

**Minutes of the
LOUISIANA STATE ARTS COUNCIL
QUARTERLY MEETING
Baton Rouge, Louisiana
Monday, March 29, 1999
10:00 a.m.**

WELCOME/CALL TO ORDER

Dan Henderson, chairman, opened the quarterly meeting of the Louisiana State Arts Council, which was held at the Capitol Annex Building, at 10:10 a.m. The following members were present:

Beverly Covington	Sally Perry
Dan Henderson	Cynthia Warner
Sara Herrington	Christine Weeks
Mary Terrell Joseph	Laura Jeter Weems
Beth Kaplan	LeAnne Weill
Carolyn McLellan	Beverly Wilson

Council members **absent** from the meeting included:

Cynthia Ardoin	Quincy Hilliard
Leah Chase	Jean Hurley
Marilyn Cox	Kay Kellogg Katz
Ken Ferdinand	Raelene S. Pell
Colleen Fletcher	Charlotte Walter

Staff members of the Louisiana Division of the Arts in attendance were:

James Borders
Lisa Green
Dee Hamilton
Wilton Hardesty
Charles Hunt
Pearlie Johnson
Maida Owens
Ann Russo
Mickie Willis

Also present was Ms. Gerri Hobdy, Assistant Secretary, Office of Cultural Development.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

A motion to accept the minutes of the December 7, 1998 meeting was proposed by Sally Perry and seconded by Beverly Wilson. The motion carried unanimously.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

A. *FY 00 Budget Projection*

Mr. Borders reported that at this time it appears next year's budget will be about the same as this year, FY 99. The Division anticipates the same level of appropriation from the state -- \$5,041,770 -- but this will not be confirmed until after the Legislative Session. The Division's Partnership Grant from the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) will be \$574,000, bringing the total income currently budgeted for FY 00 to \$5,615,770. Total expenditures for next year are projected to be roughly the same as this year, not counting the carried forward NEA funds that were distributed mid-year as additional grants dollars. The same amounts are allocated for the statewide and decentralized grants programs, and the regional folklife program, though some adjustments were made within the Special Initiatives category.

Mr. Borders then fielded questions about the projected funding next year for Special Initiatives, including the projected cessation of formal support for the Opera Initiative and the need to continue to strategize about effective ways to support Cultural Tourism initiatives and collaborations.

REMARKS BY GERRI HOBDY, ASSISTANT SECRETARY, OFFICE OF CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

Ms. Hobdy shared information regarding current legislative issues. The Louisiana Legislature convened for the 1999 session today. Among other items to be considered this year are two of particular interest to arts organizations.

Senate Bill 818, proposed by Sen. Randy Ewing (D-Ruston), would change the composition of the membership of the Louisiana Crafts Council, removing the requirement that one member be the designee of the Louisiana Black Culture Commission. The Commission no longer exists. It was noted that LSAC will appoint crafts panelists to serve in an advisory capacity

House Bill 1187, proposed by Rep. Diane Winston (R-Covington), would establish a percent for art program requiring 1 percent of expenditures for construction or renovation of state buildings be for works of art by Louisiana artists. We are looking to add more public art to our buildings by providing for the purchase of artworks (not limited to sculpture) to be placed in state buildings, interior and exterior, and recognizing Louisiana artists and craftsmen.

There was more discussion about the potential impact of Winston's bill in light of the state's plans to invest \$200 million in construction projects for office buildings and parking facilities around the capitol over the next 10 years. There was also a question from a Council member about whether funds from this legislation could also be used to support the maintenance and exhibition of works in the State Art Collection. Ms. Hobdy reported that no such provisions were included in the current draft of the legislation, but she would be more than happy to work with Rep. Winston in amending the bill to accommodate such expenditures. However, Ms. Hobdy pointed out that we would not want to try and modify the legislation too much for fear that we could lose it completely.

Picking up on that thread, Mr. Borders noted that with regard to legislation proposing the creation of a cultural endowment/trust fund, the signals the ad hoc committee had received from the administration were that the proposal was premature for this session and that we might want to take the next couple of years to flesh out the idea, maybe even work on a feasibility study. There could be an opportunity to introduce the measure during the next legislative session. The wisest course of action was to wait and not confuse the issues, now that the bill for the one percent for art is on the table.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT CONTINUED

After Ms. Hobdy excused herself from the meeting to return to the legislature, Mr. Borders continued with his report.

B. Spring Grants Review Schedule

He noted that the upcoming grants review panel meetings would begin April 27 and continue through Wednesday, May 19-- with a brief break in between for the State Arts Conference May 13 - 15.

