**MINUTES OF THE**

**LOUISIANA FOLKLIFE COMMISSION MEETING**

**Capitol Park Welcome Center**

**Baton Rouge, LA**

**Wednesday, June 4, 2014**

**Folklife Commission members present:** Ray Berthelot, Winifred Byrd, Debra Credeur, Teresa Parker Farris, Cathy Hernandez, Nicole Hobson-Morris, Amanda LaFleur, Keagan LeJeune, Karen Leathem, Kevin McCaffrey, Charles McGimsey, Allison Peña, Shane Rasmussen, Miranda Restovic, Susan Roach, Michael Robinson, Susan Spillman, Melissa Yarborough, Liz Williams.

**Folklife Commission members absent:**  Kevin Billiot, Rebecca Hamilton, Guiyuan Wang.

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

**Guests present:** Charlene Bonnette, State Library; Brian Boyles, Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities; Maria Zeringue (Thibodaux); Michael Martin, University of Louisiana, Lafayette (hereafter ULL); Jocelyn and Jon Donlon, Natchitoches; Peter Jones, Ruston; Eileen Engel, Hammond; Nick Spitzer, Tulane University; Mona Lisa Saloy, Dillard University; John Sharp, ULL; Mark DeWitt, ULL; Michael Martin, ULL.

Several members of the Louisiana Folklore Society, which met after the commission meeting, also attended: Frank de Caro, LSU; Solimar Otero, LSU; and Carolyn Ware, LSU.

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

Teresa Parker Farris opened the meeting of the Louisiana Folklife Commission at 11:08 am at the Capitol Park Welcome Center in Baton Rouge.

**II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes for the last meeting were approved. Liz Williams moved and Kevin McCaffrey seconded.

**III. REPORTS**

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

Farris deferred her report to the Business section of the agenda.

1. **Election of New Officers: two at-large members of the executive committee**

The Commission elected Nicole Hobson Morris as an at-large member of the executive committee.

1. **LDOA Budget Report – Cathy Hernandez**

Hernandez reported that the LDOA budget should remain about the same as last year. LDOA is in the process of filling the staff position left vacant by Kelly Pepper.

**D. Director – Maida Owens**

In the interest of time, Owens directed commissioners to her written report that is attached to the minutes. She encouraged Commissioners and guests to see the traveling exhibit, *A Better Life for All: Traditional Arts of Louisiana’s Immigrant Communities*, on exhibit at the Welcome Center.

**IV. BUSINESS**

1. **Culture Connection 2014 – Teresa Parker Farris**

The Louisiana Folklife Commission arranged for the addition of a Folklife Heritage Award as part of the 2014 Louisiana Culture Awards. Ray Berthelot, Melissa Yarborough, and Liz Williams served on the selection panel and reviewed 5 nominations (David Simpson, Goldman Thibodeaux, Hattie Addison and the Winnsboro Easter Rock Ensemble, Kevin McCaffrey, and Louisiana Folklife Village/New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival). Parker Farris thanked the Commissioners for making nominations and serving on the selection committee. Creole accordionist Goldman Thibodeaux of Opelousas received the award. Parker Farris thanked Winnie Byrd for participating in the ceremony since she was unable to attend. Commissioners agreed that the number and strength of the nominations justified having a Folklife Heritage Award next year. Commissioners discussed the selection process and expressed concern that the selection committee ranked the nominations, but did not discuss the applicants and make the selection. Parker Farris will clarify the process with Office of Cultural Development staff.

Parker Farris also reported on the Louisiana Folklife Commission’s success in bringing Peggy Bulger, the former director of the American Folklife Center, to Arts Connection during the 2014 Culture Connection. With funding from the Atchafalaya National Heritage Area, Bulger spoke on *Rooting Tradition in Community: A Roadmap to Cultural Sustainability.* Jennifer Rittner Guidry, with the Atchafalaya National Heritage Area, and Teresa Parker Farris also participated in the panel.

1. **Folklife Proclamation – Teresa Parker Farris**

Parker Farris announced that today is **Louisiana Folklife Day.** Lt Governor Jay Dardenne will read the proclamation at 2:00 pm in the State Capitol. The Commission agreed that this was an effective strategy, and it should be repeated in 2015, but during the Legislative session.

1. **Proposal to Lt Governor – Teresa Parker-Farris**

Parker Farris reviewed past discussions of the proposal and explained that the proclamation fulfilled the request to execute a small project, but the Commission has not proposed to the Lt Governor a larger project. John Sharp, University of Louisiana Lafayette, provided an overview of a project that ULL is developing to document the traditional cultures of nine coastal Louisiana parishes over five years with fieldwork by professionals and students supporting several products: a publication, film, traveling exhibit, and traveling program. Sharp said that ULL would like to consider collaborating with the Commission. Commissioners made the following suggestions:

1. Start the project with a conference hosted or co-hosted by the Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism
2. Include collecting material culture artifacts for deposit in a museum, possibly the Louisiana State Museum
3. Include documentation done after Hurricane Katrina which has largely not been published
4. Provide a list of documentation done to avoid duplication of efforts
5. Consider an online publication rather than a print publication

Amanda LaFleur moved that the Commission create a committee to explore collaboration among ULL, the Commission, the Louisiana Folklore Society and other appropriate entities. Ray Berthelot seconded. The motion passed. Committee members include: Ray Berthelot, Amanda LaFleur, Karen Leathem, Allison Pena, Susan Spillman, and Kevin McCaffrey (chair). The Committee will ask the Lt Governor to convene the discussion with a conference since this project is urgently needed and timely.

