

## LOUISIANA STATE ARTS COUNCIL QUARTERLY MEETING

Capitol Park Welcome Center

702 River Road

August 21, 2008

10:30 a.m.

### WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Scott Hutcheson welcomed the Council members and Division staff and asked each one to introduce them self.

#### **Louisiana State Arts Council (LSAC) members present:**

Virginia Saussy, Fred Zeagler, Karen Courtman, James Hartman, Gerri Hobdy, Gale Odom, Barbara Motley, Marguerite Anderson, Angela King, Michael D. Robinson, and Rose Marie Sand

#### **Louisiana Division of the Arts (LDOA) staff present:**

Danny Belanger, Vanessa Ledbetter, Sparkle Hurst, Dána La Fonta, Kelly Pepper, Bethany France, Ann Russo, and Maida Owens

Pam Breaux, Secretary of DCRT; Scott Hutcheson, Assistant Secretary of OCD; and Tommy Usrey, Vice President of Louisiana Partnership for the Arts Advocacy

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Hutcheson asked Mr. Zeagler, who was present at the last Council meeting, to motion to accept or reject the Minutes. Mr. Zeagler motioned to accept the Minutes. Ms. Breaux seconded the motion as the ex-officio member, and who was also present at the last meeting. The Minutes were approved as presented.

### CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Mr. Hutcheson gave an overview of the history of the Louisiana State Arts Council, its function, and the legislation that created it. Included in the packet is a copy of the by-laws, which is something that will be approached through some of our committee work, making updates and amendments to them. The by-laws should be tweaked every now and then based on the structure of the Council, the role, responsibility that has been assumed, and such. The information on the grants is also included. Mr. Hutcheson informed the Council members that the main purpose of this meeting is to approve the 171 statewide arts grants recommendations.

The Division of the Arts operates within the Office of Cultural Development, which also includes the Division of Archaeology, the Division of Historic Preservation, and CODOFIL (The Council for the Development of French in Louisiana). The Division of the Arts oversees the Statewide Arts Grants, Percent for Art, Arts-in-Education, Folklife, Individual Artists, and Decentralized Arts Funding Programs. The Division manages the Decentralized Arts Funding Program in cooperation with regional distributing agencies around the state. The Council serves as an advisory body to the Division, but it has one governing function that's legislative. That function is to approve the grant awards each year. The Council serves as an advocate for the Division of the Arts and the arts in general. The Council is also involved in the Governor's Arts Awards, advising how the arts awards should be given out. It selects the winners for the arts awards each year. Nominations come from

across the state. The Council, as an independent body, reviews the nominations and makes selections for the current year's Governor's Arts Awards. The Louisiana State Arts Council is very important to the structure of arts leadership in the state of Louisiana.

Ms. Breaux spoke on how the Council's work in the Office of Cultural Development fit into the Department of Culture, Recreation, and Tourism. The Lt. Governor is charged with being the Commissioner of the Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism. The Department includes the Office of Cultural Development, which the Council will work most closely with; the Office of Tourism; the Office of State Parks; the Office of the State Library; and the Office of the State Museum. Ms. Breaux shared with the Council the Department's most recent Annual Report to give an idea of the guiding principles by which we are driven, and for results that we work to achieve. The Arts Division's work is embedded across all that we have charged the Department with, most important, the Division's responsibility and role around the concept of developing Louisiana's cultural economy. The cultural economy work has spread to create a vision, not just for the Office of Cultural Development and its divisions, it also helps to steer the offices of the Department to acknowledging that Louisiana's cultural assets, cultural industries, arts preservation, and all of those components of culture are of critical importance to the state of Louisiana, and for the development of the state as a whole. Culture employs 144,000 people in our state. It's the second largest workforce we have in the state. Ms. Breaux read the following 5 principles of governing, which are important for the entire organization, on how we focus around doing the work that we do:

- Our diversity is a strength, not a weakness
- We work to expand and diversify Louisiana's economy
- We work regionally to lead globally
- We work to add value to raw material, native talent, and intellectual capital
- We set our goals to international standards, not the southern average

Whether our work is within the Division of the Arts, the entire agency, or across the entire department, these are the principles that lead our work, our goal setting, our planning and the execution of that work.

