

LOUISIANA STATE ARTS COUNCIL QUARTERLY MEETING

Louisiana Municipal Association

700 N. 10th Street, Room 1

January 18, 2008

10:30 a.m.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Ms. Weeks called the meeting to order, and thanked the Council members and Division staff for attending.

Louisiana State Arts Council (LSAC) members present:

Christie Weeks

Marion Drennen

Neil Early

LeAnne Weill

Juana Woodard

Angela Hammerli

Susan Reed

Mary T. Joseph

Susan Turner

Louisiana State Arts Council (LSAC) members absent:

Susan R. Brunner (proxy to Chair)

Jose S. Canseco

Anna B. Ferguson (proxy to Chair)

Molly Sooter

Cynthia Warner Weirick

Frederick L. Zeagler (proxy to Chair)

Louisiana Division of the Arts (LDOA) staff present:

Veronique Le Melle

Danny Belanger

Pearlie Johnson

Kelly Pepper

Bethany France

Sparkle Hurst

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Susan Turner was not at the last Council meeting, and the minutes did not reflect her absence. Minutes will be amended to reflect Ms. Turner's absence. Ms. Reed motioned to approve Minutes as amended, and Mr. Early seconded. Minutes approved as amended.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Ms. Weeks reported that she participated in the RDA/CDC Retreat held in Baton Rouge November 5-7, 2007. She thanked the Division staff for a job well done in developing the Retreat. The executive directors and the community development coordinators were present. As a pilot this year, the inclusion of a small number of Board members from the Regional Development Agencies (RDA) was added. The feedback received was helpful. There was a need to assist the Board members in adopting a more regional view of their responsibilities, as many of them are also involved in individual organizations, and to understand how their region fits into the State of Louisiana's goals and plans relative to funding and cultural economy. It's anticipated that an invitation will be issued to Board members, from the RDAs, to participate next year for part of the retreat. There were lots of good ideas exchanged, and the retreat gave the RDAs and CDCs a chance to share concerns.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms. Le Melle introduced the Division's Deputy Director, Danny Belanger, who joined the staff the end of November. Mr. Belanger has been integral to the operations of the Division. He is

working very closely with Ms. Johnson and the Operations Team to get ready to implement the e-grant system next year, and to digitize all work samples from the artists and arts organizations.

Ms. Le Melle distributed a summary of the FY08 grants funded for this current year. All funds have been expended. Ms. Le Melle pointed out that our Regional Development Agencies have started a process where they no longer compete for grant funds; however, there is a small amount of competition between them for the funds available to them. With the agreement, the RDAs will provide art services within their region. The Division is using a system where the Regional Agencies do a 3-year performance plan outlining how they are going to outreach. Ms. Phenev and Ms. Le Melle will have a formal evaluation to present to the Council at the August meeting when the grants are reviewed.

\$4.1 million was requested in FY08, and slightly over \$2.2 million was distributed through competitive grants. In FY07, \$2.9 million was requested, and \$1.5 million was distributed through the competitive grant process.

January 17, 2008 was the deadline to receive Intent to Apply forms for the FY09 grant season. The grant application deadline is March 3, 2008. The Intent to Apply form must be submitted for the Capacity Building category. The Intent to Apply form must also be submitted if an organization is applying in the Stabilization category for the first time. Once an organization has been funded, under Stabilization, that organization does not have to submit the Intent to Apply. Because we feel the need to continue working with organizations on their preliminary plans before they submit their Capacity Building applications, they must submit the Intent to Apply. This allows the Division to assign the organization a program officer before the deadline. The program officer will assist the organization in their application preparation. It also allows us to gauge on what the needs are. General Program Support is one of the Division's newest Arts-in-Education categories.

