

**Minutes of the
LOUISIANA STATE ARTS COUNCIL
QUARTERLY MEETING
Baton Rouge, Louisiana
Monday, March 25, 1996
10:00 a.m.**

WELCOME/CALL TO ORDER

Penne Mobley, chairperson, called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. The following members were present:

Suzanne Arceneaux	Jean S. Hurley
Gloria Callais	Beth Kaplan
Marilyn Cox	Elizabeth Chubbuck-Meche
Katie Planche Friedrichs	Penne Mobley
Sara Herrington	Virginia Riley

Council members **absent**, but naming a proxy for the meeting were:

Cynthia Ardoin
Johnnie Kocurek
Raelene Pell
Deborah Reese
Beverly Wilson

Council members **absent** from the meeting included:

Mary Ann Netterville
Anthony Rollo

Staff members of the Louisiana Division of the Arts in attendance were:

James Borders
Velma Gray
Maida Owens
Ann Russo
Dee Waller
Mickie Willis

Also present was Gerri Hobdy, Assistant Secretary, Office of Cultural Development.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

A motion was made to adopt the minutes of January 22, 1996. The motion was seconded by Elizabeth Chubbuck-Meche and carried unanimously.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

There was no Chairman's report.

GRANTEE REPORTS/PRESENTATIONS

There were no grantee reports/presentations.

The new Secretary of the Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism was expected to introduce himself to Council members at this point in the meeting, but last-minute, late-breaking developments in the special legislative session prevented him from attending the meeting.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Borders announced that Judyth Demarest joined the Division staff as the panels project leader and presented a brief biographical statement about Ms. Demarest's education and her previous experience.

Mr. Borders then presented the 1995-96 Decentralized Arts Funding Program grants making summary to the Council and stated that there are a number of new applicants in the statewide round this year, many of whom were applicants in the first two rounds of the decentralized program. Mr. Borders stated that the second round of the decentralized program cycle started January 1, 1996 and ends on September 30, 1996. He presented the projected decentralized arts funding program formula for the third round of the program, which he prefaced by explaining that, according to the new census data provided from the LA Dept. of the Treasury, the population of the state has increased by 100,000 since 1990. Unfortunately DOA's allocation from the state has not increased proportionately. The Division still has only 2.1 million dollars in the decentralized program to distribute among 4.3 million people. Instead of 50 cents per person per parish, the allocation is down to 48.64 cents per parish. If the DOA gets a significant increase from the Legislature we will be able to go back up to .50 cents or more in the decentralized allocations. There have been some significant allocation shifts among the state's parishes and overall we have had four regions gain population and four regions lose population.

Penne Mobley asked if it would be an advantage to try to tie our legislation to per capita. Mr. Borders responded that this is how a number of revenue sharing programs already in place at the state and federal level operate. Penne Mobley stated that it would sound better if we would ask for another quarter per capita increase rather than an extra million dollars. Penne Mobley further stated that there was discussion with Charlie Smith, the arts lobbyist, about drafting some legislation that

would tie the Division's funding to a per capita formula.

Mr. Borders asked the Division's Program staff to share what is happening in the statewide grants programs with the number of applications and the kinds of applications they are receiving this year and the impact the decentralized program has had.

Mickie Willis, the Arts in Education Program Director, reported that the number of AIE applications have increased this year. Apparently a lot of people have been planning and executing AIE programs and have become interested in education programs. Being new to the staff, he said he could not assess the quality as opposed to last year. Most seem to be good solid grants. There are technical problems, but that is to be expected. There are good proposals for the most part. There are 85 applications overall compared to 73 last year.

Dee Waller, the Performing Arts Program Director, reported that there is an increase in the number of projects, maybe by 10% or more, across performing arts discipline. It is the result of a combination of factors in her disciplines. There are decentralized applicants coming in for the first time and there are local arts agencies and major arts institutions applying in project assistance for the first time (the result of recent guideline changes). Moreover, she added, more projects are of a multi-parish or statewide scope.

Ann Russo, the Visual Arts Program Director, reported that as a whole the Visual Arts grants seem to be prepared better. Applicants seem to know more about grants writing largely due to their experience in the decentralized program. Allowing the local arts agencies and major arts institutions to come into Project Assistance is a good step ahead as far as seeing the quality and the type of programming that they are involved in. The number of Visual Arts grant applications is about the same. There is an increase of Majors and a few Locals coming in, but most of the other applicants are visual arts organizations. There has been a decrease in the number of applications in Media. She speculated that a possible reason for the drop is the fact that the panel only funded 6 of 23 applicants last year. Sometimes applicants get discouraged from applying when that happens. Also, a lot of those potential applicants have received more funding in the decentralized program. Ms. Russo also reported that there will be a meeting with the staff of the N.O. Video Access Center, a media consultant and other media representatives from throughout the state on April 18th. They will review the results of the statewide media survey and make plans to hold a second Louisiana Media Rendezvous.