The Council works in partnership with the Louisiana Partnership for the Arts (LPA), an organization that exists for advocacy and professional development of the arts field. The LPA with various partners, including the Council, advocate for public investment in the arts. Most of the advocacy is manifested through working with the Louisiana Legislature. Some of the work the LPA does involve working with the Congressional Delegation as it pertains to the State Arts Council. The advocacy work that happens at the state level is organized by the LPA.

The Council is also involved in making recommendations to the Secretary of the Department for candidates for the executive director's position. We are in the middle of the process to hire a permanent executive director. The Council will have a sub-committee and the sub-committee will be looking at the finalists and prioritize candidates to recommend. At the end of the process, the Secretary will decide whom to appoint as executive director to the Division of the Arts.

Ms. Breaux assured the Council that they could call her or Mr. Hutcheson at any time with questions regarding their role as it pertains to supporting and advocating for the Division of the Arts. Ms. Breaux and Mr. Hutcheson are the 2 Ex-Officio members of the Arts Council. They take that role very seriously, especially in this time of transition caused largely to new rules and the legislation concerning the financial disclosure for ethic reform. That is why many of the people on the Council are new. It was a confusing time at the end of the legislative session. Many people left Board and Commissions

very quickly because it was very hard to absorb the impact of the financial disclosure. Some are returning to the Boards and Commissions, and newer people are coming on as we finally take a look at the 11<sup>th</sup> hour work the Legislature was able to do to minimize some of the impact of the Financial Disclosure Rule. Mr. Hutcheson informed the Council that a roster list of Council names and e-mail addresses would be available. Much of the communication with the Council will be via e-mail.

Mr. Hutcheson spoke on the Louisiana Partnership for the Arts, a critical partner with the State Arts Council and the Office of Cultural Development. Its sister organization is the Louisiana Partnership for the Arts Advocacy (LPAA). That is where Mr. Tommy Usrey plays such a significant role in. The role of LPAA is to be advocates for increased funding through the Office of Cultural Development, especially to the budget for the Division of the Arts. We are happy to report as we look at the grants for this year, we were successful in receiving a \$922,000 increase in funding from the last legislative session. Every other year is a fiscal session where you can increase taxes and get money through legislative means. They also work to get the legislature to increase executive budgets for organizations. There will be a special session in January and the regular session will begin in March. You will begin receiving in your inboxes "Tommy's Tips" which are part of his role in advocacy. Mr. Usrey's e-mail address is [artsmanne@aol.com](mailto:artsmanne@aol.com). The Council also plays a great role as advocates for us in those efforts, which serves the entire State, and in distributing those funds to ensure that they get to where they need to get to have the impact that we hope they do.

#### **DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Mr. Belanger spoke on the grants and described the distribution the grant categories as follows:

- Stabilization – primarily for the institutions that we financially support across the state.
- Capacity Building – primarily for the institutions that we financially support across the state.
- Arts-in-Education – where we help support our regional partners in Arts-in-Education as well as some of the school systems that we work with.
- Folklife – where we support folk artists and folk fellowships.
- Local Arts Agencies – we help support 10 arts councils across the state through the Local Arts Agencies who help distribute our grants for us through decentralized art funding, as well as assisting with issues that we deal with on a state level.
- Artists Services – for individual artists.

There were increases from the FY08 and FY09 numbers for Stabilization and Capacity Building, which is responsible for the actual funding we received from the capital bill this year.

Mr. Belanger referenced the Funding Recommendation Summary sheet listing \$5,636,286 in grants the Division gave out this year, including the extra funds that were recently received from House Bill 1. This is the largest grant total ever received. We are approaching \$6,000,000 with another \$400,000 for special programs and Special Initiatives that have not been allotted yet. These dollars go directly to the organizations and artists across the State. No funds are kept within the Division.

