

Request for Budget Increase

Presented by: Mount Kisco Arts Council

Prepared on: February 1, 2026

Request to Increase Village Support for Mount Kisco Arts Council

Organization: Mount Kisco Arts Council (MKAC)

Request: Increase the Village allocation from \$10,000 to \$20,000 annually, and modernize the way funds are accessed and administered.

The Ask

- 1. Increase funding:** MKAC currently receives \$10,000 from the Village annually. We are requesting an increase to \$20,000. The allocation has been unchanged since MKAC's inception in 2018.
- 2. Update oversight to a workplan-based model:** MKAC requests a shift from per-purchase approvals to an annual, pre-approved workplan and budget with clear reporting. It is reasonable for Village funding to be earmarked to specific programs, but current per-expenditure approvals create unnecessary friction and slow down contracting, production planning, and partnership coordination.

Why now

- MKAC is delivering consistent, public-facing programming that residents recognize and return to, but the current funding level limits program quality, talent, and capacity.
- A modest increase stabilizes planning, supports higher-quality production, and strengthens MKAC's ability to leverage sponsorships and outside funding.

What the Village gets if this is approved

If the Village increases MKAC support to \$20,000 for the next fiscal year (starting in June), the additional funding will be used to deliver a stronger, more consistent slate of public programs across the year:

- 1. Summer Concert Series:** stronger lineups and better production
 - Increase artist fees enough to attract higher-caliber performers.

- Improve production value (sound support, basic staging needs, logistics) so the series is more reliable, more comfortable to attend, and more likely to grow.

2. Year-round programming expansion (low-cost, high-impact)

Repeatable formats that build consistent engagement:

- Small exhibitions and pop-up showcases (local artists, student work, themed community exhibits)
- Guest lecturer / artist talk series
- Panel discussions and community conversations (arts, culture, creative economy, local history, etc.)

3. Local Artist Grant (pilot) with a public-facing outcome

- Launch a modest annual grant that results in something the community can experience (a public presentation, exhibit, workshop, or performance).

4. Spring Arts Festival: planning and support for the next cycle

Because the fiscal year begins in June, Village funds would support:

- A stronger "Year 2" Spring Arts Festival in Kirby Plaza (or equivalent spring activation), with earlier planning, improved production, and better partner coordination.

5. Organizational readiness and accountability

- If allowable, use a small portion for contracted, task-based support (for example: publicity support for a defined campaign, or grant-writing support tied to specific submissions).
- If Village funds cannot be used for labor, MKAC will keep Village dollars focused on direct program costs and use other fundraising to cover administrative support.

Proof points: consistent attendance and community engagement

- **Reliable turnout and repeat participation:** MKAC programs bring residents together regularly across multiple formats (music, exhibitions, readings, conversations), building a consistent audience and a dependable community rhythm.
- **Summer Concert Series is a proven draw:** The series is a popular, recurring program with clear potential to grow through improved scheduling (day/time) and booking, and stronger production value.

- **Open Stages momentum:** A recent Open Stages attracted approximately 100 attendees and secured a local sponsor (Exit 4 Food Hall), showing community demand and the ability to partner with local businesses.
- **Panel discussions and community conversations:** MKAC has hosted panel-style programs that deepen engagement beyond performances and help residents connect around local creative work and ideas.
- **Steady programming:** The reading series and writing workshops are consistent and sustained by highly committed leadership, which is how long-term community culture is built.
- **Partners and organizations at the table:** MKAC is convening an Arts Summit to bring together local creative organizations, arts-adjacent businesses, and community stakeholders. Village trustees and the mayor are invited, and the Summit is intended to strengthen collaboration and community-facing programming.

Community-facing benefit in plain language

MKAC programming naturally brings people into the heart of Mount Kisco before and after events, creating the kind of lived-in village energy that helps a small downtown feel connected and active without forcing it.

Organizational capacity and sustainability

- MKAC maintains a professional public-facing website (mountkiscoartscouncil.com) and a small merchandise line that supports outreach and modest self-generated revenue. These tools help residents find programs, build awareness, and strengthen continuity.

A practical, accountability-forward funding mechanism

To keep oversight while removing the current approval bottleneck, MKAC proposes one of the following:

Option A (recommended): Annual workplan approval and quarterly reporting

- The Village Board approves:
 1. a one-page annual program plan (events list and goals), and
 2. an annual budget by category (talent, production, marketing, grants, admin).
- MKAC can then expend funds within approved categories without separate votes.

- MKAC submits a quarterly one-page report (events delivered, attendance estimates, partnerships/sponsorships/in-kind support, and spend-to-date vs budget).

Option B: Pre-approved event earmarks (simpler, more restrictive)

- The Village approves a short list of named programs (e.g., Summer Concerts, Spring Arts Festival, Artist Grant, Open Stages production support).
- MKAC can spend within each program budget without separate approvals; anything outside those caps returns to the Board.

Requested action

Approve an increase of the Village allocation for MKAC from \$10,000 to \$20,000, and adopt Option A (preferred) or Option B for fund administration, effective with the next fiscal year budget cycle.

Appendix:

"Year in Review" snapshot

One-page attachment with:

- Total public events produced/co-produced
- Estimated total attendance (clearly labeled as estimates)
- Number of recurring programs
- Partner venues/organizations involved
- Business sponsors/in-kind partners

Then a simple list:

Date | Event | Location | Approx. attendance | Partner/sponsor/sponsor