**MINUTES OF THE**

**LOUISIANA FOLKLIFE COMMISSION MEETING**

**State Library of Louisiana**

**701 North 4th Street, Capitol View Conference Room**

**Baton Rouge, LA**

**Friday, June 3, 2011**

**Folklife Commission members present:** Ray Berthelot, Doug Bourgeois, Winifred Byrd, Teresa Parker Farris, Marcia Gaudet, Rebecca Hamilton, Jonn Ethan Hankins, Dána La Fonta, Karen Leathem, Charles McGimsey, Nicole Hobson-Morris, Allison Peña, Susan Roach, Michael Robinson, Dean Sinclair, Susan Spillman, Liz Williams.

**Folklife Commission members absent:** Lisa Abney, Chris Broussard, Kevin Billiot, Amanda LaFleur, Michael Sartisky.

**Louisiana Division of the Arts (LDOA) staff present:** Maida Owens, Sparkle Hurst.

**Guest(s) attending:** Dayna Lee, HDR Inc.; Liz Williams, National Park Service.

**I. CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME/INTRODUCTIONS**

Teresa Parker Farris opened the meeting of the Louisiana Folklife Commission at 11:00 a.m. at the State Library of Louisiana in Baton Rouge.

**II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Liz Williams moved to accept the minutes and Winifred Byrd seconded. The minutes were accepted as presented.

**III. REPORTS**

**A. LDOA Budget Report – Dána La Fonta**

La Fonta gave an overview of the budget cuts in the Arts Division. The State Arts Grants Program received $959,000 and the Decentralized Arts Funding Grants received $1.5 million.  Since 2009, the grants budget has been cut 60%.  The Arts Division is working with a consultant on the Strategic plan for the agency that consists of focus groups around the state, an online survey, and individual interviews with key stakeholders and business leaders. After the Louisiana State Arts Council approves a draft, it will be posted for public comment.

Hankins asked about allocations to programs.  La Fonta explained that in the last few years the Arts Division has been sustaining cuts and more could happen in coming years. At this time, travel is suspended.  Hankins asked whether other agencies suffered mid-year cuts and what the Commission could do to avoid this. La Fonta responded that all agencies have sustained cuts due to the state budget deficits and the global recession.

**B. Director – Maida Owens**

Owens provided a written report that is attached to the minutes. Owens pointed out her involvement with the Governor’s Office of Coastal Preservation and Restoration’s next master plan in addition to her involvement with the American Folklife Center’s Homegrown Concert series where she presented Marce Lacouture, David Greely, and Kristi Guillory singing Cajun and Creole home songs.

Owens introduced the three new Commissioners. Nicole Hobson-Morris is representing the Division of Historic Preservation; Dána La Fonta represents the Louisiana Division of the Arts, and Michael Robinson with LSU is representing the Louisiana State Arts Council.

**1. Update on Folklife Program Activities**

Owens shared about the Open Doors Mentoring Program which has 6 more organizations bringing the total to 9 participating in the program. Each organization gets a project assistance grant and can attend four organizational development workshops during their first year. Their second year, they can get a Capacity Building grant. This labor intensive model has been challenging to implement with the state budget and staff reductions. We are exploring other strategies to serve a broader component of the Folklife constituency.

**IV. BUSINESS**

**A. Republishing Louisiana Folklife: *A Guide to the State* – Susan Roach**

Roach recommended not republishing the Guide as a print publication, but rather to post key articles on the Folklife in Louisiana website, [www.louisianafolklife.org](http://www.louisianafolklife.org).

**B. Folklife Implementation plan for LDOA Strategic Plan – Maida Owens**

Owens presented a report on the results of the Folklife Visioning. The Commission accepted the report as presented and asked Owens to forward it to the Louisiana State Arts Council with a cover letter asking LSAC to consider the report in the course of developing the LDOA strategic Plan. Some Folklife representatives will be invited to the focus groups and all commissioners will have the opportunity to comment on the initial draft. Owens asked Commissioners to let her know if they would like to volunteer to work on the Folklife work group for the implementation plan.

**C. Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill MC 252 Incident and Response: Traditional Cultural Properties Inventory and Research –Dr. Dayna Lee, HDR Inc and Liz Williams, National Park Service**

Lee, Williams, and Christopher Moreno are preparing a report on the cultural impact of the oil spill for HDR, Inc, which is contracted by the National Park Service. Lee is supervising several contractors who are identifying culturally significant locations in Louisiana which will result in a cultural inventory of the coastal parishes. Funding is from BP. The Louisiana work is part of a larger effort to document the Gulf Coast with 15 ethnographers. Mississippi, Alabama, and Florida are pretty much complete.

Liz Williams reported on the clearinghouse of oil spill oral histories that are posted on the Southern Food and Beverage Museum’s website. She has talked with many groups wanting to document the impact of the spill on the culture. She encouraged Commissioners to send people to the website to add other projects. They are also collecting artifacts related to the spill and culture. She will provide a call for identifying documentation projects for Owens to disseminate.

