

Summary Minutes for the

CALIFORNIA CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL ENDOWMENT (CCHE) BOARD MEETING

Held Wednesday, November 2, 2021 at 9:00 a.m. via Zoom
(virtual attendance only due to COVID-19)

Welcome and virtual meeting procedures by Bryan Cash, Chair.

Agenda Item 1: Roll Call and Introductions. Board Members Present: Chair Cash, Greg Lucas, Gayle Miller, Juan Devis, Don Waldie, Catherine Gudis, Amie Hayes, Donelle Dadigan, Senator Anthony Portantino, Senator Scott Wiener and Assemblymember Isaac Bryan.

Agenda Item 2: Approval of June 1, 2021 Meeting Minutes.

ACTION TAKEN: Motion made by Greg Lucas, seconded by Gayle Miller, and carried. Ayes (8): Chair Cash, Gayle Miller, Greg Lucas, Amie Hayes, Catherine Gudis, Don Waldie, Donelle Dadigan and Juan Devis.

Agenda Item 3: Chairperson's Report given by Bryan Cash. Thanks given to the members for making the many requests that came through on the final budget, funding up to 70 general fund projects that Agency received, 18 of which relate to the objectives of the CCHE, totaling close to \$70 million, in addition to the \$50 million for the competitive Museum Grant Program, for a total of \$120 million going toward investments in areas related to the CCHE. Again, thanks to the members who are here for making those investments in this area.

Agenda Item 4: Manager's Report given by Carol Carter. Shared that staff will be presenting the updated draft guidelines for the Museum Grant Program, which is funded with the general funds that are appropriated in the Budget Act of 2021.

Introduced Heather Baugh, Assistant General Counsel at the Natural Resources Agency, who will be sharing a short presentation regarding Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act.

Shared Board member changes since we last met Assemblymember Isaac Bryan replaced Assemblymember Evan Low, also Jackie Blackshear resigned in August. Welcomed Assemblymember Bryan and thanked, Jackie Blackshear for her service to advancing the work of the CCHE.

Reported that since we last met in June, 15 of the 25 projects that the board approved for the Museum Grant Program now have executed grant agreements in place, the remaining projects are in various phases of documentation submission and review, including the three projects that were on the waitlist which now have sufficient funding to move forward, those three wait list entities have been contacted and we are working to move those forward.

Reported we have 11 new review committee members for the Museum Grant Program, and we are still actively recruiting additional members. If the Board has recommendations for outstanding candidates who may be interested in serving on the review committee, please contact Diane Sousa or myself to provide the names for potential candidates for us to contact and go over the process and timeline.

Thanks, given to Celeste DeWald and the California Association of Museums for their help with the committee member recruitment, we appreciate their efforts and now have on-boarded a diverse group of museum and cultural professionals to participate on the committee.

Comment from Catherine Gudis:

Is the list of committee member panels available to the board?

Carol responded: Once we have a full list, we were happy to share.

Comment from Catherine Gudis:

Are these entirely new members with no overlap from prior rounds also what organization types are the new members from?

Diane responded: The members are from a wide range of disciplines that include children's museums, history centers, State Parks curators and executive staff members. We are working to have a good geographic distribution of the members, we have Los Angeles, San Diego we are looking to recruit more members from Northern California.

Bryan responded: Asked Diane to share the committee list with the Board Members including the member's location and specialty so that the Board Members can assist to fill in any gaps.

Agenda Item 5: Presentation of Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act by Heather Baugh. Heather provided a 10-minute training presentation on the rules and requirements of the Bagley-Keene Open Meetings Act for board members and staff.

Agenda Item 6: Presentation of Museum Grant Program Draft Guidelines presented by Melissa Jones and Diane Sousa. Currently sollicitating public comment on the draft guidelines through November 12th. Gave program background and went over key components of the changes to the program including the program funding source, history, program purpose, funding priorities, match requirements, technical assistance workshops, timeline and the evaluation process of the program for board input and public comment.

Comment from Senator Scott Wiener:

Thanks, for the presentation and the work that went into the program.

Comment from Senator Scott Wiener:

Asked for clarification of the 10-year and 15-year change and how that works.

Carol responded: This is what we call land tenure, if a proposal is a capital project the capital improvements must be maintained for 10 or 15 years depending on the amount of the grant. These are one time funds the can be completed over one to two years.

Comment from Senator Scott Wiener:

Asked for clarification of the prioritized communities and is the LGBT community included in that category in the proposed guidelines?

Carol responded: Great question, we define underserved as a community with a clear lack of historical and cultural resources, so it could be included there.

Diane responded: The definition is very broad so the LGBT community would definitely fit into that underserved category.

Comment from Senator Scott Wiener:

Asked for clarification if the applicant has to be both underserved and been severely impacted by COVID-19 to be given priority?

