



# Memo

City Manager's Office

**TO:** Mayor & Council

**FROM:** Commission on the Arts

**DATE:** January 17, 2012

**SUBJECT:** 2012/13 Arts Funding

The Commission on the Arts held its hearings on 2012/13 COTA Funding requests on November 12, 2011, and formalized its recommendations to the City Council on January 9, 2012. Funding for the process was \$138,117, or an increase of 5% over 2011/12. The minutes from the January meeting are attached to this memo for your information.

The members of the Commission take **very seriously** their criteria and eligibility for funding guidelines, as outlined by the City Council in 1987 and revised in 1999/2000, and listed below:

## **Definition of Eligible Organizations**

1. Be located in Ames.
2. Be incorporated under the Iowa Non-profit Corporation Act.
3. Have by-laws or other documentation which identify its major responsibility as meeting specific art goals.
4. Be federally tax exempt, or affiliated with a federally tax exempt organization.
5. Those which do not discriminate, in accordance with law, on the basis of race, creed, color, sex, age, national origin, religion, physical or mental disability, and sexual orientation.
6. Be a non-governmental agency.

## **Criteria for Funding**

1. Need for financial support.
2. Efforts to obtain funding from other sources.
3. Fiscal responsibility and accountability.

4. How the Ames community would be served.
5. Nature of audience to be served/benefited, with emphasis on benefit to young people.
6. How the arts in Ames will be furthered.

### **Not Eligible for Funding**

1. Capital equipment and salaries will not be recommended by COTA for funding.
2. Activities that restrict participation on the basis of race, creed, color, sex, sexual orientation, age, national origin, religion, physical disability, mental disability, or that require the purchase of private memberships.
3. Organizations which fail to submit previous final reports.
4. Hospitality expenses (e.g. receptions).
5. For-profit organizations, other government agencies, individual artists, and human service agencies.

The Commission has tried to convey to the arts organizations that there is no guarantee of increased levels of funding each year, and that requests are judged on their own merits within the funding available each year. The Commission continues to emphasize the responsibility that organizations have to raise funding on their own to support their individual operations and to avoid becoming too dependent on Local Option Sales Tax funds. These funds should be used to enhance and not replace a group's own fund raising efforts.

The Commission was very detailed in discussing its recommendations. The Commission reviewed previous allocations for current organizations, and talked at length about the level of support which was appropriate for each organization. Commission members were particularly concerned about the balance between funding for annual grant allocations and the amount which should be set aside for mini-grants. The City Council should note that again less is being set aside for mini-grants based on discussion with the arts groups and the need to fund on-going operations of the organizations.

Besides the recommendations, staff has also attached the explanatory paragraphs which may help to answer some of the questions which you may have regarding the programs provided, and the reason behind the funding recommendations, for each organization. It should be noted that during the annual hearing process, the Commission generally asks about ticket prices and increases in membership fees (to keep up with cost increases). Organizations may or may not have specific fees set at that time, since that is often fluid when the funding request is being made 18 months in advance.

Representatives of the Commission will be available on the 14<sup>th</sup> of February to answer any questions you may have.

<b><u>Organizations</u></b>	<b><u>2012/13 Recommended</u></b>	<b><u>2011/12 Adopted</u></b>
Ames Community Arts Council	\$8,111	\$7,700
ACTORS	13,464	12,170
Ames Chamber Artists	2,390	2,390
Ames Children's Choirs	9,718	9,200
Ames Choral Society	2,690	2,550
Ames International Orchestra Festival Association	8,080	7,600
Ames Town & Gown Chamber Music Association	16,007	14,950
Central Iowa Symphony	10,424	10,000
Co'Motion Dance Theater	5,593	5,480
Friends of Ames Strings	1,200	1,200
Kids Co'Motion Dance	3,167	2,860
Octagon Center for the Arts	44,802	43,160
Story Theater Company	8,982	8,780
<b>Annual Grant Totals</b>	<b>\$134,628</b>	<b>\$128,040</b>
Mini-grants	3,489	3,500
<b>Total Budget</b>	<b>\$138,117</b>	<b>\$131,540</b>

**MINUTES**  
**COMMISSION ON THE ARTS**

January 9, 2012

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by Chair Fred Lewis. Members present were Andrew Zehr, Craig Zywicki, Joel Jacobsen, and Christopher Sutch.

**Public Forum**

There was no one present for Public Forum.

**Approval of Minutes**

Chris Sutch moved the minutes from the December 5, 2011 meeting be approved. Andrew Zehr seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

**New Business**

Discussion surrounded most of the paragraphs, detailing the rationale behind the awarding of grants and some editing suggestions were made. Commissioner Zywicki moved that the paragraphs that were presented be approved. Jacobsen seconded. Motion carried unanimously. The Commission will present its budget recommendations at the February 14, 2012 City Council meeting.

