**MINUTES OF THE**

**LOUISIANA FOLKLIFE COMMISSION MEETING**

**Capitol Park Welcome Center**

**Baton Rouge, LA**

**Friday, January 4, 2013**

**Folklife Commission members present:** Ray Berthelot, Doug Bourgeois, Winifred Byrd, Teresa Parker Farris, Marcia Gaudet, Jonn Ethan Hankins, Nicole Hobson-Morris, Amanda LaFleur, Charles McGimsey, Allison Peña, Michael Robinson, Susan Spillman.

**Folklife Commission members absent:** Lisa Abney, Kevin Billiot, Chris Broussard, Rebecca Hamilton, Karen Leathem, Susan Roach, Michael Sartisky, Dean Sinclair, Liz Williams.

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

**Guests present:** Charlene Bonette, State Library

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

Teresa Parker Farris opened the meeting of the Louisiana Folklife Commission at 11:11 am at the Capitol Park Welcome Center in Baton Rouge.

**II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes for the last two meetings were approved.

**III. REPORTS**

1. **Chair Report – Teresa Parker Farris**

Farris reported that since the last commission meeting, she and Liz Williams met with Lt. Governor Jay Dardenne, Chief of Staff Cathy Berry, and Pam Breaux for an informational discussion about the Folklife Program and Louisiana Division of the Arts in order to underscore folklife’s potential for the department. They asked the Lt Governor to support folklife in three ways: 1) ensure that the folklife websites are kept current with folk traditions and tradition bearers and links to folkways point at other locations, which requires new fieldwork to update photographs and data, 2) ensure that the Folklife Program is involved in visible projects that demonstrate how important folklife is, and 3) ensure that he includes folklife in his talks around the state. The Lt Governor said that while he couldn’t promise funds, he could talk more about folklife as he speaks around the state. He also encouraged the Folklife Commission to propose a project for him to consider.

**B. LDOA Budget Report and Strategic Plan Report – Phil Boggan**

Boggan reported on staff and budget changes in LDOA. Dana LaFonta decided to return to program work and has moved into the artist services position vacated when Ann Russo retired. LDOA has started a search for a new executive director. In response to substantial mid-year FY13 and projected FY14 budget cuts, Pam Breaux cut a position in the Office of Cultural Development held by Danny Belanger. Danny moved into the position vacated upon the resignation of Bethany France who is now director of the Rodrigue Foundation’s A+ Schools Initiative. The projected budget cut to OCD in FY14 is anticipated to be $300,000.

**C. Director – Maida Owens**

Owens provided a written report that is attached to the minutes. She highlighted the ongoing redesign of the folklife website, www.louisianafolklife.org, and thanked Allison Pena and Jean Lafitte National Park and Preserve for support of *Delta Pieces: Northeast Louisiana Folklife,* a virtual book that is now online. She also reported that the New Populations research in Shreveport by Laura Marcus Green is online as is *Louisiana Folklife: A Guide to the State*.

Owens reported that she has received a request to exhibit the dugout in the Creole State Exhibit which is in storage at the State Museum. She will need to determine whether the museum has sufficient environment control and security, but pointed out that a long-term plan is needed for the Creole State Collection as is a policy about loaning items beyond the State Museum.

Susan Roach asked Owens to share with the Commission that Kerry Davis, the research associate who worked for the Regional Folklife Program at Louisiana Tech University from 1999 until 2009, passed away on December 15, 2012 in an automobile accident. She was a major force behind the Louisiana Quilt Documentation Project and its link to the National Quilt Index. The Commissioners resolved to honor Davis with a memorial added to the Quilt Documentation webpages.

**IV. BUSINESS**

1. **Culture Connection 2013 –** Maida Owens

Boggan reported that Culture Connection will be Tuesday, April 23, and it will again provide a networking opportunity for the culture constituency followed by meetings with legislators. He invited the Commission to participate and said that he will be sending more details in the coming weeks. Commissioners discussed how they could participate and expressed interest in developing strategies over email and during an informal gathering before meeting with legislators.

1. **Strategies for Service Learning Using Folklife Resources – Teresa Parker-Farris**

Parker-Farris led a discussion about ways that university students could be more involved in documenting traditions through service learning classes. Owens shared her efforts to involve faculty at Louisiana State University, Southern University, and Baton Rouge Community College in documenting Baton Rouge traditions and that faculty in fields other than anthropology and folklore are interested, especially performance studies. The Commission explored ways that student research could be archived and/or included on the folklife website. Owens said that some student work is already online by being published in the *Louisiana Folklore Miscellany*. Commissioners discussed the need for student work to be vetted before being posted online. It was agreed that more faculty would participate if they knew that this was an option for their students.

1. **Archiving the folklife websites -- Maida Owens**

Owens reported that the State Library Recorder of Documents is developing new policies and procedures about archiving state websites. Once those are finalized, Owens will submit the folklife webpages for archiving, thus guaranteeing the preservation of the sites’ content for perpetuity. Owens said that the priority would be work commissioned for publication on the websites and not previously published elsewhere.

1. **Louisiana Folklore Society at AFS - Marcia Gaudet/Susan Roach**

Gaudet reported that having a table in the bookroom of the America Folklore Society meeting in New Orleans, October 25-27, 2012, was an effective awareness strategy, even though it did not generate many sales.

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

The next meeting is scheduled for Friday, June 7, 2013 at 1:00 p.m.