1. **Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities – Miranda Restovic**

Restovic reported that the LEH, in transition following their change in leadership, is looking for strategic partnerships. In the past, the organization’s focus was on grant making, but now staff are focused on developing their own programming, such as Brian Boyles’ public oral history sessions about New Orleans. They are meeting with agencies in the Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism. Restovic outlined three possibilities that could involve folklife. *Cultural Vistas*, LEH’s quarterly magazine could include a regular folklife feature to elevate the profile of folklife efforts in the state. The folklife content of KnowLA.org, their online encyclopedia, could be expanded and made more interactive. They are moving from entries being solicited by the staff to a more open submission process and are considering tying grants to developing entries. If a mini-grant program is reinstated, the commission could help make the folklife community aware of them.

1. **Louisiana Folklore Society – Mona Lisa Saloy**

Saloy reported that the 2014 Louisiana Folklore Society annual meeting at Dillard University was successful. Their membership is down, partly due to the annual meeting moving annually, but they are working to address the issue. C. Keagan LeJeune, the Miscellany editor, reported that the *Louisiana Folklore Miscellany* remains strong. There is an open call for submissions for all issues. The 2017 issue will be a folklore and literature theme. LFS is also initiating a student paper competition for 2015 and expanding the website.

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

The next meeting is scheduled for Friday, January 9, 2015.

**V. PUBLIC COMMENT AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Susan Roach announced that she had Louisiana Folklife Festival posters for everyone. Allison Peña announced that the Bicentennial of the Battle of New Orleans will take place in January 2015. Liz Williams announced that SoFAB will have a ribbon cutting on September 29, 2014. The organization’s new facility will include a demonstration kitchen, restaurant, and bar at 1504 O.C. Haley Blvd. in New Orleans. Winnie Byrd announced that the Louisiana Trust for Historic Preservation and the Division of Historic Preservation will co-sponsor its 35th annual conference on June 16, 2014 in Natchitoches. Kevin McCaffrey announced that he will be showing his film, *No One Ever Went Hungry,* in Paris at the Louisiana Festival. Amanda LaFleur announced that Congrès Mondial Acadien will happen August 14-18 in Louisiana. She is organizing Louisiana Day which will include films and speakers. Liz Williams announced that she involved in the Moscow Jazz Festival featuring New Orleans jazz and cuisine. Brian Boyles announced that copies of *Cultural Vistas* are available. Shane Rasmussen announced that the Louisiana Studies Conference will be September 19-20, 2014, and the theme is Louisiana Realities.

**VI. ADJOURN**

There being no further business to discuss the meeting adjourned at 12:45 p.m. Winnie Byrd moved and Allison Peña seconded.

**Folklife Program Director’s Report – June 4, 2014, Maida Owens**

**New Populations:** The Shreveport Regional Arts Council (SRAC) hosted an **Art of Community workshop** by Laura Marcus Green and Amy Skillman on April 4, 2014. On April 3, the **traveling exhibit, *A Better Life for All: Traditional Arts of Louisiana’s Immigrant Communities*,** premiered at SRAC for one month. Curated by Laura Marcus Green with assistance from the State Museum staff, the exhibit features four QRs (Quick Readers) so that visitors with smart phones can access 2 audio clips, 1 video clip, and the website. The exhibitor’s guide for hosts of the exhibit and schools includes activities for youth in and out of school. An expanded version of the exhibit is also online. The exhibit will become part of the State Museum’s traveling exhibit program which primarily target parish libraries.

**Baton Rouge Folklife Survey:** Folklorists Douglas Manger and Laura Marcus Green have completed their first fieldwork trips. Manger focused on cowboy traditions, fishing traditions, and several folk artists. Green focused on fiber arts, especially those used for community causes. The Folklife Program has received $40,800 for the next phase of the program. Manger and Green will build on their prior work. Kevin McCaffrey will document welders creating outdoor cooking equipment, fishing and boating gear, and artistic creations such as belt buckles or sculptures. Maria Zeringue (ULL MA -francophone studies) will document meat markets and other food related sites while she interns with the Folklife Program May – July. She is also updating the Recommended Videos list. Several other projects are in development.

The Library of Congress’ American Folklife Center awarded the Louisiana Folklore Society and the Folklife Program an **Archie Green Fellowship** of $30,400 to document the occupational folklore in small businesses in Baton Rouge. Jocelyn and Jon Donlon will document small businesses providing repair services. Laura Marcus Green and Douglas Manger will document businesses related to their earlier fieldwork.

**Folklife in Louisiana Website:** The website redesign is complete. Susan Roach has submitted the last essay for *Delta Pieces: Northeast Louisiana Folklife* which focuses on sacred music. Eileen Engel is preparing an educator’s guide.

To promote the website, the program produced a **brochure** to be used as a technical assistance tool when meeting with organizations or individuals. A **bookmark** will be used at events with larger audiences, such as the Louisiana Book Festival and conferences.

**Folk Arts in Education:** The Folklife Program collaborated with the Arts in Education program to create arts integration lessons based on the Louisiana Voices Educator’s Guide.Kidsmart staff wrote and piloted the unit *Creative Classroom: Being A Louisiana Neighbor* that features 8 lessons using theatre and visual arts. Paddy Bowman with Local Learning, Inc. will be augmenting the strategies with Louisiana Voices resources and strategies.

The Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism did not receive BESE 8g funding to support ***Uniquely Louisiana*,** a CRT education initiative, but one component initiative is moving forward. With support from the Atchafalaya National Heritage Area, CRT is creating a web portal that will feature education resources provided by all agencies in department and it is being led by Maida Owens.