
 - e. Web-based Communication



2. *Helpline Mentor* – Serve as a mentor in your field of expertise with inquiries made through our Helpline program
3. *Advocate* – Act as an information conduit within a (self-defined) community for the Arts Alliance and arts and cultural programming.
4. *Personal Work Plan* – In a meeting with the Executive Director and/or Council Chair(s), establish a plan to support Alliance work.

TRANSITION/RESTRUCTURING: Following the retirement of its longstanding Executive Director at the end of 2018, the Arts Alliance entered a transition period. Under the leadership of a new Executive Director and facing a severe budget shortfall, the Arts Alliance tasked the Advisory Council with helping with the following Arts Alliance Strategic Plan items at the March 2019 meeting:

- Grow the Arts Alliance mailing list,
- Advocate and share about the new Donor Program, and
- Participate in the Workshop Program.

By July of 2019, the Advisory Council began to evaluate its role in light of all of the changes at the Arts Alliance. While some of the changes were productive, such as the artist workshop program, the ambiguity surrounding the Advisory Council’s new role was problematic. In seeking to recruit new members and help the Alliance grow its influence and mailing list, questions and concerns began to arise.

Advisory Council members asked the Arts Alliance for clarification and more specific direction, stating, “The Advisory Council would like the Board of Directors to provide specific tasks for the Advisory Council to work on for the next two years. The State of the Arts & Culture events provided focus, tasks and goals to work towards. Currently the role as “community awareness & support” are nebulous and do not provide specific direction.”

By late fall 2019, the Arts Alliance’s new Executive Director was transitioning out of her role, Advisory Council recruitment was put on hold, and the Arts Alliance Board of Directors stepped in to fill the leadership needs of the organization. At the December 2019 joint meeting between the Advisory Council and Alliance Board of Directors, members of the Clackamas County Board of Commissioners and staff attended and provided feedback.

Some key takeaways from the county representatives at the December joint meeting included:

- The Commissioners wanted to see a development plan, in which the Arts Alliance was able to tie county values/goals/outcomes to its own.
- The Commissioners wanted to increase communication between the Arts Alliance, Advisory Council, and the county.



- The Commissioners really valued the Alliance and Advisory Council and their work.

As a next step, it was decided that some strategic planning sessions were in order, the first of which was held in February of 2020. A trained facilitator led members of the Advisory Council and the Arts Alliance Board of Directors through strategic planning exercises, including a SWOT analysis, evaluation of current programs, and a discussion of missing voices at the table.

Together, the group decided that a new way forward was necessary, with the Arts Alliance serving as the “hub/axle/crossroads/heart of arts and culture in Clackamas County.” The Arts Alliance essentially fulfills the unique role of Convener and Connector, providing Advocacy and Advice.

In order to do this, it was proposed that the Arts Alliance needed to restructure its operations and the way it interacted with the communities it serves by:

- Creating a single organization (CCAA),
- Increasing board size, including adding some of the missing voices,
- Creating Working Groups, by discipline, and
- Honoring geography and artistic discipline in the new organization.

As 2020 progressed, COVID-19 lent its own effects to this process, in that multiple Advisory Council members needed to resign in order to focus on the survival of their own businesses and the health of themselves and their family members. In this time, other Advisory Council members began to attend Arts Alliance board meetings, as the two groups grew closer. In May, the Advisory Council chair provided the following update.

The Arts Alliance Advisory Council is “on hold” until the financial picture is clearer, an Executive Director is hired, and a strategic plan is in place. However, we can still contribute to the re-forming and future direction of the CCAA by generating ideas about specific projects and activities which we and the Arts Alliance might pursue in the future. The “interim” and future Executive Director can use this information to build the organization’s future plans. So just as the “State of the Arts” community dialogues were a task that the Advisory Council engaged in for several years, so might there be other tasks that the AC can be involved with besides reporting on art and culture activities in our respective communities.

Advisory Council members were also asked to complete a survey to generate workable ideas related to the mission of the Arts Alliance, focusing on potential activities and projects that the organization, in which both the Board and the Advisory Council could participate.



In June of 2020, the Arts Alliance hired a new interim Executive Director. In response to the survey results as well as individual conversations the new Executive Director initiated with the Arts Alliance Board, a joint meeting to finalize plans was scheduled for August 2020. The main thrust of the meeting was to finalize a plan to propose to the Board of County Commissioners.

Background documentation for the August meeting stated that:

Based on conversations with the current Alliance Board members and other community members, it was clear that all wanted to make a change in the leadership design. There needed to be a reinvigoration of the Alliance Board and Advisory Council and a better communication model between the Board, Council, and the artists in the county.

Therefore, you proposed that the current Advisory Council be disbanded. The Alliance Board would grow and create a strong committee structure based on artistic and cultural diversity as well as geographical spread, with ideally one board member for each committee.

Advisory Council members could become CCAA board members (with the understanding that not all Advisory Council members may want to become board members and with the understanding that the Alliance has a functioning procedure for onboarding new members).

At the retreat itself, attendant Arts Alliance Board and Advisory Council members were asked to agree with the full proposal and/or make changes to come to an agreement. It was recognized that disbanding the Advisory Council would require Board of County Commissioners (BCC) approval since it is a county-appointed committee.