When the paragraphs about the Octagon and Ames Community Arts Council are received, the Commission will examine them. Approval will be done by email.

The Commission will next meet on February 6, 2012 at 5:00 p.m.

Zywicki moved the meeting be adjourned. The Commission adjourned at 5:12 p.m.

SL/cg

## **COTA 2012-13 Paragraphs**

### **ACTORS (\$13,464)**

COTA recommends granting \$13,464 to ACTORS, Inc., which has been providing high-quality amateur theater to Ames and the surrounding area for 55 years. ACTORS' productions are the result of hard-working volunteers from all spheres of life, ranging in age from elementary school students to senior citizens, and who mostly come from Ames and other Story County communities. Through the efforts of these volunteers, as well as fund raising and grants from agencies such as COTA, ACTORS is able to provide theater to Ames and the surrounding area while keeping its ticket prices affordable for a wide cross-section of the community.

### **Ames Chamber Artists (\$2,390)**

COTA would like to grant \$2,390 to the Ames Chamber Artists. This group of volunteer singers from Ames audition and perform for the community. In a typical year, Ames Chamber Artists will perform at least two major programs and the group will partner with other Ames organizations (e.g., Ames Middle School) to provide choral entertainment and choral experience. Ames Chamber Artists will be celebrating their 24<sup>th</sup> year.

### **Ames Children's Choirs (\$9,718)**

COTA recommends a grant of \$9,718 to the Ames Children's Choirs. The organization consists of three choirs which perform throughout Ames for community events, conferences, schools, churches, and other special groups. Additional public performances for all three choirs are open to anyone, and the choirs encourage participation from area youth to support artistic and educational experiences. 2012-2013 will be the 18<sup>th</sup> year for Ames Children's Choirs.

### **Ames Choral Society (\$2,690)**

COTA recommends an award of \$2,690 for the Ames Choral Society. Since 1964, the Ames Choral Society has encouraged participation in making and learning about choral music. The non-auditioned, mixed chorus includes about sixty singers, ranging in age

from high school students through older adults. The society benefits Ames and central Iowa by providing a chorus open to all interested persons. They perform three concerts annually and are involved in specialty concerts as well. This past year, they teamed with local musicians to provide a free concert honoring the victims of the attacks on 9/11/01. They plan to participate in a community choir festival in Decorah, Iowa, and possibly offer a program for Breast Cancer Awareness.

#### **Ames International Orchestra Festival Association (AIOFA) (\$8,080)**

COTA proposes a grant of \$8,080 for AIOFA, which has been bringing world-renowned orchestral performances to Ames since 1969. Their mission is to promote and facilitate the live performances of orchestral music by outstanding ensembles and to foster awareness of the value of classical music.” Projects sponsored by AIOFA include educational activities in schools, master classes by visiting professional musicians and local experts, and workshops for ISU musicians. The China National Symphony will perform in March, 2013, with either the Swedish Chamber Orchestra (Spring 2013) or the National Symphony Orchestra of Cuba (Fall 2012) rounding out the 2012-2013 season.

#### **Ames Town & Gown Chamber Music Association (\$16,007)**

COTA suggests an award of \$16,007 to the Ames Town and Gown Chamber Music Association. Ames Town and Gown presents chamber music concerts of world-famous musical ensembles and sponsors educational outreach activities, including initiatives targeting varying age groups. Generally, five concerts are presented each year, featuring one or two string quartets, a piano program and other offerings as artists are available.

#### **Central Iowa Symphony (\$10,424)**

For the Central Iowa Symphony, COTA recommends granting \$10,424. Its mission is to “foster quality performances of orchestral music for the people of central Iowa communities, to offer satisfying musical experience for its musicians, and to provide leadership in the arts community.” Embarking on its 25<sup>th</sup> season, the Central Iowa

Symphony is comprised of local musicians, and continues to focus on special events that target youth performers and audiences. The annual season format has expanded to five orchestral concerts – four at City Hall (Fall, Holiday, Young Artists and Spring Finale) and one at the Ames Band Shell (free Summer Pops). The group has expanded its youth outreach to include free tickets for ISU students.

