

**REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MUSCATINE ART CENTER
April 21, 2026**

Present: Mark Seaman (phone), Mark Post, Diana Tank, Kathleen Haltmeyer, Rebecca Schmertman, David Meloy, Vince Lawson and Mark Butterworth.

Staff: Lynn Bartenhagen, Barb Christensen

Visitors: Pat Carver, Karen Cooney, Kristine Conlon

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by Mark Seaman 12:00 PM.

Minutes: Minutes of the March 17, 2026, Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees were reviewed and discussed. Moved/seconded (Butterworth/Schmertman) to approve the minutes as presented. Motion carried.

Minutes of the April 2, 2026, Special Meeting of the Board of Trustees were reviewed and discussed. Moved/seconded (Butterworth/Post) to approve minutes as presented. Motion carried.

Minutes of the April 6, 2026, Special Meeting of the Board of Trustees were reviewed and discussed. Moved/seconded (Butterworth/Schmertman) to approve minutes as presented. Motion carried.

Minutes of the April 9, 2026, Special Meeting of the Board of Trustees were reviewed and discussed. Moved/seconded (Butterworth/Tank) to approve minutes as amended. Motion carried.

Bills for Approval: Bills in the amount of \$3,122.15 were presented, reviewed, and discussed. Moved/seconded (Butterworth/Schmertman) to approve the bills as presented. Motion carried.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Long-Range Planning: Barb Christensen reported that she has started working as Administrative Support Consultant to the Board of Trustees. Her first endeavors will be to get familiar with staff and current MAC operations.

Three firms (de Novo, Eden+ and BNIM) have recently reached out about continuing to work with MAC. Mark Seaman responded back to them explaining that because of budget and personnel uncertainties at this time that any further endeavors will be put on hold until later this summer.

Finance & Budget: David Meloy led a discussion on the Executive Committee's meeting with city leadership (Mayor Brad Bark, City Administrator Matt Mardensen, and Assistant City Administrator Tony Kies) on April 13. At the meeting a summary of MAC Board's activities were presented including decision to hire Barb Christensen as a part-time administrative consultant. It was also shared with City officials that the Board wanted to be transparent about external funding sources and the restrictions on using them. Another topic, the Muscatine Hotel/Motel tax was also discussed. Matt Mardensen stated that it is capped at 7% and MAC receives 25% of Hotel/Motel tax taken in. This percentage going to MAC isn't going to change, however, if tourism increases or new motels are built in Muscatine the 25% share would get larger. The \$200,000 reduction on 2026/2027 MAC budget was also brought up and MAC representatives asked if it could be reduced. Mayor Brad Bark indicated he would try to ask City Council if they would reconsider.

A discussion on providing city leadership with information about noncity funds benefitting MAC was conducted. It was moved/seconded (Butterworth/Haltmeyer) that Mark Seaman should give city council and leadership a summary of funds held by Support Foundation that benefit MAC. Motion carried.

Lynn shared that the \$15,000 CLP grant report was due in June to the Iowa Dept. Cultural Affairs. Barb Christensen noted she would look into it. Also, there is \$3,000 left from the Carver Trust Grant and they have approved its use for an intern to continue working on the collections project.

Collections: Gifts from the Kautz family includes two drawings by Ellen A. Wagener, and six acrylic paintings by Jack Foco. Both are American artists that have other works in MAC collections. A gift of a farm scene painted by Lee Allen is expected in

May from his family. Allen was friends with William Bunn and Grant Wood. Work continues on barcoding and cataloguing the Jim Burr Collection.

Building & Grounds: Lynn reported that the Friends of the Japanese Garden have started working in the garden and currently waiting for garden mulch to be delivered. Mark Latta has started the water feature. The first Japanese Garden wedding has been scheduled for October 3, 2026.

Community Engagement: The need for communication with MAC stakeholders and public on recent MAC changes was discussed. Mark Seaman proposed to cooperate with Kevin Jenison, Muscatine Communications Manager, on developing a news release in the near future.

Lynn shared that the “Muscatine and the Civil War” exhibition will be up from March 19, 2026 thru May 30, 2027. In conjunction with the exhibit a well-attended program was presented on April 18 in which Lee Williams portrayed Abraham Lincoln and gave a presentation on Lincoln’s life and presidency. After that, author Randee Fieselmann gave a presentation called “The Union First,” centered on her book called “The Union First: Community and Commitment in the First Iowa Infantry.”

“Art Array 2026” is currently displayed on the second floor and will end on May 31.

Local author Frank Kelly will have a presentation/book signing on April 25. His book “An Irish Dream: Feast and Famine” is the first in a trilogy exploring the Kelly family’s history.

There are two Friends of the Muscatine Art Center fundraisers scheduled. Paintings & Pairings, a new event featuring wine, cheese, desert paired with painting workshop, will occur on May 14. The Annual Ice Cream Social is set for June 28 from 1:00 to 4:00 pm and will feature the Burlington Street Bluegrass Band.

Personnel: An update on the search for a new Director was given by Vince Lawson and Mark Seaman. They shared there were a few potentially promising candidates who have applied. Vince Lawson agreed to contact Stephanie Romagnoli about selection and interview procedures and if the candidates have been contacted yet.

Evaluation of MAC staff was discussed since they are supposed to be done in May by the Director, which we don’t have right now. Vince Lawson agreed to contact Stephanie Romagnoli about possibility of staff doing self-evaluations and how he might be of help with the process.

Pat Carver expressed an interest in serving on the Board of Trustees and has applied for the vacant seat.

Lynn reported that Annette Hovland and Katy Loos are interviewing candidates for Collections Intern and Education Intern for the months of June, July, and August.

Director’s Report: In Packet

New Business: Mark Butterworth emphasized the need to continue planning ways to insure the long-term sustainability of MAC due to upcoming city budget reductions.

Next Board meeting – May 19, 2026 at 12:00 P.M.

Adjourn: Moved/seconded by (Haltmeyer/Post) to adjourn. The motion carried and the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Vince Lawson
Secretary
Muscatine Art Center Board of Trustees