

STATE FOUNDATION ON CULTURE AND THE ARTS
General Board Committee Meeting*
250 South Hotel Street, Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813
Physical Meeting Location: Multipurpose Resource Room, First Floor
Remote Meeting Location: Video Conference or Telephone

Wednesday, May 21, 2025 at 11:00am

MINUTES

Members Present

Konrad Ng, Chairperson, Janet Sato, Maui, Randall Fujiki, At-Large; Sean Connelly, At-Large; Michael Marshall, At-Large; Susana Browne, At-Large; Nalani Brun, Kauai.

Member Absent

Jill Kuramoto, At-Large.

SFCA Staff Present

Karen Ewald, Executive Director; Rhiannon Keene, Administrative Assistant, Melly Wilson, Administrative Services Assistant.

Others Present

Alyssa-Marie, Department of Attorney, Representative Jeanne Kapela, Senator Chris Lee.

1. Call to Order

Chairperson Konrad Ng called the meeting to order at 11:02 a.m.

2. Roll Call and Determination of Quorum

Chairperson Konrad Ng called the determination of quorum for the Executive Director to lead. All Commissioners were present, except for Jill Kuramoto.

3. Approval of the Agenda

A motion to approve the agenda was made by Nalani Brun and seconded by Janet Sato. The motion to approve the agenda was approved unanimously.

4. Approval of Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on March 12, 2025

A motion to approve the Minutes of the last General Board committee meeting held on March 12, 2025, was made by Susana Browne and seconded by Janet Sato. There was a discussion to check on the status of each board member when listed in the minutes to ensure who to list as at-large and who to list as the island they represent. The motion to approve the minutes was approved unanimously.

5. Public Testimony on Agendized Items

Chairperson Konrad Ng called for any public testimony. There were none.

6. Items for Discussion, Consideration, and Action

6.a. Federal Funding/National Endowment for the Arts Update

Karen Ewald shared with the full board the NEA update the House submitted its budget request to Congress for fiscal year 2026 which called for the elimination of the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the Institute of Museum and Library Services. Ewald also reported that the NEA sent a large amount of direct grant terminations to some grantees. There was a discussion for the SFCA to gather data on the number of HI grants terminated and total funds lost. Ewald also stated that the NEA funds for this year have already been received in full, and thus there is no impact.

6.b. State Funding FY26 Budget Update

Karen Ewald updated the board on the progress of the budget. She stated that due to the restructuring of the SFCA funding, there would be no recommendations on grants or purchase approvals as these items will be impacted by the SFCA budget. Once the SFCA budget is set and there is clarity on general fund reductions and restrictions, line items, the Special Fund Assessment and the Federal Partnership Agreement, the SFCA will move forward, informed by these items. The SFCA is working with an additional budget which came from the HB1378 measure. This adds layers of processing and paperwork that will take additional time and cooperation with the Department of Accounting and General Services as the SFCA waits for the Operational Expenditure Plan to be released by Budget and Finance.

6.c. 2025 Legislative Session Update

Karen Ewald reported the two measures that remained alive at the close of the 2025 Session: HB1378 and HCR163 HCR163: Urging the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts to establish an annual festival celebrating Pacific Island Culture and Arts.

6.d. Strategic Plan Update

Karen Ewald presented to the board the draft of the new Strategic Plan which is pending approval. Commissioner Brown emphasized the need for approval of this plan and there was discussion to bring the recommendation for approval for the August 22 meeting or a meeting scheduled before that date.

7. Executive Director's Report

Karen Ewald shared with the full board her updates on various items of interest. The inaugural MOD Gala welcomed over 700 attendees inside the museum and outside on the lawn, and met the goals of the friends to raise awareness for the institution. Sponsors included Hawaii Community Foundation, Shangri La Museum of Islamic Art, Culture & Design, Events International, Kaleikini Foundation, LVRG Group, Farther Indico Team, Kanakolu Noa, Kamehameha Schools, First Hawaiian Bank, AHL, Wall to Wall Studios, Battery Bill, NMG Network, KHON 2, Alaska Airlines, Blue Ocean, Romer House Waikiki. The MOD Gala welcomed world-renowned chefs and food artisans who drew inspiration from their cultural roots.

The programming for Capitol Modern FY26 may need adjustments based on the final budget for the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts. Programming will be evaluated based on resources and community needs. Focused community gatherings will be initiated at Capitol Modern as well as on neighbor islands.

Pacific Jurisdiction site visit – American Samoa - Creative West embarked on its second Pacific Jurisdictions (PJs) site visit from April 22 - May 1, 2025. Karen Ewald was on the last leg of the site visits to American Samoa, where she met her counterpart Ammon Fepulea'i and Governor Pula Nikolao Pula. She helped to conduct grants workshops and took part in cultural activities.

8. Announcements

Karen Ewald announced to the full board the next board meeting is on August 22, 2025 on Kauai.

9. Adjournment

Chairperson Konrad Ng called for a motion to close the meeting. A motion was made by Nalani Brun and seconded by Janet Sato. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 12:30 P.M.