**D. Set date for next Commission meeting**

The next meeting is scheduled for Friday, January 6, 2012 at 11:00 a.m.

**V. PUBLIC COMMENT AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Rebecca Hamilton announced that the Louisiana book Festival found private funding and will be held this year.

Allison Pena announced that the National Park Service is planning commemoration the Battle of New Orleans in 2015.

Jonn Hankins announced that the 200th anniversary of the 1811 slave revolt on Destrehan Plantation will be celebrated throughout the year.

Ray Berthelot announced that the Plaquemine Locks State Historic Site will be reopening through collaboration with the community.

Marcia Gaudet announced that University of Louisiana at Lafayette will be offering an undergraduate degree in traditional music performance in the music department.

Susan Roach announced that the Louisiana Quilt Documentation project is now linked to the National Quilt Project and she is providing an article for that project.

Doug Bourgeois reported about changes in the Scenic Byways Program. The routes are being evaluated.

Susan Spillman reported about her efforts to incorporate New Orleans culture into the Xavier University curriculum.

Owens reported that the Louisiana Bicentennial Commission’s education program is using the Louisiana Voices foodways unit and New Populations research in its lessons plans. These were developed by Memory Seymore with the Louisiana State Museum.

Susan Roach shared Louisiana Folklife Festival posters with the Commissioners.

Karen Leathem reported about the exhibit, Living with Hurricanes: Katrina and Beyond, has opened at the Louisiana State Museum.

**VI. ADJOURN**

There being no further business to discuss Allison Peña motioned to adjourn and Chip McGimsey seconded. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 12:20 p.m.

**Folklife Program Director’s Report – June 3, 2011**

**Maida Owens**

I continue to serve on the **Cultural Heritage Technical Advisory Committee** for CPRA 2012 Master Plan, Office of Coastal Protection and Restoration along with Don Davis and Carl Brasseaux.

**Lower Mississippi Delta Initiative application**: We received $21,150 to present online the Louisiana Delta Folklife Project research and archive Folklife Program materials.

The LFP archives at LSU were invited to be part of the **AFS National Folklife Archives Initiative** funded by NEH. AFS will provide $5250 for LSU to hire an archivist to enter collection level data into a database over the next two years through May 31, 2013. We will be one of ten organizations participating.

The **LDOA Strategic Plan** has completed the online survey and 6 focus groups. Four 1-on-1 interviews are next. All commissioners will be invited to the open meeting presenting the results. After the Strategic Plan is completed, folklife will have a working group to inform the implementation plan.

**New Populations – Open Doors Mentoring Program:** Six immigrant organizations are participating in the second year of the Open Doors Mentoring Program along with the three from the first year. The 2011 organizations are receiving a $3000 project grant. Consultants Amy Skillman and Laura Marcus Green are working with the 3 2010 organizations to determine their strategies to best use a $1000 grant to support organizational development. 19 people participated in the first Open Doors workshop on Saturday, May 21 that introduced them to arts resources. Three more workshops will be held: Building Organizational Capacity, Marketing, and Fundraising.

**2011 Participating Organizations 2010 Participating Organizations**

Baton Rouge Bengali Association (BRBLA) Adelante, Inc. (Nicaraguan), New Orleans

Baton Rouge Chinese Culture Club (BRCCC) Asociación Cultural Latino-Acadiana (ACLA), Lafayette

Indian Arts Circle of New Orleans (IACNO) Yang Guang Chinese Dance Troupe, BR

Wat Thammarattanaram (Laotian), Broussard

Vietnamese American Young Leaders of New Orleans (VAYLA-NO)

Akashleena Literary Cultural Organization (ACLO) (Bengali), Prairieville

**New Populations Fieldwork:** Laura Marcus Green is surveying the Shreveport area to identity immigrant organizations and their traditions. Laura Westbrook, Susan Roach, and Sheila Richmond will be completing projects on New Population communities that they had started, but were not complete when the Regional Folklife Program ended. Laura is doing an additional Asian dance project in New Orleans. Sheila is documenting Chinese New Year in Shreveport. Susan Roach is working on Mexican ritual traditions.

We have received $45,000 from **NEA Folk Arts Infrastructure funds** to 1) continue Open Doors Mentoring Program, 2) reconnect with folk artists and tradition bearers and invite them to participate in an online registry, and 3) enhance the Folklife in Louisiana website.

**Regional Folklife Program:** We have given the universities official notice that the program has ended and received digital copies of the three Regional Folklife Program files. For NSU, a Memorandum of Understanding is in process so that Louisiana Folklife Center has full rights to the materials.

The UNO Regional Folklorist materials included **Ethlyn Orso’s UNO Folklore Archive** of her students’ papers. Jay Edwards is retiring and his archive includes the work of his students and those of Frank de Caro and Rosan Jordan’s student folklore papers. We are looking for a place to deposit them. LSU and UNO have declined.

**Louisiana Bicentennial Commission’s heritage education committee** is developing educational materials. This has resulted in a coordination of CRT education resources with the creation of a web portal. Folklife resources are included in this initiative.