Mr. Usrey researched and found that we are the second largest cultural producer in the State, behind Tourism. For every dollar that goes out the door, \$18 is realized through State Revenue. We touched 5.4 million people this year through our grant dollars, and gave 171 grants. The Division had over 400, combining the 215 decentralized arts funding which are our regional partners who receive money from the State for doing their regional grant distributions. There were also grant dollars received that were separate from us, and Pass Throughs, which the Legislature gives to recipients who apply through the Legislature for arts funding. The Council is being asked to help us move forward with our dollars.

We can't release the dollars until the State Arts Council gives their approval. Ms. Breaux gave a brief background on the Council approving the allocation of funds without having reviewed the applications. The Council's role is to approve a process and an outcome that ensures that there is good access and good distribution of the dollars.

When the Division receives applications, earlier in the year, they go through staff reviews, and then they go through very in-depth reviews by several panels of reviewers. The panels are assembled according to the discipline of that individual panel. The reviewers go through every application. This process is divided between 8 – 10 review panels. The panelists receive the applications in advance, and are given a few weeks to review them one-by-one. Then they convened together as a group to do a group review of the applications. The opportunity to apply is published broadly across the state. The Division staff offers grants workshops in each of the 8 regions of the state so that those who have heard about the applications and the opportunity for funding have a chance to learn about it. That process is then followed up with Division staff offering technical assistance, usually by telephone, to anyone who has a question while completing their application. Technical assistance is available for about 1 month prior to the grants deadline. 354 applications were received. The internal process ensures everything is in place, and that we have everything we need from the various applicants. If something is missing, we try to get it prior to the reviewers assembling. Reviewers are employed from within the state, and some from outside the state, to make the recommendation. Who determines the grant? Ms. Breaux answered the panels make that recommendation; however, if the Division staff sees there are some things that might have gone awry, then it becomes the staff's responsibility to make a determination as to whether the panel recommendations were obscured for some reason. If that were the case, then it is brought to the Council.

Mr. Belanger referenced the sheet providing the scores of what the panel recommended and how they deployed the funding. As the score gets lower, the applicant gets a lower percent of the amount they asked for. There were a number of applicants who scored higher than others and did not receive funding, and Mr. Belanger explained that some of those applicants might have received Fellowships. Is it common for the percentage of people receiving grants to be high on the organizations and much lower on the individual applications? Ms. Breaux answered that it's the volume. Does the panel start with a slice of pie that goes for each different type, or is there discretion over the entire process? Mr. Belanger answered the Division gives them the applications to look at and they make their recommendations for who they would like to fund. Once they have made their final recommendations, they are told what the allotted funding is for the category. The panelists then divide that funding up between the recommendations they have already made. It's done this way because, if we begin the process with the allotted funding known, the reviewers may not judge the applications as clearly as possible. What process is used when an applicant protest the funding recommendations? There is an appeals process. We received none this year. Had there been any appeals, the Council would review them. What about the conflict of interest flags? Several of the panelists may be involved with the arts in their community, they may have been involved with an organization and have knowledge, or they may have served on a Board. The Division tries to be cognizant of this beforehand and as the people are invited to be panelists, we ask. They are flagged because we ask that panelist to step out during the voting process.

We have material present for organizations from the smallest to the largest. If someone does not receive a grant, are they included on the list? All of the organizations and individuals, whether funded

or not, should be listed in the packet. How is past performance with grants that were awarded years before affect grants that are submitted this year? If a grantee or organization didn't spend all of their funds from a previous year for the same program, how does that weight into the matrix? The Division has grant guidelines that lists the criteria. Mr. Belanger asked that the Council not share any of the information included in the packets. Are the actual or average scores given to the organizations? Mr. Belanger answered organizations receive their actual score. What is Region 1A?