1. **Follow up with the Lt. Governor**

The Commissioners discussed strategies to follow up with the Lt. Governor. Possibilities included providing the Lt. Governor a list of talking points, meeting with him periodically, celebrating a state folklife day, asking the American Folklore Society to create National Folklore Day, sending the Lt. Governor copies of the *Louisiana Folklore Miscellany*, providing a list of resources by region/place. They also suggested having a bookmark with a QR code for the website as a give-away piece.

**V. PUBLIC COMMENT AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Allison Pena announced that the Battle of New Orleans celebration will be in Chalmette January 8, 2013. The Recognizing our Roots: Living History Youth Program honors Choctaw involvement in the battle with youth from the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Jena Band of Choctaw, and Mississippi Band of Choctaw participating.

**VI. ADJOURN**

There being no further business to discuss the meeting adjourned at 12:35 p.m.

**Folklife Program Director’s Report – January 4, 2013, Maida Owens**

The **LDOA Strategic Plan** was distributed, but plans to convene working groups are postponed until the new LDOA executive director is hired.

**New Populations—**OpenDoors Capacity Building grants are complete. We will provide funds to the Shreveport Regional Arts Council to provide an **Art of Community workshop** by Laura Marcus Green and Amy Skillman in early 2014. This follows on research by Laura Marcus Green. We are collaborating with the Louisiana State Museum to create a **New Populations traveling exhibit**. Laura Marcus Green is writing text panels and a guide for communities. It will become part of the State Museum’s traveling exhibit program which primarily targets parish libraries.

**Website Development**

The following resources have been added to the **websites.**

* **Delta Pieces: Northeast Louisiana Folklife**, a virtual book, with Susan Roach, Pete Gregory, and Dayna Lee. It includes 70 articles, 209 photos, 52 audio clips, and 9 video clips. This was supported with funds from the **Lower Mississippi Delta Initiative** to Jean **Lafitte National Park and Preserve**. These funds also supported other website enhancements and archiving of Folklife Program materials at LSU library.
* 2012 **Louisiana Folklore Miscellany.** 7 articles
* Sara Ann Harris’s essay on “The Evolution of Isleno Identity”
* Added 42 photographs to **Gifts from the Hills: North Central Louisiana Folk Traditions**
* **Louisiana Folklife: A Guide to the State.** 12 articles
* **Traditional Arts: A Window onto Northwest Louisiana's Multicultural Landscape,** New Populations research by Laura Marcus Green and an introduction to the New Populations research by Laura Marcus Green and Maida Owens. 10 articles.
* **Louisiana Voices Educator’s Guide** was updated with Paddy Bowman.

**The following resources are in development.**

* Web redesign includes redesigning and reformatting [www.louisianafolklife.org](http://www.louisianafolklife.org), writing abstracts for 366 webpages for an **online searchable database**, writing metatag descriptions, recapturing video clips, adding photographs, and audio and video to articles that are only text.
* Laura Marcus Green is reworking **technical assistance resources** with support from the American Folklore Society. This is an effort to move technical assistance resources to the AFS website and reduce long term web maintenance.
* Three articles commissioned in the 1990s had not been published, so I arranged for them to be updated and published. **Rebecca Cureau** published her article, “Contributions of African-Americans to Louisiana Folklore Research” in the 2012 *Louisiana Folklore Miscellany*, which is now online. **Joyce Jackson** is updating and adding multimedia resources to “Songs of Spirit and Continuity of Consciousness: African American Gospel Music in Louisiana.” Ben Sandmel is updating and recommending multimedia resources for an article on blues. The Jackson and Sandmel articles will be in the 2013 *Louisiana Folklore Miscellany*.

**Strategies for the following projects have not been determined:**

* Revision of Recommended Reading list. Delete or revise?
* Videotapes on Louisiana Traditional Cultures. Delete or revise?
* Update the Folklife Bibliography
* Update the Theses and Dissertation Database

**Folklife Database**

* We are updating information in the folklife database with the assistance of Bethany Garfield, Dayna Lee, and Rachel Ornelas. Dayna Lee updated contact information for Native Americans and provided the essay, “Louisiana Indians in the 21st Century” which provides an overview of all tribes and bands. Rachel Ornelas is updating craftspeople’s contract information and providing an essay on Louisiana crafts.

**Folk Arts in Education**

* Paddy Bowman, director of Local Learning: National Network for Folk Arts in Education and a key writer of Louisiana Voices Educator’s Guide, participated in the **ICI (Imagination, Creativity and Innovation) Summer Institute** for educators and teaching artists on June 22-24 that focused on music. She will have a larger role in summer 2013 when the focus is dance. Building on this connection, KidsmArt is writing Arts Integration lessons using Louisiana Voices unit The State of Our Lives: Being a Louisiana Neighbor with Kidsmart. This builds on arts integration efforts in the state and links Louisiana Voices to social studies and arts integration. They will be used by Kidsmart and posted on the Louisiana Voices website.
* Memory Seymour, the State Museum education director, is reviewing Louisiana Voices Educator’s Guide to recommend **updating content standards.** The Louisiana Department of Education has adopted Core curriculum standards, a national system.

**Baton Rouge Folklife Survey**

* Pending funding by the National Endowment for the Arts, the Folklife Program will initiate a folklife survey of Baton Rouge. NEA funds would provide professional fieldworkers. I am also working with faculty at LSU, Southern, and Baton Rouge Community College about service learning projects for students. The Arts Council of Greater Baton Rouge and the East Baton Rouge Parish Library are collaborating on a related project, Baton Rouge Traditions.

**Museums on Main Street**

* Brian Boyles with Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities has asked me to participate in the orientation/training sessions in February for the 6 communities that received grants to host this year’s Museum on Main Street exhibit, “The Way We Worked.”