Ms. Le Melle distributed a list outlining the total number of applications submitted as of 5:30p.m. January 17th. The updated totals are as follows:

- 7 applications for Arts-in-Education, General Program Support
- 27 applications for Capacity Building, Implementation
- 20 applications for Capacity Building, Planning
- 5 applications for Capacity Building, Service Providers and Incubator Support
- 13 applications for Stabilization in all tiers

Ms. Hammerli asked about the E-System. Ms. Le Melle answered that for FY2009-2010 the Division will select 2 discrete categories to use the E-System, allowing the Division a chance to use the system, get acquainted with system, and receive feedback. The following funding year, the E-System will begin across all grant categories. The E-System is offered through Westaff, the Regional Organization for Western State Arts Agencies. We are part of the Southern Arts Federation (SAF). The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) works with each of the regional organizations to derive a product or service that is then used nationally, and is subsidized through NEA. A few years ago Westaff developed the E-grant System, which aligns with the Federal E-grant System. Everything is done electronically to NEA, and this will align us with the Federal grants. This is a subsidized program where we are not buying the software. Westaff can build a

system unique to Louisiana for about \$90,000. They also have an NEA sponsored system, which is their database, and they keep it. We are buying a license to be able to use their database and software at a cost of less than \$20,000 a year. It will save us time, as there will be no need to make copies of our applications for the panelists. The panelist will sign into their part of the system and be able to view every application directly. Each organization will have an electronic signature. It will take about 2 years to get the State of Louisiana on to the system. Mr. Belanger included the applications can be updated and saved. You can also highlight what parts of the application are to be submitted.

The applicants will initially enter about 4 screens of information the first year they apply through this system, and every year afterward, when they sign on and use their organization's electronic signature, all of their organizational information will appear on the screen. They would then be asked has anything changed, or are there any corrections to be made. If not, hit submit and it will go to only the narrative sections. The applicants will only have to do this once. The Council was pleased with the proposed changes.

Heather Leatherbury, E-Services Manager for the Southern Arts Federation, met with the Division staff. That meeting was very fruitful. Ms. Leatherbury traveled with Ms. Russo to a meeting in Alexandria and another in New Orleans. They were part of a larger panel on artist services in New Orleans, and what came out of that was a renewed interest from our artists to become more active with the services of the Southern Arts Federation, which is what we were hoping would happen.

NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Le Melle informed the Council that Governor Jindal's Cabinet now includes former CRT Secretary, Angèle Davis, as the Commissioner of Administration. Our newly appointed Secretary, Dawn Watson, was the previous Undersecretary. Ms. Le Melle will work with Assistant Secretary Pam Breaux to invite the Secretary to the next Council meeting, or the one following.

The new administration came onboard on Tuesday, and Wednesday an Executive Order for a Hiring Freeze was issued. The only thing that might be affected within the Division is the hiring of student workers. The Division usually hires 1 or 2 student workers to assist in the grant application process and panels. The Division was informed by the Administration that a special exception request from DOA (Division of Administration) is needed to hire a 20-hour per week student.

Ms. Weeks asked the Council if anyone had the opportunity to listen to Governor Jindal's Inaugural Address. It referenced Louisiana's culture, music, cuisine, cultural economy, the film industry, to name a few, and how important these things are to the State of Louisiana.

Ms. Le Melle spoke with Mr. Hutcheson regarding where the LPA (Louisiana Partnership for the Arts) is with Council Appointments and Reappointments. Mr. Hutcheson is giving the new administration about 30 days, and he will approach them again to see what the new head of the Boards and Commissions intends to do with the State Arts Council. Ms. Le Melle will keep the Council informed. The LPA is charged, by the enabling legislation for the Council, to submit a pool of nominees for the Council from which the Governor chooses. There are other

appointments from the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House, and a few other people have a few individual appointments. Mr. Hutcheson will remind them that the Council has been in a holding pattern for 4 years. Ms. Weeks let the Council know that she appreciates their continued involvement.

STANDING COMMITTEES

Advocacy

In Ms. Brunner's absence, Ms. Weeks reported the Regular Session will start in March for the legislature, and LPAA has already begun to formulate plans for the Arts Advocacy efforts. Mr. Hutcheson informed the Council at the last meeting that LPAA had issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) for a lobbyist for the arts in Louisiana. There were 5 firms and/or individuals interviewed. They ultimately decided on Roedel Parsons. There are some people on the team who are already versed in the cultural economy and arts efforts. We will see some new approaches. One thing they said they would do is to provide training and information to people in the region. We pay attention to what goes on in the State of Louisiana, as well as what goes on with the National Endowment for the Arts. We have many people who continue to contact their senators and their representatives in Congress. For the first year in a long time, there was an increase in NEA funding and National Endowment for the Humanities funding. Ms. Weeks encouraged the Council to thank the Federal Legislators for their assistance. Mr. Early asked Ms. Weeks about how active people were around the state with the campaigning. Ms. Weeks answered that Capwiz, or its equivalent, is tracked through Americans for the Arts. That would be something to ask Mr. Usrey about what has been the level of participation in Louisiana for Federal efforts.