- Region 1 – New Orleans Region
- Region 1A – Northshore Region
- Region 2 – Baton Rouge Region
- Region 3 – Houma-Terrebonne Region (The River Parishes)
- Region 4 – Acadiana Region
- Region 5 – Southwest Louisiana Region
- Region 6 – Alexandria Region (Central Louisiana)
- Region 7 – Shreveport Regional Arts Council (Northwest Louisiana Region)
- Region 8 – Northeast Regional Arts Council (Northeast Louisiana Region)

They mirror the Economic Development Planning Region of the state. Arts Council members are picked by region, and as the grant panelists are chosen, the Division has a regional focus with that as well. Panelists are selected from all over the state. Does the Division look for expertise when selecting a panel? Mr. Belanger answered yes, the panelist need to be involved in that field. How the amount of funds is available determined for the different categories? Ms. Breaux answered history and precedence is part of it. We also look for the strategic planning process. The Strategic Plan for the Division of the Arts expresses areas of emphasis, need and focus, which play a part. We establish the need based upon the request.

We look at the statewide art grant programs, as opposed to the decentralized arts funding programs where those dollars are deliberated on at the local level. We look to see what we're covering in one and looking for ways so it's not duplicated in the other. There are a lot of things that come into the process. Mr. Hutcheson added that it's according to impact also. The organization's service operations are often broader than individual artists or small groups. That is seen a lot in the capacity building and stabilization grants that have different purposes, and the numbers reflect that. Sometimes there is an increase when an organization moves out of capacity building. The idea behind that is to invest in the growth of organizations. Organizations move out of the capacity building category into the stabilization category that often is rewarded with different and larger grant totals because their impact and services are greater. What about the artist's grants? Ms. Breaux answered the need is great because there are so many artists that are unfunded compared to those that are funded. More dollars are needed in the artist program. It's not as evident in looking at the sheet in the packet, but it is another leading category. It's a category where there's a lot of opportunity to put new dollars in. We have addressed additional dollars in individual artist programs, and significant new dollars in the stabilization program that covers those organizations that are behind in catching up to past funding awards. Are the regional agencies panel driven? The process differs for the regions, and the regional agencies are done on a per capita basis according to the size of the organization and the communities served by them. They are betted through a panel at a regional level.

The allotments received by the arts councils that are best served as regional distributing agencies receive allotments based on population. The size of the pot is based on the amount of money we get from the State of Louisiana for arts grants. Half of the dollars are reserved at the state level for

statewide competition, and the other half is distributed to the 9 Regions per capita for their regional arts councils. Those arts councils enter into a contract with the Division of the Arts on how to best serve their regions. They employ local panels, for local decision making, to bet those applications. This is the decentralized program. It is a complimentary grant pool that is local, has its own process, and each region does it a little differently but with an approved process. They work within the guideline the Division sets up. There are local options within those guidelines so that they can adapt to the type of constituents they serve, geography issues and capacity issues and such. Mr. Hutcheson asked for a motion to approve the panel recommendations. Mr. Hartman motioned to approve funding recommendations, and Mr. Robinson seconded. Funding recommendations approved as presented.

## **STANDING COMMITTEES**

Mr. Hutcheson would like to have the Council fully seated before moving on to the larger committee structures. He distributed a sheet to the Council with some other future committee assignments in which the Council might be interested, and a copy of the by-laws to see what it entails. The Council will vote on the nominating committee within the by-laws that set the nomination process for the Chair. That might be best served if it waits until the next meeting to be addressed. We need to move forward on the Governor's Arts Awards.