Maida Owens, the Folklife and Crafts Marketing Program Director reported that the grant writing is much better. Allowing Majors to come into Projects has impacted Folklife a lot. There are fewer applications in Folklife this year, however, from 19 down to 14. Apprenticeship applications also dropped dramatically, with only 6 submissions this year after having 19 last year.

Sarah Herrington inquired about the response and impact from the statewide grants workshops that were held in January. Mickie Willis responded that he has received applications from people that he spoke directly with at the workshops and Dee Waller stated that she has received applications from all the people she networked with also.

Mr. Borders explained that because of the second deadline for Fellowship applications in the fall, staff may go out again in July and August to conduct additional workshops. With applications due on the first of September, the staff will contact the local arts agencies to see if there is a need for workshops this summer.

Sara Herrington mentioned that it might be interesting to track the kind of response the Division is getting from the workshops. She stated that it would be very helpful to the Council to know just how much impact the Division is having. She added that the workshop in Shreveport was well attended. Mr. Borders mentioned that Pam Atchinson did a pre-application review in Alexandria where applicants brought draft applications to review a few weeks before the deadline and it really made a big difference.

Sara Herrington stated that this kind of information is valuable for the Council to know because when they go to legislators and talk about how available the funding is, they can really show how many opportunities their constituents have to understand the grants programs and how much help they receive, etc.

Mr. Borders then presented draft copies of the DOA's 1994-95 Annual Report to Council members. He explained that he hopes to get them printed before the end of the legislative session so that each legislator will get a copy of the Annual Report and know exactly what's being funded, how the money is distributed and what the money is supporting.

Executive Committee Report

There was no Executive Committee Report.

Advocacy Report

Beth Kaplan reported that the Advocacy Committee met with Mr. Steve Perry, the Governor's Chief of Staff, and Mr. Charlie Smith, the DOA lobbyist. DOA is in the executive budget at \$4.2 million—\$1 million in the regular budget and \$3.2 million in the supplemental appropriations budget which is subject to renewal of the temporary sales tax. We need the 4% tax to pass. At this point we can hope that we are at \$4.2 million and pray that we will get \$5.2 million. She advised the Council to keep talking to their local agencies and different representatives of the arts to write letters to the legislators, the governor, the House Appropriations Committee and the Senate Finance Committee thanking them that we are in the budget, giving them examples about where the funding is going and tell them how important the funding is and express how appreciative we are. She stated that Steve Perry sounded very positive and friendly and that he is a friend of the arts, and also sounded confident about keeping arts in the budget.

Sara Herrington shared that she had the opportunity to sit in on the advocacy meeting also and was encouraged and hopeful about the funding for the arts. She also mentioned that she and Penne Mobley had a meeting with their new local legislators and they were very supportive. Beth Kaplan asked that each one of the council members and grant recipients write a letter to their legislators to create a network.

Mr. Borders stated that legislators are really impressed when they hear from their constituents and organizations who actually receive funding from the DOA. He said there will be a number of challenges with this year's budget because even if the Medicaid problem is solved, the legislators are dealing with a deficit in excess of \$190 million dollars. Right now the state is looking to cover a shortfall next year of more than \$900 million. About \$450 million is coming out of the Medicaid program's changes with regard to the federal subsidy formula. Another \$445 million is the result of the sales tax expiring. But he also pointed out that in last year's operating budget, the state used about \$200 million of non-recurring income to provide for goods and services. With the mandated increase in such things as prisons expenses and education costs, there is still a \$192 million gap where new money has to be found, or cuts have to be made, which won't be covered by the 4% sales tax or by the federal Medicaid subsidy formula change. So there will still be some budget cuts made in all probability. We just have to make sure that legislators understand that arts is a priority for funding. We have to maintain our position that our money should be first dollar and that we are a revenue generating industry. If the state doesn't support this kind of growth and investment in our people, communities and cultures, we will always be in the same boat of trying to put money into areas to patch up problems in the state, as opposed to creating the growth that can generate the revenues that can, in turn, support all the needs and services of the disadvantaged and those who are helpless. So we have to maintain that it is a priority for us to get our funding. The more the legislators hear from the constituents and recipients in their area, the more support we will get.

Beth Kaplan and Sara Herrington discussed writing a thank you letter to Senator Jimmy Cox, Senator Hainkel, and lobbyist Randy Haynie from the Council for their continued support.