Policy

None

Special Events

Governor's Arts Awards

Ms. Le Melle informed the Council that Mr. Danny Belanger and Ms. Maida Owens are the Division staff heading the Governor's Arts Awards Team. Mr. Early shared with the Council that Mr. Gene Davis is still excited about his award, which turned out to be a real shot in the arm for the whole community. Not only did it bring recognition to him, it also bought recognition for the whole community and parish. There are more people asking questions and are listening more intently.

Ms. Le Melle informed the Council that the Arts Division is now fully staffed, and the Cultural Economy Initiative is almost fully staffed. There was one position needing to be filled prior to the Freeze. Ms. Breaux hired Ms. Kathleen Sarsfield to be the manager of the World Cultural Economy Forum (WCEF). Ms. Sarsfield is a full-time member of the Office of Cultural Development who will be working completely on the Forum. Ms. Le Melle let Ms. Woodard know that she will be hearing from Ms. Sarsfield. They will be doing multiple statewide events. They are changing and improving upon last year's success. Ms. Sarsfield will spearhead that while Ms. Gaye Hamilton is working on the Tax Incentive Initiatives that came out of the last session. Please call 225-342-8200 and ask for Gaye Hamilton, and she will be happy to talk you through both the Artist Tax Credits and the Cultural Districts Tax Credits.

The Percent for Art Program has completed installations in 2 more buildings. Ms. Demarest encouraged the Council to drive by the LaSalle Building, at the corner of 3rd St. and North Blvd. to see the niches above the doorways. The Percent for Art Program has completed their first selection committee on the Bienville Building. Now that the Percent for Art Program is fully staffed, Ms. La Fonta is working very hard to streamline the process. Ms. Weeks asked if the Council could do a tour of Percent for Art Projects, in the Baton Rouge area, following the April Council meeting. Ms. Le Melle will get with Ms. La Fonta and Ms. Demarest to plan an activity.

Ms. Weill asked about Advocacy. Ms. Weeks reported that the LPAA Lobbyist Search Committee spent a significant portion of the interview time with each firm or individual inquiring how new members of the House and Senate would be educated about the importance of the arts in Louisiana. An action plan is under development and the Council will be kept informed. Mr. Scott Hutcheson and Mr. Tommy Usrey are the contact people for the Louisiana Partnership for the Arts Advocacy (LPAA).

OLD BUSINESS

None

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The next Council meeting is scheduled for April 11th in Baton Rouge. With Mr. Hutcheson's assistance, the Council could possibly meet with their legislators. The Council voted to have the August meeting on Friday, August 8, 2008. Ms. Weeks will inform the Council of the date and location for the Fall Council meeting at the April 11th meeting.

Ms. Weeks distributed a form, at the last meeting, for Council members to complete. The form gave them an opportunity to serve on a different committee, or affirm their desire to continue to serve on the committee/committees they currently serve on. Ms. Weeks gave a brief description of the purpose and services of each committee:

- Advocacy Committee – This committee plans and implements advocacy efforts on behalf of the Division to the Governor, Lt. Governor, Secretary of CRT, and the Louisiana State Legislature; helps coordinate Council advocacy efforts with those of the LPA, and puts forward recommendations to the full Council relative to advocacy efforts. The advocacy committee will be the most active in the next several months.
- Policy Committee – This committee is activated at times. It reviews Division grants policies and long-range plans every 2 – 4 years; reviews Council by-laws, and puts forward recommendations to the full Council relative to advocacy efforts. This committee is engaged on a less regular basis than the other committees.
- Special Events Committee – This committee plans and coordinates the annual Governor's Arts Awards nomination and selection process and ceremony; plans and coordinates other special events and activities on behalf of the Council.

ADJOURN

Ms. Joseph motioned to adjourn, and Ms. Drennen seconded. The meeting adjourned at 11:40 a.m.