### **Advocacy**

None

### **Policy**

None

### **Special Events**

#### *Governor's Arts Awards*

The Governor's Arts Awards this year are scheduled for October 7<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Belanger gave a brief background on the GAA process. The Division will also be celebrating its 20<sup>th</sup> year anniversary this year. In the past a date is set and a call for nominations for the categories is released. The categories are: Arts Organizations, Professional Artist, Folk Artist, Arts Education, Patron, Leadership in the Arts, Lifetime Achievement, Cultural Economy Development, Historic Preservation Partnership, and Cultural Tourism. The Lt. Governor recently added the last 3 awards. The Division staff group is under the leadership of Division staff member Kelly Pepper. Ms. Pepper has compiled a listing of all the nominees this year. The Council will convene a group of 3-5 members to review the applications and make recommendations to the Division. There is a short timeline to get the necessary information to print for invitations and programs. Mr. Hutcheson asked the Council for volunteers to serve on the Governor's Arts Awards Selection Committee. The Committee would meet in Baton Rouge for 1 day. Michael Robinson, Angela King, Rose Marie Sand, Barbara Motley, Marguerite Anderson, and Gerri Hobdy volunteered serve on the Governor's Arts Awards Selection Committee. 5 packets were available at the meeting to distribute to the committee, and Mr. Hutcheson will deliver the sixth packet to the volunteer from New Orleans. Mr. Belanger will coordinate with the Committee to establish a date to meet to review the nominations.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Mr. Hutcheson asked the Council if there were any general questions needing to be answered about the State Arts Council. How many members are on the Council? There are 22 members. What is the handout distributed for? It's regarding the ad hoc committees. There are 2 Standing Committees, the Executive Committee and the Nominating Committee, listed on page 4 of the by-laws. In the past, the

ad hoc committees were the Advocacy Committee and the Special Events Committees. Ms. Breaux acknowledged the by-laws need updating. The Division will follow-up with the Council by e-mail in the next month, or shortly thereafter, regarding any preference to serve on a committee. A description of what each committee does will be included. We will need Chairs for those also. 12 members are needed to have a quorum, which we have, including Ms. Breaux and Mr. Hutcheson.

A Council member read in the by-laws that each member is to serve a 6- year term. Mr. Hutcheson answered the by-laws are up for revision. The by-laws do not usurp the legislation. We operate with 22 members with 6-year terms. Ms. Breaux informed the Council that the by-laws are subject to the Council's revisions to work in concert with the legislation. The legislation is the primary document that we work from and respond to. The legislation is different largely because it was amended after the by-laws were amended. The legislation is more specific and up-to-date. A part of the process of updating the by-laws would be to make it match the legislation. Council terms work mostly in concert with gubernatorial administrations. Will the Council participate in the executive director search prior to the next meeting? Ms. Breaux and Mr. Hutcheson answered yes. Applications are currently being betted for certain qualifications. The Council will be updated on the timeline, which is expected to happen in the coming weeks. Gale Odom and Michael Robinson volunteered to participate in the executive director search. There is no set timeframe, and at a certain point it will be done electronically. At that time the Council will be asked to participate in the interviews.

A Council member asked if they were to draw lots at that meeting to determine the length of their terms. Ms. Breaux answered they are recommending that the Council be fully seated before moving on that. The main purpose for today's meeting is to get the grant recommendations approved and select a Special Events Committee for the upcoming Governor's Arts Awards, in which a quorum is needed. Ms. Breaux stated there have been situations in the past where the Governor has appointed the chairman without having the Council fully seated, and there have been situations where the Governor has not. We are a work in progress and a little bit of fallout with the new Ethics Reform. In the legislation received, the Lt. Governor has a certain amount of nominees and the Louisiana Partnership for the Arts receives a certain amount of nominees.

If the Lt. Governor nominates someone, the Partnership for the Arts cannot re-nominate that person. That is the reason why there are a lot of new members. We had to fall within what the legislation would allow just for nominations. Currently the Council is 9 members short of being fully seated.

Mr. Hutcheson distributed the Governor's standard document for the appointment to a board or commission and asked the members to complete it. Appointees are required to complete the document so that they can become certified, and duly authorized to take the actions taken today.

Are the member's home address and contact information going to be posted on the website? Mr. Hutcheson answered yes.

Ms. Ledbetter distributed and explained what information needs to be completed by the Council on the reimbursement form for mileage incurred traveling to and from the meeting.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

None

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

None

## **ADJOURN**

Mr. Hutcheson called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Robinson motioned to adjourn, and Ms. Odom seconded. The meeting adjourned at 1:00 p.m.