Mr. Borders reported that the Division of the Arts had received 213 Arts-in-Education and Project Assistance applications, as well as 19 Artist Roster applications and 94 Mini-Grant applications. This is another record for LDOA in terms of the number of applications to be processed. He thanked the staff for the good job that they are doing with the grants application process.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Executive

Mr. Henderson reported that the Executive Committee met on March 2 to discuss the Division of the Arts' FY00 budget. He also reported that the committee spent time discussing strategies for using Special Initiative funds. The conversation centered around how we can take our limited funds and concentrate them in an area that can generate visibility, but at the same time be cost-effective while maintaining a high level of artistic quality to show that the arts are a key factor in improving the quality of life in Louisiana. Again, instead of dividing the \$50,000 into small bits throughout the state, concentrate funds in a couple of areas, with perhaps State Parks, looking at their goals and objectives and help contribute to meeting their goals. This will help the public and, more importantly, the legislators see that the arts do draw audiences and make other projects successful. We want to use these funds to make an impact and have a true partnership, working together to achieve a common goal.

There was additional discussion about these strategies and other potential projects and partnerships. LDOA staff said they will continue to work on this effort and will keep the Council informed of developments.

B. Advocacy

There was no formal Advocacy committee report, though it was noted that the Division of the Arts was expecting a flat, stable funding level for next year and that the introduction of the Percent for Art legislation put a new item on the agenda for which Council members and arts constituents could advocate.

C. Policy

Mr. Borders reported that although this committee hasn't had a chance to meet formally, they have been working as part of the Joint Committee on Grants on the process of revising Division of the Arts grants guidelines for 2000-2002. Progress reports had been mailed previously to all Council members. Most of the key areas for improvement had been identified through public meetings and surveys and the staff was in the process of developing to recommendations for improvement, which are not major.

A brief discussion followed on the recommended actions for expanding the scope of the fellowship program, the use of out-of-state panelists and the introduction of grants applications that can be filled out by applicants on their computers.

D. Special Events

1. Governor's Arts Awards

The Special Events Committee met on March 9 to select the 1999 Governor's Arts Awards winners. This year the committee selected nine recipients. At the end of the meeting there were some recommendations to improve and build upon the process. One recommendation was to add a Media category to recognize those who provide outstanding coverage of the arts. There was discussion among Council members about adding this category and strategies for increasing the number of nominees for the awards and the sense of prestige that the awards carry.

Mary Joseph moved to add media as a category for the Governor's Arts Awards and LeAnne Weill seconded. The motion carried without any opposition.

It was agreed that the Division staff would work on developing recommended criteria and language for the media award category.

This was followed by a brief update on plans for the Governor's Arts Awards reception/ceremony on May 13 at the Old State Capitol, 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.

2. State Arts Conference

Mr. Borders provided an update on plans for the State Arts Conference, *ArtWorks '99: A Sense of Place*, and distributed registration brochures to Council members.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Approval of Panelists for Spring Grants Review

Mr. Borders asked the Council for a formal approval of the list of panelists for the spring grants review sessions slated to begin April 27, 1999. The list of panelists confirmed to date had been sent previously to the Council for review. Christine Weeks moved to accept the recommendations. Carolyn McLellan seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

B. Endorsement of Mini-Grant Selections

The Council was then requested to endorse the list of mini-grant recipients sent prior to the meeting. These artists were selected by the staff in mid-March. There were 94 applicants and 35 were selected for awards of \$500 each to support their professional development.

The staff fielded questions about the geographic distribution of the grant recipients and the final reporting requirements for the mini-grants.

Sara Herrington moved to accept the recommendations. Cynthia Warner seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

A. Plan for State Art Collection

At the December 1998 LSAC meeting at the new and spacious Alexandria Museum of Art, a few Council members inquired about the condition of the state art collection and the LDOA's overall plan for the collection. The staff promised to provide an

update at the next meeting.

Ann Russo, visual arts director, delivered the report and led the discussion. The state art collection, she explained, was developed in the early 80's when LDOA actually operated a visual arts gallery in the Old State Capitol before it was renovated. After the agency was kicked out of the gallery, the pieces from the collection were then put on loan in state office buildings around the Capitol Complex. Over the years, there have been inconsistent efforts to repair, conserve, and preserve the collection, which now contains more than 100 items. Some years ago, a couple of pieces even disappeared from the offices that they were loaned to and have not been recovered yet.

Ms. Russo's report included an update on recent exhibitions of portions of the collection and opportunities to increase public access to the collection through exhibitions at other galleries, museums, businesses and events around the state; discussions the LDOA has been having with museums in the state regarding possible long-term loan of portions of the collection; the recently acquired climate-controlled storage arrangements for works not on display in state offices; a new appraisal of the collection that is underway by the same firm that last appraised the collection in 1992; the recent cleaning of some of the pieces that were lent out for public exhibition this year at the Imperial Calcasieu Museum in Lake Charles; plans to re-photograph the collection and to augment the images currently being used in the online version of the collection; a description of the database that is used to maintain an inventory of the collection; and the challenges of providing sufficient funds to support the needs of the collection.

Council members requested that the state arts collection be on the agenda as an ongoing item under New/Old Business so that the Council will be kept abreast of developments.

OTHER COMMENTS

It was noted that the next LSAC meeting is scheduled for Monday, June 28th.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, a motion was made to adjourn. It was seconded and adopted. The meeting ended at 12:25 p.m.