Diane responded: Yes, the Budget Act states that the museum must have been severely impacted by COVID 19 **and** serve an underserved community **or** title-1 students.

Comment from Senator Scott Wiener:

Asked for clarification is it the community or the museum that must have been severely impacted by COVID-19?

Diane responded: The museum must have been severely impacted by COVID-19.

Comment from Senator Scott Wiener:

Asked for clarification on how the COVID-19 impact is determined?

Carol responded: Currently the way the guidelines are proposed the questions are geared towards the impacts to the museum itself so their revenue, their staffing, their ability to be open and serve their community and things of that nature.

Comment from Senator Scott Wiener:

Okay, so it is not about the community being impacted by the virus, it is about the museum being economically impacted by the pandemic.

Carol responded: Economically and also their ability to serve their community, there are other types of impacts besides just economic that they can include.

Comment from Senator Scott Wiener:

That is really helpful, appreciate the clarification.

Comment from Chair Cash:

Asked for clarification to confirm severely impacted by COVID-19 is a priority not a qualification to apply.

Carol responded: It is a priority, so it is weighted very heavily so it is pretty much like a qualification.

Comment from Catherine Gudis:

Thanks, for the presentation and clarifications.

Asked for clarification of how a museum is being characterized, it seems like this is aimed to serve those who are doing a variety of public programming, presenting historical and cultural histories and the histories of California.

Asked for clarification of superior museum in the context of priorities and expressed concerns about the number of questions and the possible burden that this puts on an applicant.

Expressed concerns about the number of days open and possible impacts that could result in unintended prioritization of larger organizations over smaller organizations who have less staff etc.

Carol responded: Thank you for those comments, this is the purpose of the public comment process to take the Board's and the public's considerations as we finalize the guidelines.

Carol responded: The program being specific to museums is because originally in Assembly Bill 482 which created the program it was to create a competitive grant program to support small capital projects in museums, it was subsequently expanded to include those programming elements, but it was specific for capital projects in museums.

Carol responded: Going back to your comment and also the Senator's comment about whether the community itself was impacted by COVID, maybe there's some way, we can take that into consideration, and we will take those comments back and consider them on how we could potentially incorporate something like that.

Carol responded: We wanted to ensure that museums, have been in operation for a minimum of two years. This was mostly related to sustainability and to ensure they had the existing infrastructure to be able to administer the funding and provide the programming or complete the capital project that we were awarding the grant for. Regarding being open for a minimum number of days related to COVID we did provide a provision in the guidelines that if the museum was closed to the general public but providing services, they could count that as an open day. We are aware that many of our stakeholders have been working out in the community, providing services virtually and in a lot of innovative ways that they were really serving their communities, so just because they were closed but they were providing services, we were still including that as an as an open day.

Diane responded: The guidelines define a museum as a public or private nonprofit institution that is organized on a permanent basis for essentially educational or aesthetic purposes and that owns or uses tangible objects cares for those objects and exhibits them to the general public on a regular basis and in general museums, fall within the following categories art museums, history and heritage museums, including historical societies historical preservation organizations and history museums, children's museums, science and technology museums, including planetariums, discovery centers natural history and natural science museums, general museums and living collections, such as arboretum's botanical gardens nature centers zoos aquariums and wildlife conservation center.

Comment from Don Waldie:

Asked will the members of the board, have access to the full applications of those applicants being recommended for funding?

Carol responded: We can absolutely make those available to the board members.

Comment from Juan Devis:

Thanks, the informative presentation everyone. To follow up a little bit on the train of thought that Catherine brought up, I think there is something there for us to recognize that museums, unfortunately, are not in every single community across California, especially, in areas that are actually very museum poor but they're not culturally poor. There are some organizations in those communities that have served as a de facto museum/cultural center or gathering center without the official label of a museum.

For example, the Ford Foundation just launched a very big initiative of over 160 million dollars to fund America's cultural treasures and they defined those as an American cultural treasure was organizations that had significantly provided access to arts and culture to particular communities, it was not reduced to the label of a museum.

I think it's important to recognize that particularly at this at this point in time, and maybe think about a more expansive understanding of what we consider, a cultural hub in a particular community. I can think of numerous places across California and here in southern California and LA County that reside in museum poor communities, yet they have that role within those communities. I think that those are the communities that actually have been the most impacted by COVID, so I encourage us to continue along the line of this conversation, so that we can open up that definition a little bit more to consider museum and perhaps rethink that a bit Thank you.

Carol responded: Thank you for your comment.

Comment from Senator Scott Wiener:

If you're going to consider the severely impacted by COVID 19 definition, to potentially include whether the community itself has been impacted I just want to say one thing that in the LGBT community there are a lot of risk factors that our community has for COVID 19 and I think our community has been pretty badly impacted however, the state of California, the California Department of Health have severely failed to actually, collect meaningful data about our community. The Department of Public Health, still failed to collect meaningful data, so I if what you're considering ends up prioritizing communities that were impacted, if the LGBT community were to be excluded based on the state of California is failure to collect data, even when legally required to do so, I would object to that, and so I just want to sort of put that marker out there, so thank you.