Policy Committee Report

There was no Policy Committee report.

Special Events Committee Report

In reference to the upcoming Governor's Arts Awards, Marilyn Cox reported that the meeting of the Special Events Committee was scheduled immediately after this meeting adjourned. All council members were invited to attend. She asked if anyone would like to join the Special Events Committee because council members will need to attend on the day of the selection of the Governor's Arts Award winners, which is April 13th. The applications for nominations for the Governor's Arts Awards have been sent out to all the local arts agencies, all legislators and many arts organizations. They will have had approximately one month to get their nominations back to the committee. The deadline is April 8th. The nomination applications will be sent to Lafayette where the selection committee will be on April 13th. The date for the Governor's Arts Awards have been set for May 8th at the Governor's Mansion. There will be a cocktail buffet starting at 6:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. Marilyn stated that the Governor and the Lt. Governor will be there to present the awards.

Virginia Riley suggested one person be selected to do the award and commission a piece of art from a group of fellowship winners. Public service announcements have gone out to the media to notify the public about the upcoming awards. Marilyn asked the council to please call their arts council in their area to suggest to them that if they have a nominee to get them in right away.

Nomination categories include Professional Artist, Arts Organization, Patron, Arts Education, Business/Corporate and Lifetime Achievement.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Borders asked the Council to please let the office know which grants review panels they plan to attend as soon as possible.

Mr. Borders reported that at the last meeting in Shreveport when the field was present, there were discussions about the Southern Arts Federation (SAF). At the last SAF board meeting, he talked about some of the concerns the field had. The board meeting focused on the strategic plan that the agency is attempting to undergo to restructure itself so that it does become more effective, friendly and serviceable to its constituents. {Some of the problems that our artists and organizations have faced in the past seem to have been created as much by what we have done in this agency to help people understand the programs and opportunities that are available through SAF as they have to do with any of SAF's shortcomings.} There are a number of states in our region that emphasize providing more information for their artists, organizations, and agencies to apply for subsidy and fee support and other services that are provided by the SAF. We haven't done as good a job here in the state of making our organizations aware of those opportunities. The Southern Arts Federation is attempting to restructure. It is the proper time for us to discuss our concerns and those issues were raised at the last meeting. Mr. Borders stated that he has been asked to serve on a special by-laws committee so that he can have some input about the concerns the field has. There were some concerns in the field that the strategy for us would be to resign from the SAF and look to be a part of some other regional organization. Mr. Borders stated that he takes quite the opposite view. We are a state member of that agency, it is our agency, so we have to make sure that it is structured and functioning in a way that makes sense for us.

Penne Mobley stated that there were discussions that since there is a two-year period of evaluation, put them on notice that we had concerns and that, if at the end of that period, if we didn't feel it was in our best interest to continue as a member, that we would be resigning. She also stated that SAF is trying to make changes in some positive ways, but they still need to be watched closely because they haven't communicated with us as effectively as they should.

Mr. Borders stated that they have hired a public relations person because they recognized that they have a weakness in terms of communicating with all the states and getting information out to all the agencies. The Division has taken it upon ourselves to distribute around the state the SAF Annual Report. One problem is that there is not enough of our artists or agencies that understand or know enough about the programs there, so we thought that the Annual Report would be a good first step in informing people about them and we will continue to work with them to improve the services.

Sara Herrington asked Mr. Borders if he suggested that any action be taken or if he was suggesting that we wait and see and if that's the case, if he is putting a time on waiting. Mr. Borders responded that we talked about targeting the end of this fiscal year, which ends in June. He explained that the board and field have just started to see the new strategic plan and changes that will take place beginning in the 1996-97 year.

Penne Mobley recommended that the field communicate to Mr. Borders what their concerns are because there were no specific complaints, just a lot of unhappiness. Mr. Borders promised to survey the field for specific instances of dissatisfaction with the SAF and to keep the board informed of major developments.

On another matter, Elizabeth Chubbuck-Meche made a motion to have the Baton Rouge Arts Council serve as the fiscal agent for the state to write checks and take care of the administrative part of the 1996 Governor's Arts Awards. The motion was seconded by Beth Kaplan and carried unanimously.

Dee Waller reported that Beverly Wilson was awarded Arts Educator of the Year award by the Louisiana Arts Educator Association (LAEA) and was honored at the national conference.

Ms. Kaplan requested that Mr. Borders draft a letter of congratulations from the Arts Council to Beverly Wilson.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the chair called for a motion to adjourn. Such a motion was made, seconded and adopted. The meeting ended at 11:40 a.m.