

Town of Natick

Massachusetts 01760
Home of Champions



Amy K. Mistrot, Chair
Susan G. Salamoff, Vice Chair
Michael J. Hickey, Jr., Clerk
Jonathan H. Freedman
Richard P. Jennett, Jr.

December 10, 2018

Jay Paget
Program Director, Cultural Facilities Fund
10 St. James Avenue, 3rd Floor
Boston, MA 02116

Dear Mr. Paget:

It is with genuine enthusiasm that the Natick Board of Selectmen support The Center for Arts in Natick's (TCAN) grant proposal to the Massachusetts Cultural Facilities Fund for \$50,000 in matching funds for important repairs to the historic firehouse facility. TCAN is a cornerstone of the vibrant Natick downtown, an economic driver to our local economy, a cultural center for the regional area, and is well loved by both immediate Natick residents and residents from surrounding communities. Any and all efforts to support both the preservation of the building itself and the energy that comes from the building that houses a 290-seat performance space, state-of-the-art lighting and sound systems and the Summer Street Gallery for visual arts is so important to our community.

The building that houses this regional artistic hub was rebuilt in 1875 after the fire of 1874 that destroyed most of the downtown. The building represents a long history from which the Natick nickname - the "Home of the Champions" - was earned at the Hook and Ladder competition in 1891. That long history was reborn in 2003 when the building was renovated and reopened as a venue that "now hosts over 300 performances, movie screenings and classes annually, while providing local artists in Natick and surrounding communities with frequent performance opportunities. Most importantly, TCAN brings people together to share all forms of artistic expression."

The support of the community and the work of the volunteers that support TCAN is seemingly limitless as evidenced by the \$50,000 that has been raised already for the needed repairs; however, the capital needs of the building must be consistently managed and are expensive. The \$50,000 matching grant that TCAN is applying for will address energy efficiency, repairs for extensive structural damage in the concrete floor, and moisture/water penetration. The need for these matching grants is real and significant.

When reviewing the submitted grant applications, the Natick Board of Selectmen is asking the Cultural Facilities Fund to consider the return on the investment of these grant funds from choosing TCAN as an incredibly worthy recipient. The structure itself is well maintained and will continue to be with the added

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investment of these funds. The community engagement – both in the immediate and surrounding communities – is solid evidence that the benefits of this investment will be enjoyed by many in Natick and the broader MetroWest area. This grant is an investment that will return both tangible and intangible dividends to many people and for many years to come.

The Board strongly supports TCAN's grant proposal and respectfully encourages the Cultural Facilities Fund to give full consideration and hopeful approval to TCAN.

Sincerely,

The Natick Board of Selectmen

Amy K. Mistrot, Chair

Jonathan H. Freedman

Susan G. Salamoff, Vice Chair

Richard P. Jennett, Jr.

Michael J. Hickey, Jr., Clerk