THE PLAN: The new structure that the Advisory Council proposed, and the Arts Alliance Board approved at the August strategic planning retreat consists of the following elements:

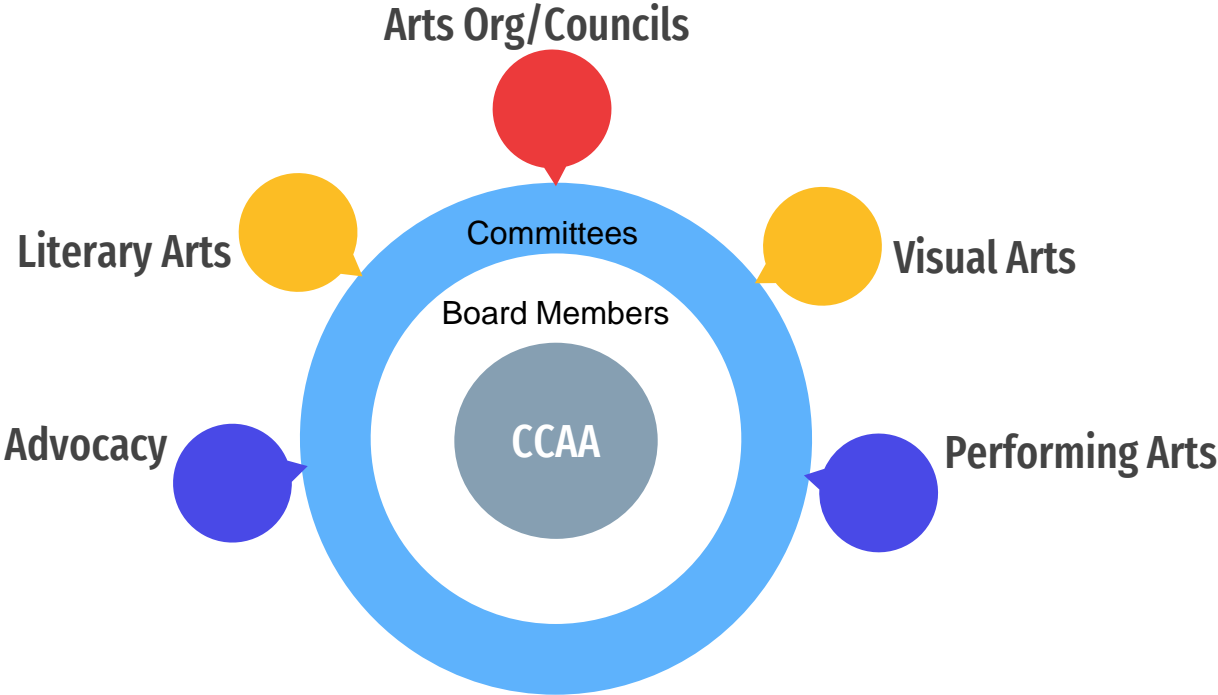
1. The dissolution of the formal Advisory Council.
2. The Arts Alliance Board of Directors serving as an information conduit between the communities and arts and culture disciplines of Clackamas County and the county's Board of County Commissioners.



- a. Board Structure Proposed:
 - i. Executive Team of Four Officers
 1. One Chair
 2. One Chair-Elect
 3. One Treasurer
 4. One Secretary
 - ii. Five Committee Heads (one for each committee)
 - iii. Remaining members recruited for: Diversity, Skills (Development, Communications, etc.), Geography, etc.

3. The development of Committees, which serve as further information and communication conduits, liaising between their specific communities, disciplines, and organizations and the new, strengthened Arts Alliance Board of Directors.
 - a. Committee Structure Proposed:
 - i. Visual Arts
 - ii. Performing Arts
 - iii. Literary Arts
 - iv. Local Arts Organizations/Councils
 - v. Advocacy

Clackamas County Arts Alliance





DRAFT

Arts Alliance – Board of County Commissioners Agreement

This draft agreement represents a continuation of the longstanding relationship of collaboration, advising, and affinity between the Clackamas County Board of County Commissioners and the Clackamas County Arts Alliance. The mission and goals of this relationship remain unchanged under this new structure, as we seek the most effective way to support, develop, and promote access to arts and culture in all our communities through information, resources, and leadership.

This agreement holds the following statements as guiding principles for our work in the county:

- Clackamas County’s creative artists contribute to our collective strength, vitality, and community health.
- The arts are crucial to a complete education for all children, and integrating arts into our schools transforms learning, strengthens communities, and increases academic success.
- The unique cultural heritage and history of Clackamas County must be preserved and celebrated.
- The synergy that takes place when organizations and individuals share resources leads to a thriving arts and culture environment.

Agreement Terms

The Arts Alliance remains committed to serving as the connection point, lending expertise and consultation in support of the Board of County Commissioners and in representation of the county’s arts and culture community. This will be accomplished with the following three-fold approach.

1 – The Arts Alliance will serve as both liaison and advocate for the county arts and culture community, providing leadership, resources, and direction as well as functioning as convener for individual artists (by discipline,) in addition to the various arts and culture groups throughout Clackamas County.

2 – The Arts Alliance will advise local businesses and Clackamas County city governments seeking arts and culture expertise, always looking for ways to connect local businesses or government with the county’s arts and culture community for collaboration in support of local economic development and cultural tourism.

3 – The Alliance will support the Board of County Commissioners in a proactive way enabling them to understand the various needs as well as the positive impact of the arts and culture community in the county.