Carol responded: Thank you for your comment.

Comment from Catherine Gudis:

I want to just circle back around to one thing that wasn't addressed related to my concern about there being 37 questions and whether there has been any thought into ways to streamline this application a little bit.

Carol responded: Thank you sorry I didn't address that one. We often do look at that and we really do try to carefully balance the need for information, in a competitive process and the number of questions but we will take that into consideration and take another look. I know this doesn't address your question regarding folk's ability to apply but one of the things that we did institute across all our programs is to eliminate the need to submit a large volume of documents up front.

We do require all of the information, but we really tried to streamline it so that only those that make it to the final phase of the evaluation process have to submit that additional documentation, so that is one way we try to ease the burden on the stakeholders.

Chair Cash responded: Indicating that staff also conduct technical workshops, where they can sit down individually and have the members of the committee there to help out smaller museums or even the larger museums, who need help, that's made a big difference down the road because we've had people who maybe normally would not have applied but have actually been able to be helped by having these technical workshops.

Carol responded: We will answer questions, up to the point of the entity submitting their proposals, so we provide a lot of assistance, we have a dedicated person who answers the SOAR helpline, so if applicants are having any issues with the submission process we have somebody that answers those questions up to that very last point when they submit to help provide assistance and applicants can call us they call us and we provide that hands on assistance throughout the process until they submit.

Diane responded: I just wanted to speak to the number of questions and hopefully ease some concern, the first nine or 10 questions are data entry questions so they're either selecting ABC or they're just entering a number, very few characters involved. The remainder of the questions have a limit of 3,000 characters so we're trying to keep them from having to provide a full thesis per question and really trying to assist the applicants with streamlining their answers to find a balance but still obtaining the information, we need to make those evaluation decisions, hopefully that's helpful.

Agenda Item 7: Public Comments

Comment from Celeste DeWald:

Good morning chair and board members my name is Celeste DeWald and I'm the Executive Director of the California Association of Museums. Our association with over 200 museum members across the state representing all disciplines and size organizations, was the primary advocate for this one-time investment of \$50 million into CCHE in the Museum Grant Program.

We are also CCHE's partner as you heard in the establishment and continued promotion of this Snoopy license plate, we are extremely grateful to the Legislature and the Governor for recognizing the extreme need for this \$50 million investment, especially since California museums were losing \$22 million a day during the height of the pandemic and many of those organizations were not eligible for, like shuttered venue operators grants, for example, that other entities were. As some of the Board discussion has focused on this is also an opportunity to recommit to the Museum Grant Program's purpose of supporting projects that are deeply rooted in and reflective of previously underserved communities.

We look forward to working with the CCHE staff, the board and legislators to make this kind of investment in museums and cultural institutions a regular occurrence in order to support vital programs, services and capital projects that make a significant contribution to all California communities especially as we all grapple with the existential threat of climate change and how to better serve vulnerable communities museums, want to partner with the state to protect cultural collections for generations to come and to ensure equitable access. I also I want to congratulate the staff on this open process of providing comments and discussion around the guidelines, thank you.

Comment from Chair Cash:

I just wanted to get back to Juan's question about eligibility. Juan if you could maybe help us brainstorm on that too and we don't have to do this here, but we could do it offline just kind of brainstorm how we would define a museum to expand it to allow for more of the communities that are more of the organizations that you were thinking about that would be great if you had any input on that either now or if you could provide that to staff.

Comment from Juan Devis:

Yes, that would be a pleasure to do a little bit of a brainstorming and I'm sure that there are other people here that would welcome be part of that. I think that this has been part of the conversation that we've been having here and at a national level.

Cultural impact of COVID in different institutions, go so well beyond the museums and like I said before there are places like self-help graphics, for example in Boyle Heights is really, the only place that you can consider a museum, yet I don't I don't think that they would qualify for something like this. In the San Fernando Valley in the Inland Empire where there are really important cultural institutions that behave like museums but not called such so, I think that there's an opportunity for us to look into that and I would welcome being part of that conversation.

Agenda Item 7: Public Comments not on the agenda - No public comments.

Comment from Chair Cash:

We really appreciate all the comments and the good discussion here today on the guidelines and we will take all those things into consideration and then all the public comments that we receive, and we will put those together for the final guidelines that we will present at a future meeting. We are planning to come back to the board I sometime in December the public comments period ends on the 12th of November.

We really appreciate everyone being here today and for all of your discussion, and we will see you again in December. Thank you everyone.

Agenda Item 8: Adjournment at 10:07 a.m.

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