



"The Oconee Cultural Arts Foundation promotes arts & artists and provides art education to the citizens of Oconee County and the Northeast Georgia region."

OCAF Board of Directors

Regular Meeting Minutes

January 9, 2025 /4 p.m./School Street Studios

In attendance: Brock Toole, Paula Williams, John Quakenbush, Eadaoin Waller, Sherry Woodruff, Lawrence Stueck, Rob Farley, Jim Norton, Kathie Anderson, Vickie Moody, Paul Clark

Absent: Abbey Duhe, Betty Walton, Judy Marable

The meeting was called to order and quorum was confirmed at 4:06 p.m.

Comments to the Board: There were no guests requesting to speak.

Approval or Amendment of Past Minutes: John Quakenbush motioned to approve the December minutes and Jim Norton seconded.

Approval or Amendment of Meeting Agenda for January 9 : Jim Norton motioned to approve and John Quackenbush seconded.

Reports of Officers and Standing Committees:

- I. Chairman: Brock commended Paul and the Board for ongoing work.
- II. Vice Chairman: No report.
- III. Treasurer: John reviewed the Statement of Activity for December. Total revenue was decreased from last December, due to change in scheduling of the Holiday Market and Artist Shoppe from December to November. The combined sales from the Holiday Market and the Artists Shoppe were comparable to last year. Overall, donations were \$12K higher than last year due to a 30K increase. Total expenses increased by \$7K in December due to increases in Salaries, Contract Labor, Advertising and Insurance. Year to Date, expenses increased \$24K over last year, primarily due to increases in Advertising, \$10K, Supplies, \$6K, (Upgrade of POS system), Salaries and Contract Labor \$6K, Insurance \$7K, offset by \$12K decrease in Artist Payouts.

John said that the Board needs to discuss a mandate for a financial management policy, especially with a new Executive Director coming in. Paula was asked for a copy of a policy

used at the museum she worked with prior to OCAF. Anne Shoemaker indicated that work has begun to create such a policy. Annie is also working to balance the budget.

Regarding restricted donations, John will seek clarification on where the funds may be used.

- IV. **Executive Director:** Paul reported that checks had been stolen from the OCAF mailbox, but with the cooperation of Oconee State Bank, the Police Dept., and our accountant, the issue was resolved within 24 hours. OCAF is opening a new bank account and will close out the old one pending outstanding transactions and transfers. To date no losses have occurred due to this. Eadaoin asked about the prospect of no longer using checks and plans are being reviewed to make payments more secure.

Paul reported that our new membership policy began 1/1/25. The Membership Policy as well as the Donor information will be posted on our website soon.

Paul reviewed a handout on planned events. He said that there is a Valentine's Day "Paint and Sip" event being planned for adults, with a corresponding crafting session for participants' children. There was discussion of Youth Art Month, and Teacher Art Exhibits. Paul suggested that OCAF sets up a sale of students' art. John suggested that a membership table should be set up at the Youth Exhibit Reception and everyone agreed.

St. Aelred's Catholic Church has asked to rent all of OCAF's facilities for services, Sunday School and other activities on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Sundays for the next three years while their church is being built in Bishop. The church has 200-275 members. While OCAF won't be able to accommodate all of their needs, the Board voted (9 for-2 opposed) to allow Paul to pursue the possibilities. There was concern raised over the need to ensure that OCAF's activities and events take precedence. Brock looked at this as a positive monetary opportunity, a sentiment echoed by Eadaoin. This discussion ended with the advice to "keep an open mind."

Paul reported that the Holiday Market and Artists' Market results were good, and that a delay in payment to an artist has been resolved.

Paul reported \$30K in donations, and a continuing search for sponsorships.

The website is currently being overhauled. The developer will add more detail and a new website should be up by the second quarter of 2025.

25 candidates for the Executive Director position have been identified, and soon it will become a list of 10, pending committee approval.

OCAF has a teacher desiring to create an after school program for children ages 7-14. It would begin as a one day session, then expand as interest grows. Vicki noted that activities would have to be planned per age group, since the interests and skill levels differ. A draft

camp schedule was also discussed. Vicki said that camp information/applications should be posted immediately because parents have begun searching for out of school activities.

V. Reports of Special Committees:

A. Governance Committee: Eadaoin presented the Volunteer Policy and Agreement documents for Board adoption. Lawrence asked for clarification on the confidentiality policies. After discussion, it was agreed that volunteers must respect the need for in house privacy and do nothing to harm OCAF. "If in doubt, leave it out" was the outcome of discussion. Everyone agreed that volunteers can always ask staff if the issue is raised. Brock made a motion to adopt both documents and Rob seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

B. Ad Hoc Music Committee: Lawrence is planning to gather musicians at OCAF to explore the space in order to plan upcoming events.

C. Thrift Sale: Sherry says plans are underway for a March sale. Eadaoin offered to assist. It was agreed that thrift shop donations should be underway now.

VI. Unfinished Business: A Board Retreat is proposed due to a need for a strategic planning and budget discussion. One day would involve Board orientation, standards and committee assignments. Another 2-3 days would finalize plans. It was suggested that the Board meet for one day in March or April/May, and then schedule another session over a Friday evening and Saturday later. This was tabled for further discussion.

Lawrence produced a drawing of the proposed **Stancil entrance** from Patch Architectural and Design Company. Brock said that any work costing above \$8,000 must have a commercial contractor, not a residential one. After discussion, it was suggested that the project be divided into two, possibly enabling the use of a residential contractor. Currently the lowest bid on the project is \$34,000 and the highest is \$107,000. Lawrence is investigating lower options, but it was agreed that this needs to happen without further delay.

Vicki asked the Board to consider putting an awning over the handicapped entrance on the opposite side of the building to match the design of the Stancil project

Grants: Vicki proposed that the Board apply for the General Operating Grant for \$10,000 from the Georgia Council for the Arts. The deadline is February 7. If it isn't approved, there are others in July and the fall.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:55 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by Kathie Anderson, (Substituting for secretary)