### **Co' Motion Dance Theater (\$5,593)**

COTA recommends a grant of \$5,593 for the Co' Motion Dance Theater (CMDT). Founded by Valerie Williams in 1978, it is a modern dance company based in Ames. Its mission is to build awareness of and appreciation for modern dance. Co' Motion Dance emphasizes dance as a performing art, a form of communication, and a medium of self-expression. The dance theater plans at least three full length concerts each year, which are rebroadcast on Ames Public Access television. Performances are typically scheduled with one in the fall, winter, and "Women in Motion" in the spring. Performances range from free shows outdoors to formal concerts in theaters. To reach a broad audience, the troupe offers events at various locations, performing most frequently at the Ames City Auditorium. Co-Motion Dance Theater does some touring to promote modern dance across the Midwest and to expose people in other locations to the lively Ames' arts community. CMDT offers free admission to children, age fifteen and younger, who are accompanied by a paying adult.

### **Kids' Co' Motion (\$3,167)**

COTA would like to grant of \$3,167 for Kids' Co' Motion which introduces modern dance to youth in Ames and the surrounding communities. During a three week intensive summer performance workshop, participants (ages eight to eighteen) receive instruction in modern dance technique, composition, improvisation, choreography, and theater arts. Students work together and contribute their ideas and choreography, as well as their dancing, to the final performance. Students attend four hour classes daily for 3 weeks. The program culminates in a performance at the Ames City Auditorium in late July. Dance participants reflect diverse population groups in terms of race, religion and national origins. Kids' Co'Motion integrates students with various physical and/or

mental disabilities into its program. Kids Co' Motion works to make its dance concert available to everyone. Free tickets will be available to the Kids' Co' Motion performance to children, age fifteen and younger, who are accompanied by a paying adult.

### **Friends of Ames Strings (\$1,200)**

COTA recommends granting \$1,200 for the Friends of Ames Strings. This organization offers a two-week Summer String Workshop with a director from outside the Ames area to give students an expanded musical experience that is different from the school year. Besides providing an opportunity to play and improve their skills, the workshop allows students to network with other string players, many of which are from small schools and have few opportunities to play in an ensemble during the school year. In addition, the workshop provides leadership opportunities for advanced players and high school-aged string coaches. The workshop culminates with a public concert that has been well received by the Ames community.

### **Story Theater Company (\$8,982)**

COTA recommends granting \$8,982 to Story Theater Company (STC), which was founded in 2006 to address the shortage of theatrical opportunities for the children of Ames. The company provides educational workshops, performance roles, and positive interaction with artistic adult mentors. It offers two full-scale stage performances (one play, one musical) at the City Auditorium. These shows are produced in collaboration with the Iowa State University Theater Department, utilizing ten to twelve ISU students and personnel as directors and/or designers, and with feature roles for approximately seventy child actors. Their season involves a large cadre of parent volunteers. The company also offers a summer series of workshops focusing on acting, musical theater, Shakespearean acting/stage combat, and film acting. Each workshop concludes with a free showcase performance. STC has fostered the development of more than five hundred child actors and performed to over ten thousand audience members. Each season three hundred tickets are donated to local social service agencies in an on-going effort to provide access to theater to low-income and at-risk families.



### **Ames Community Arts Council (\$8,111)**

COTA recommends granting \$8,111 to the Ames Community Arts Council (ACAC). The organization's mission is to enhance and promote the arts in Ames through education, outreach, and publicity; to provide coordination among Ames arts organizations; and to encourage involvement in the arts by Ames citizens, Ames city government, Ames Chamber of Commerce, Ames Community School District, and the Iowa State University community. The organization actively promotes arts groups and events using a variety of local media. ACAC also works closely with the Main Street Cultural District to promote the downtown community with such events as the MusicWalk, ArtWalk, and Tune In to Main Street Summer Concert Series. ACAC has been promoting and coordinating arts organizations and individuals in the Ames area since 1976 and is seeking continued operational support for its services.

### **The Octagon (\$44,802)**

COTA recommends granting \$44,802 to the Octagon Center for the Arts. The Octagon plays a significant role in the cultural life of the community, frequently working with the Main Street Cultural District, Ames Community Arts Council, area schools, and local organizations. Approximately 6,000 people visit the Octagon galleries each year to enjoy free exhibits featuring local, national, and international artists. One annual event, The National Clay, Fiber, Paper, Glass, Metal, Wood Exhibit, is now in its 44<sup>th</sup> year and draws artists and visitors from across the country. In the past year, nearly 800 students of all ages and backgrounds participated in the 94 classes and workshops offered at the center. The Octagon Art Shop serves as a consignment outlet for art and craft of 211 local and regional artists and attracts nearly 9,000 customers each year. The Octagon Art Festival is the largest annual event in the Main Street Cultural District and draws more than 14,000 visitors and 100 artists to the downtown community each fall. The Octagon has made several functional and operational improvements in recent years, including reducing full-time staff, opening a ground-floor community gallery, moving the Art Shop to improve accessibility, and making significant repairs to facilities. Serving the community since 1966, The Octagon is seeking operational support to continue its services and improve organizational vitality.